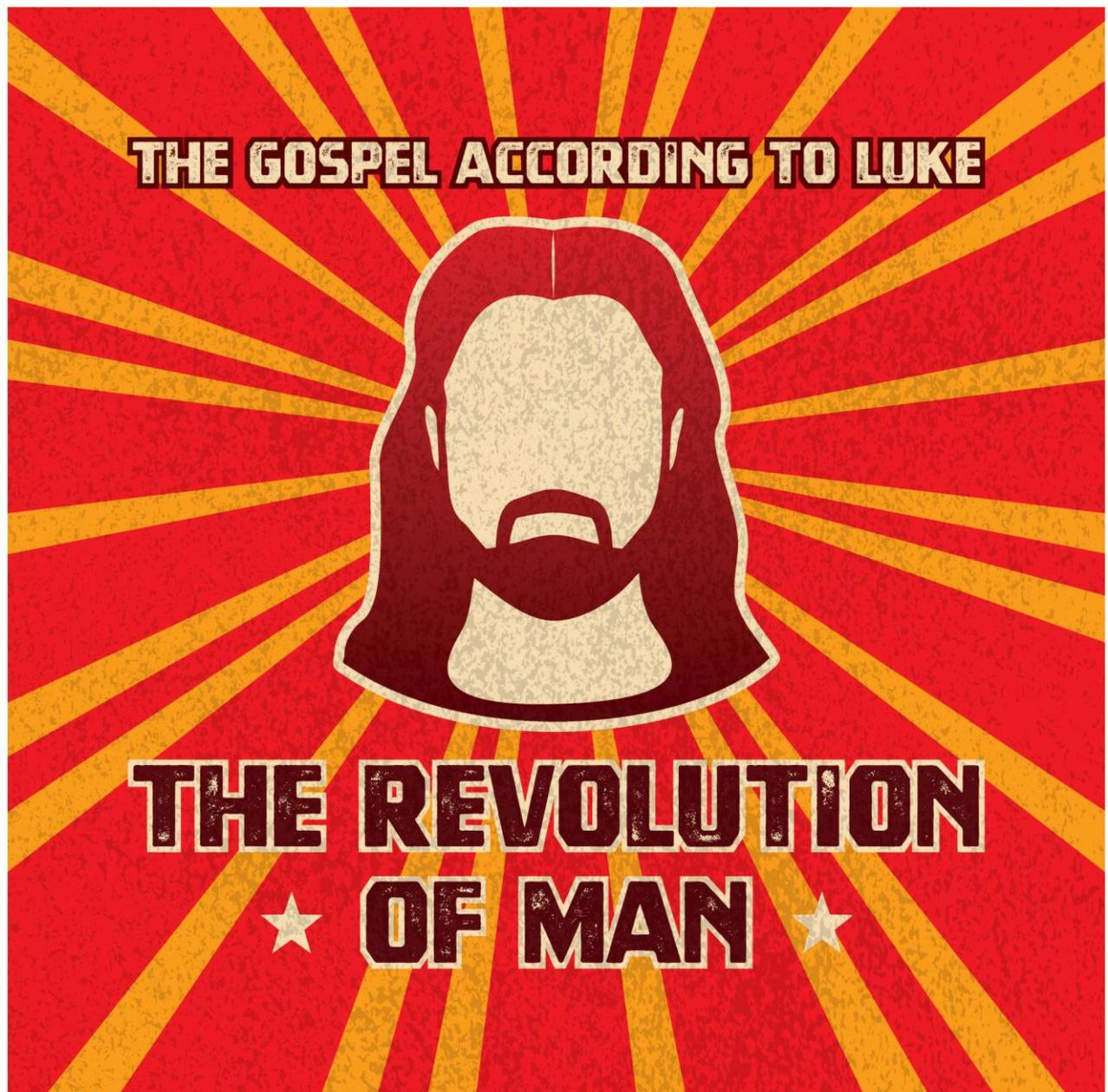


Bible Study

The Revolution of Man



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Resources to check out:

Luke 1-12 For You by Mike McKinley, published by The Good Book Company
This accessible book is very helpful even if you're not a big reader. Think of it as one part commentary, two parts devotional. An excellent book to work through as a daily devotional, to dip into on a particular passage, or to simply read cover to cover.

The Bible Project is worth noting for many excellent Bible overview videos and the resources on Luke are a great introduction:

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/luke/>

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/gospel-series/>

Welcome to Luke's Gospel! Over the next three years we're going to make our way from start to finish in three big chunks and this year we'll get to Luke 9:51 just in time for Easter: "As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem." This will be a great way to kick our year off together as we marvel at Jesus and wrestle together with how he calls us to live in response to his grace.

It is clear from the opening lines of his Gospel that Luke sets out to provide an ordered historical account of the life of Jesus. Yet even as he shows a meticulous attention to historical detail, on another level his sense of order is clearly influenced by some major theological themes, many of which we will see coming through in our studies. To help with this, sometimes we'll read through big slabs of the Gospel to see how these themes take shape. Don't be overwhelmed by these longer readings, it's ok to just let the overall themes and impressions take shape in our minds. At other times we'll focus on some shorter passages and dive deep into the detail. Each study shows the broad passage and the date that it will be preached on in the English gatherings at Trinity Church Adelaide and it would be worth reading this whole passage even though some of the studies will only consider a shorter section.

Something that will quickly become apparent as you look over these studies is that there is a deliberate structure to get us reflecting on the things that were learnt the week before. This might feel a bit unusual for some of us, but it's born of the conviction that we all find it challenging to instigate change in light of what we've read, so let's encourage and pray for each other in it. You'll also note that there are four headings under which we can think of application each week: Trust, Say, Do, Pray. They represent some basic questions: How does this passage call for us to grow in trust? How might this passage impact the way we speak and in particular our 'gospel speech' both to one another and to the outside world? How does this passage call for change in behaviour? How would God have us pray in light of this passage? In truth, every week we could consider a response under all of these headings, but some weeks it might be helpful to consider a couple of areas in particular, which is why the application questions have been clustered under different headings on different weeks. Of course, this doesn't imply that we shouldn't be praying every week, or that we shouldn't be trusting every week and so on. Rather, it's just aiming to be a helpful tool to shake up the way we tend to think of application and perhaps challenge us to respond in ways that aren't our usual pattern.

Please join me in praying that, as we see God's true intentions for humanity displayed in the Lord Jesus, we would also look to him to bring about his radical transformation in us by his Spirit, that it might be our great joy to live for his glory and as a blessing to his world.

Your brother in Christ,
Simon Marshman
Maturity Pastor
Trinity Church Adelaide
February 2020.

Luke 1:1-80 (Sunday February 9)

The prologue and preparations for Jesus' birth

Reviewing the week

What's been going on in your life with the start of a new year?

What's one area where the promises of Jesus have had an impact? What's one area where life has kind of rushed by without much consideration of Jesus?

Reading the word

What gives you confidence that someone can be trusted in what they say?

Read Luke 1:1-4

Why is Luke writing and what reasons does he give us to be confident in what he is writing?

Read Luke 1:5-56

We've just read about two promised pregnancies. Who is pregnant with whom, and why are they both impossible?

Despite the seeming impossibility of these pregnancies, what is the reason for Mary's confidence in v37-38?

According to Mary's 'song' in v46-55, what is God like? What do we learn from this about the reasons for Mary's confidence?

Look back over Mary's responses in this episode (v29-30, 38, 46-47). How does her response illustrate true faith?

Responding in your world

TRUST:

Unlike Zechariah and Mary, you might not have met an angel lately, but what reasons do we have for trusting God's promises?

Why and when do we tend to find it hard to trust God's promises in the way that Mary did? What is one thing you are finding it hard to trust God in right now? How might Luke 1 help you in this?

SAY:

DO:

PRAY:

What would it look like to model your prayers on Mary's song this week? You might like to consider writing a prayer in light of her song and use it on a daily basis in the week ahead.

Luke 2:1-52 (Sunday February 16)

Jesus' birth and childhood

Reviewing the week

How did you go this last week having your prayers shaped by Mary's song from Luke 1:46-55?

How did you go trusting in God's promises this last week? What little victories can you give thanks for? How can we pray for each other that we'd continue to grow in trust?

Reading the word

What does the world think are the signs of someone's greatness and power?

Read Luke 2:1-20

Caesar Augustus was THE great emperor of Rome – hailed by the Roman senate as “a son of a god” and considered to be the one who brought peace (through force of might) to the Roman Empire.

Looking at v1-7, how does the chain of people mentioned by Luke take us on a spiral down from the grandeur of Caesar Augustus (v1) to Jesus (v7)? How does this create a contrast between Jesus and Caesar?

Look back over v8-20 and make two lists: one list of the various ways that the glory of Jesus is emphasised and a second list of the various ways that his humility is emphasised.

GLORY:

HUMILITY:

How do the circumstances of Jesus' birth turn the normal expectations of greatness and power upside down?

The arrival of the Messiah was long awaited by the people of Israel, but the nature of his arrival was pretty unexpected. From v17-20, how did people respond?

Read Luke 2:21-40

From v25-32, what does Simeon recognise about Jesus?

What do you think he means in his comments to Mary in v34-35?

What does this tell us about the way the rest of Jesus' life will turn the normal expectations of greatness and power upside down?

In Simeon and Anna we meet two people who find what they've been longing for. What were they waiting for and how do they each respond?

Responding in your world

TRUST:

Are there ways in which we envy or fear people who have some measure of greatness and power in the eyes of the world? How does Luke help reorient our perspective? Can you think of a real-life situation or relationship where this changes things for you?

SAY:

What would it look like for you to respond in a similar way to those who first met the newborn Messiah?

Perhaps start simply by sharing with one another now one way that Jesus meets your own sense of longing, and take time to turn this into a prayer of thanks.

DO:

PRAY:

Luke 3:1-4:13 (Sunday February 23)

Preparation for Jesus' ministry.

Reviewing the week

Consider one high point and one low point from the last week and discuss together how you went in having your perspective on greatness and power reoriented in your own circumstances.

Reading the word

How would you define 'repentance'? How does this compare and contrast with the way the world thinks about saying 'sorry'?

Read Luke 3:1-18

Back in Luke 1:3-4, Luke says that he set out to 'write an orderly account... so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.' How do the opening verses of chapter 3 continue to build our confidence that this is an orderly account of events that actually occurred in history?

Luke sums up John's ministry as 'preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins' in v3 and in v4 states that this is 'as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet'. What does the quote from Isaiah in v4-6 have to do with repentance?

In v8 John calls for the people to 'Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.' Looking over v10-14, how would you sum up what John meant by this instruction? What does this teach us about what repentance is?

In v16-18, how does John describe Jesus' ministry and how does this help us to see how vital repentance is?

Before we move on, if John prepared the way for the Lord by preaching repentance, what does this say about us? What does it say about the Messiah?

Read Luke 3:21-22 and 4:1-13

Jesus was baptised to show that he had come to be identified with sinners, so that sinners could be identified with him. How does God single Jesus out as unique among all humanity, in verse 22?

Consider each of the temptations that the devil put before Jesus in 4:1-13. Why would each offer have been so tempting?

Jesus didn't give in, but he also didn't simply say 'no' each time. How did Jesus respond to these temptations? What does Jesus' resistance teach us about how we can resist temptation?

Luke took the genealogy of Jesus right back to the first generation: 'Adam, the son of God.' (3:37) How does the response of Jesus as the unique Son of God compare and contrast with that first son of God? Where does Jesus succeed where humanity failed?

Responding in your world

TRUST:

SAY:

DO:

John said, 'produce fruit in keeping with repentance.'

Take a few moments to consider what behaviours you need to change in your life. Try to identify real-world, concrete behaviours like those that John challenged in the crowds.

What action needs to stop? What needs to replace it? (eg, an action: 'don't extort money... be content with your pay' v3:14 or an attitude: 'Worship the Lord and serve only him' 4:8)

Where you feel comfortable, share this with someone so that you might be able to pray for each other and encourage each other in taking action.

PRAY:

Take time to pray in confession of sin, asking for help to pursue true repentance and change.

Give thanks that Jesus succeeded where we fail in resisting temptation, such that he is not only our perfect example, but also that he is our sinless saviour. Perhaps you could set a goal to pray a similar prayer each day this week – confessing sin and thanking God for our sinless saviour.

Luke 4:14-44 (Sunday March 1)

Jesus proclaims the good news

Reviewing the week

What has God been teaching you in the practice of confession of your sin and praise for Jesus' sinless perfection?

Consider the "wins and losses" in your battle with sin this week – how can we pray for each other: both in thankfulness for the wins and in loving solidarity in the ongoing struggle.

Reading the word

Discuss the statement: 'Actions speak louder than words.' In what ways is this true? In what ways is it untrue?

Read Luke 4:14-44

After three and a half chapters leading up to this point, Luke now introduces us to Jesus' ministry. 4:14-15 provide a summary statement of this phase of Jesus' ministry, before we get more detail of two different towns and their responses. Luke chooses to focus on Jesus' preaching in Nazareth and his miracles in Capernaum. Lets see what we learn from this by comparing the two.

	Nazareth	Capernaum
Summarise what Jesus said or did		
Summarise how the people responded		
What did the people want from Jesus?		
How does v43-44 provide a correction to their response and expectation?		

Responding in your world

TRUST:

Luke goes to great length to repeatedly emphasise that Jesus' core ministry was the proclamation of the kingdom of God (v15, 18-21, 31, 43-44). Take some time to reflect on the summary of that proclamation from v18-21.

Do you recognise yourself in any of the people described (poor, prisoners, blind, oppressed)? How has Jesus shown you God's favour?

Are there ways that you respond in a similar fashion to the people of Nazareth and Capernaum – perhaps wanting his miracles without paying due attention to his message?

SAY:

This is not the first time in Luke's gospel that we've seen the importance of proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. The angels came with an announcement, the shepherds ran to share it, John the Baptist was bold with it, and here we see that it was core to Jesus' ministry.

Who is one person in your life with whom you would like to seek out opportunity to share the good news of Jesus? Consider the following steps towards speaking with them:

Write down their name and consider a context in which you might be able to talk with them in the coming week – even if it is just to start a conversation that might open an opportunity to mention Jesus.

Share this with someone in your group and pray together for such an opportunity.

Commit to praying for each other in the coming week.

DO:

PRAY:

Luke 5:1-6:11 (Sunday March 8)

The good news divides people

Reviewing the week

Did you have any opportunity to speak of Jesus with the person you had been praying about last week? Take time to pray for them again now.

Reading the word

In what way is a Christian both a sinner and a saint?

As we move through Luke's gospel we now read about a series of interactions with people who either respond in humility and thankfulness, or in grumbling and opposition.

Read Luke 5:1-28.

Recalling the words of Luke 4:18, in what ways are each of the people Jesus meets here 'poor'?

How do they model right responses to Jesus?

Read Luke 5:29-6:11

The Pharisees have already had some questions about Jesus (see 5:21). What is their issue with him now? (see 5:30, 33; 6:2, 7)

How does Jesus' response in 5:31 highlight that the issue isn't just how they view him, but also how they view themselves?

Looking back over the various people who met Jesus in the passage we've read today, how might the Pharisees' view of themselves have impacted the way they thought about others and their place in God's kingdom?

Responding in your world

TRUST:

Why, if you think of yourself as spiritually 'healthy' will you misunderstand Jesus? Why might you even be angered or upset by Jesus? What does it mean to accept that we are not the healthy but the sick, in Jesus' view?

John Newton, former slave trader and composer of "Amazing Grace," famously said as he approached his death: "My memory is nearly gone. But I remember two things: that I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Saviour." Consider how you might helpfully reflect on this in the week ahead.

SAY:

DO:

Are there certain kinds of people you might not want to associate with (as in v30) or who might not feel welcome in our church? Are there kinds of people you wouldn't think of inviting over for a meal? Are there people who are too challenging or inconvenient to share the love of Jesus with? What could it look like to take action to change this?

PRAY:

Luke 6:12-49 (Sunday March 15)

Jesus teaches his disciples

Reviewing the week

“I remember two things: that I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Saviour.” (John Newton) How has this truth impacted you this week?

Reading the word

What do you think it would look like to live a blessed life? (#blessed)

Read Luke 6:12-49

Considering Jesus ‘sermon’ in particular (v20-49), note that it can be broken into three main sections.

- Section 1, v20-26: The kingdom of God radically re-orientes our perspective on this life. Note that this section is full of indicatives (Jesus just stating how things are and how they will be)
- Section 2, v27-42: We are called to live with this radical new perspective. Note that this section that is full of imperatives (“you should do this” instructions)
- Section 3, v43-49: How we should respond to the sermon. Note that this shifts from instructions to reflecting on how we should change – and what happens if we don’t!

How does Section 1 re-orient our perspective? What is the fundamental shift that needs to take place in our view of life?

Work through Section 2 of the sermon verse by verse, up to v36. How does each instruction for life in God's kingdom reflect the character of God himself?

How does 6:37-42 challenge us that, even if we have entered the kingdom and seek to live like its king, we all have a lot to learn? How does v41-42 help us understand what v37 does and does not mean?

Looking over Jesus 'sermon' as a whole, what do you find:

- Most liberating?
- Most countercultural?
- Most challenging?

Responding in your world

TRUST:

When do you find it hard to trust Jesus' idea of the blessed life? What would it look like to 'rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven'?

SAY:

Are there relationships that you need to seek reconciliation in – offering words of confession or forgiveness?

DO:

Are there ways that you're challenged to act in love towards others?

PRAY:

How does this passage lead us to adoration and thanksgiving to God, confession of sin, asking God for his ongoing help that we might indeed bear good fruit as children of the Most High?

Luke 7:1-50 (Sunday March 22)

Faith in who Jesus is

Reviewing the week

There was so much to take away from Luke 6! What have been some of the things you've been reflecting on since then?

Reading the word

What do you think a life of faith looks like?

Read Luke 7:1-50

After his account of Jesus' teaching in chapter 6, Luke now shifts our attention to consider who Jesus is and what a response of faith in him looks like. Rather than take the chapter in order, let's look at the central section first and then the examples of faith on either side.

From v11-17, who do the crowds think Jesus is?

Look at John's response to this in v18-20. Who is 'the one who is to come' that John has in mind? (You might find it helpful to remember that John was asked about the Messiah in 3:15-17)

How does Jesus' answer in v21-23 point to the answer? (you might like to remember what we read in Luke 4:18-19)

What does Jesus then say to the crowds about how he and John fit together in v24-35?

This is the massive claim at the centre of this chapter: that Jesus is the Messiah, the one who would come to bring the kingdom of God. Either side of this massive claim, in 7:1-10 and 7:36-50, Luke shows us two surprising examples of faith in Jesus. Consider who are given as examples of faith and how their faith is demonstrated.

What is surprising about the response of faith in v1-10?

What is surprising about the response of faith in v36-50?

How does this whole chapter answer the question of the dinner guests in v49?

Responding in your world

TRUST:

Do you trust that Jesus is the one who has brought in the kingdom of God? When do you find it hard, 2000 years later, to trust that God's kingdom is a reality? How does this chapter contribute to Luke's stated purpose, "that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught"?

SAY:

DO:

PRAY:

How do the examples of the centurion and the sinful woman shape our approach to Jesus in prayer? How can you pray like them this coming week?

Luke 8:1-56 (Sunday March 29)

What Jesus has: power!

Reviewing the week

What have you found encouraging in your prayers this last week? What has been hard?

Reading the word

Read Luke 8:1-21

It might seem strange to say this, but v21 is probably the big idea of this chapter!

- How does this verse help us see the significance of the people mentioned in v1-3?

- How does v21 help us see the significance of v4-15?

- How does v21 help us make sense of v16-18?

- What do you find encouraging about v21? What do you find challenging?

It is one thing to put God's word into practice, but Jesus is pretty clearly suggesting that his words are God's word. After all, he's been proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God (v1), he then implies that what he is saying can be equated with the word of God (v10-11), and when he calls people to listen he's clearly calling them to listen to him, not just to pay attention generally (v18). But we've already seen in Luke Chapter 6 that Jesus' teaching calls for a radical shift in perspective and a radical change in behaviour. So, you'd want to be confident that he had the authority to back up his claim.

Read Luke 8:22-56.

How does Luke reinforce the authority of Jesus' words?

Beyond simply demonstrating his power, what else do these episodes teach us about Jesus?

Much as v21 spurs us to action, what do v25, 48 and 50 remind us is the foundation for obedience?

Responding in your world

TRUST:

Are there things that make you nervous about taking Jesus at his word? Are there situations where you find it hard to obey Jesus because you're not sure that he will come through for you? How can we encourage each other in light of this?

SAY:

DO:

It is clearly not enough to just hear, or read, Jesus' words. They need to be put into practice! Lest we look in the mirror of God's word and walk away and forget what we've seen, take time to review what you were challenged by from Luke 6:17-42. Where have you seen God help you grow in obedience? Where do you need to keep striving and praying for growth?

PRAY:

Luke 9:1-51 (Sunday April 5)

The penny drops - or does it?

Reviewing the week

'Trust and obey
for there's no other way
to be happy in Jesus
but to trust and obey'

John H. Sammis (1887), Public Domain

What are your reflections on these simple words?

Reading the word

How many phrases can you think of that we hear in the media and conversation that speak of the importance of self? For example, what can you add to a list that begins with self-esteem, self-affirming, self-expression ...

Read Luke 9:18-26

The question 'Who is this?' has come up again and again in Luke's Gospel so far. What is Peter's answer at this point? What does this mean? (You will find it helpful background to read the following: 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Psalm 2; Jeremiah 23:5-6)

With that in mind, what is so shocking about v21-22? What does this teach us about the kind of Messiah Jesus is?

In v23-26 Jesus makes a series of absolute statements about his disciples. 'Whoever wants to be my disciple *must* take up their cross *daily*...' This is not an option if you want to be a disciple of Jesus, so what does Jesus say that he requires of those who would be his disciples?

In light of this, discuss the following quote from John Stott:

To deny ourselves is to behave towards ourselves as Peter did towards Jesus when he denied him three times. The verb is the same (*aperneomai*). He disowned him, repudiated him, turned his back on him. Self-denial is not denying to ourselves luxuries such as chocolates, cakes, cigarettes and cocktails (though it may include this); it is actually denying or disowning ourselves, renouncing our supposed right to go our own way.

John Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 1986, page 279

This is a massive call!! From v24-26, why is it worth it?

Responding in your world

TRUST:

What do you think it looks like to really believe v24-25? Are there areas in your life that need to change because of these promises from Jesus?

SAY:

Take a moment to share with someone what it means for you that Jesus is the Messiah, and in particular, what does it mean for him to be *your* Messiah?

DO:

Are there areas of your life where you need to take action in denying yourself as you set Jesus on the throne of your life?

PRAY:

How would God have you pray in light of this passage?

Adoration: how are you prompted to respond in adoration of Jesus?

Confession: what do you need to confess before him?

Thanksgiving: dwell on the kindness of the Son of Man to subject himself to all that is described in v22.

Supplication: where do you need God's help to live in response to what we've read?

Notes & Prayer Points