

**SERMON: "BIBLE BASICS - LUKE"**

**TEXTS: NEW TESTAMENT LUKE 7:1-10 & 10:25-37  
NEW TESTAMENT LUKE 24:13-35**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Times have changed a bit since I was the associate pastor working with youth  
There are now 6 different offerings of the Montreat Youth Conference - six weeks.  
It was just one week back in the day. It grew quite large, hence the need  
for them to offer other versions, other weeks

When I was doing youth ministry, Anderson Auditorium, where the worship service  
and keynotes are held, was packed full – 12 hundred youth and adults.  
I still remember one preacher, his very first words ... “We all come here broken”  
You could have heard a pin drop. Everyone was leaning in to listen.

Johnny let it be known last week that Mark, the first gospel, was his favorite gospel  
This week I will tell you my favorite gospel – Luke. One reason - because Luke’s  
gospel emphasizes Jesus’ concern for and connection with our brokenness  
It does so in a wide variety of ways with stories like the Good Samaritan,  
the prodigal and his brother and so many healing stories, one after another.

Legend has it that Luke was a physician. That educated guess stems from two places  
In Colossians, chapter four, Paul brings greetings from Luke, the beloved physician  
The time frame of when Paul wrote his letters and Luke wrote his gospel do overlap  
both believed to be written between 60-70 A.D.

The other reason for that educated guess is how very many healing stories there are  
There are sixteen! Sure seems that Luke wants us to know Jesus’ as a healer  
Lots of different kinds of brokenness healed – healing wounds of body, soul and spirit  
Think general practitioner more so than specialist (and that is not at all a slight  
on specialists) ... Jesus just happens to have a multitude of specialties

One clear focus on our brokenness in Luke is Jesus’ concern for the poor  
One example being that his version of the Beatitudes is a bit different  
While Matthew says “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” Luke says, “Blessed are the poor.”  
Also the parable of the Great Banquet in Luke 14 where the host,  
hearing the excuses of some invited guest, invites in the poor and the lame

## HEALING TWO WAYS

Another thing Luke does a bit differently is his casting, if you will

The first two stories we consider this morning feature unlikely heroes

A Roman soldier and a Samaritan, not exactly characters from central casting

I love how Luke lifts up the 'outsider' as the example of faithfulness

I think it helps keep us church folk humble. Jesus is at work in this building. Yes!

He is also very much at work outside this building. He's 'on the loose.' Yes indeed!

That intentional inclusion of the outsider keeps us from being too exclusive

And it keeps our eyes and ears (and our hearts and minds) open

Our first lesson is a healing story that lifts up a Roman soldier, an officer of the army that occupies Israel, as an example of faithfulness. The story begins with a bit of an explanation, explaining how this Roman is actually a good man

The Jewish leaders who approach Jesus say this about him

**“He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.”**

Ok, that helps. A local leader has vouched for the Roman. But he is still an outsider

He is a humble outsider. Jesus started to go with him, but he stopped Jesus

Said he wasn't worthy, then said Jesus' word was enough to heal his servant

He showed that kind of trust, that kind of faith. A Roman, a good Roman.

Jesus lifts that Good Roman up as an example of faithfulness

And then a few chapters later he really pushes the envelope

First a Good Roman, then a Good Samaritan

### ***Show Image of Good Samaritan***

Let me remind you of who the Samaritans are. Think exes (like all my exes live not just in Texas but in Samaria). When ancient Israel had its north / south split, the northern tribes made their capital in Samaria. Samaritans are not a different ethnic group, they are the 'us' that became 'them.'

Let me back up to how the story of the Good Samaritan begins. It is right after Jesus answers a lawyer's question about the greatest commandment

The lawyer then asks a follow up question. I think he was looking for an 'out.'

**But wanting to vindicate himself, he asked Jesus,  
“And who is my neighbor?”**

## HEALING TWO WAYS

Jesus doesn't give the lawyer the out he was probably looking for  
Instead he gives an example of someone being a very good neighbor

I absolutely love this story. It features two forms of healing  
One in how the Samaritan generously (and with some risks) cared  
for a stranger left beaten and bruised on the side on the road

And two in addressing the divide between 'us' and 'them'  
In showing us that the one we would assume was the bad guy  
was in fact, quite clearly the good guy ... A Good Samaritan  
Man, if that's not an oxymoron. Who would think, dare suggest it?  
Jesus just did. Jesus put together Good and Samaritan. Made it a combo!

Might he try that with our assumptions about good guys and bad guys  
Talk about a kind of brokenness in need of some healing  
Who are the 'Samaritans' we call by other names ... you know, those people  
Ever thought that Jesus might call those people good?

Might we need some healing from our assumptions?  
I love how this story not only gets someone out of the ditch and on their feet  
It also has Jesus, in his own way, getting up in our grill  
and challenging our assumptions about who's who  
who God just might be using to show us how to love and live

Okay, one more great story unique to Luke – the road to Emmaus  
It is yet another story that highlights how Jesus identifies with our brokenness  
How he touches us and heals us where and when it hurts

### ***Show image of Road to Emmaus***

I want you to pay attention to the before and after pictures in this story  
How Luke describes the two followers before their encounter with one who,  
after he has broken the bread, they realize is the risen Christ himself

**Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.**

## CHANGING DIRECTIONS

They were sad, understandably so. Maybe even a little mad with this traveler  
How could he not know about what happened in Jerusalem

**Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.**

They were sad not only about the death of their friend, their leader  
They were also mourning the death of their hopes ... ‘we had hoped.’  
And they were confused, confused about what the women saw  
and what they said, what they saw for themselves after hearing this ...  
that the tomb was empty. Huh?

You ever feel that way – sad about your loss? We’ve all been, will be, broken like that.  
And what about your hopes ... you ever feel like your hopes have died?  
Cynicism, I’ve noticed, has a way of creeping up inside us and taking hold of us  
It grabs the steering wheel and drives us until we stop looking out the window  
Cynicism, not secularism, not socialism, is the greatest threat to faith

You ever feel confused like they did? Not knowing what to think or do?  
Maybe even being afraid to believe good news?  
Maybe feeling broken beyond repair?  
I ask these questions knowing ‘we all come here broken’

Now look how things change for these two who were sad, maybe a bit mad,  
definitely confused, overwhelmed . After their encounter with the risen Christ,

**That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.**

They had just stopped for night, called it a day (a travel day)  
Then they got up from their meal and went back to where they just were  
They were that eager to share the news – to make that three hour walk back.  
That encounter with Jesus changed them, how they saw things

## SUMMARY

I see this story as yet another healing story. He touched their brokenness.  
And not just theirs but ours. There is not a greater healing story  
then the story of the resurrection – death itself has been defeated

I very much appreciate how Luke uses these before and after pictures  
He doesn't make it as stark as some weight loss ad  
This isn't marketing. He doesn't have these two turn into what  
one of my favorite bands R.E.M. calls "Shiny, Happy People"

Luke has them go back to where they were ... Into their own lives  
Into their own circles and cycles. But now they see the world differently

Yes, there are times that Jesus touches our brokenness  
and it is very much like a miracle cure (like those before and after pictures)  
where sad and mad and confused do turn dramatically to shiny and happy

But please hear me, I don't want you thinking that everything's got to be  
shiny and happy, 'everything's coming up roses and daffodils'  
I sure as heaven don't want you posing and pretending that being a Christian  
means you've got it all together, that it is always good for good people.

Luke isn't telling that story because that is not the story of Jesus  
Luke isn't pointing to a Jesus looking all handsome behind the velvet rope  
a shiny happy Christ for shiny happy Christians

Luke is pointing us to Jesus of Nazareth who is with us in our brokenness