

Preaching Through The Bible Michael Eaton

Luke's Gospel

Part 25 Jesus' School of Discipleship (6:12-49)

• *Jesus' ministry in Galilee – a second phase begins*

• *'Sermon on the Mount' – a block of teaching for disciples*

• *Material not recorded by Mark*

• *Jesus misunderstood by his family and rejected by the Pharisees*

1. Luke again emphasises Jesus' prayerfulness

• *Rearranges Mark's material – specially mentioning prayer on the mountain*

2. Jesus trains colleagues

The first phase of the Galilean ministry ^{☐1} came to a climax when Jesus became popular, and yet was in danger of being killed by the Pharisees ^{☐2}. This perhaps took place in the early part of AD 31. Jesus probably went to Passover in AD 31. About this time **a second phase of Jesus' Galilean ministry begins** ^{☐3}. It perhaps takes place in the middle of AD 31. (Some think the dates are three years earlier.) People came from all over the country to hear Jesus, from as far as Idumea in the south, from as far as Tyre and Sidon in the north ^{☐4}. At this point Jesus chooses a high hill among the hills to the north of the sea of Galilee. It is a less populated area and He goes there to pray ^{☐5}, to choose twelve disciples ^{☐6}, to heal the sicknesses of His followers ^{☐7}, and to teach them ^{☐8}. Jesus' ministry to His disciples takes place at a lower part of the mountain where there is a level place. There He preaches the famous 'Sermon on the Mount'. It was perhaps a block of teaching which lasted a day or was conducted over several days rather than a single meeting with a single sermon.

The material of Luke 6:20–8:3 has no parallel in Mark's Gospel. The first part tells of the Sermon on the Mount ^{☐1}. Then Jesus heals a centurion's servant ^{☐2}, raises a widow's son from the dead ^{☐3}, answers a question from John the Baptist ^{☐4} and is anointed by one of His followers ^{☐5}.

At this time Jesus is misunderstood by His family ^{☐1} and is denounced by the Pharisees as having demonic power (Mark 3:22–30). Luke mentions a tour of Galilee made at this time ^{☐2}. Because of His rejection by the Pharisees Jesus teaches in parables ^{☐3}. Four miracles take place ^{☐4}. Mark mentions Jesus' rejection at Nazareth (already told by Luke) which brings this period to an end. All of this probably took place in middle AD 31. If the feast of John 5:1 is the feast of tabernacles, then Jesus went to Jerusalem in October AD 31 for at least eight days, and the events of John 5:1–47 took place there.

When He got back from Jerusalem there was a further period of Galilean ministry; we shall consider it in a later chapter.

1. **Luke again emphasises Jesus' prayerfulness** ^{☐1}. We have seen that Luke constantly emphasises the value of prayer. He told us how Zacharias' prayer was unexpectedly answered ^{☐2}, and how Anna was called to a life of prayer ^{☐3}. He has shown us how Jesus was given the Holy Spirit as He was praying ^{☐4}, and how Jesus' fame in Galilee made Him turn to prayer ^{☐5}. Now again we see how Jesus feels the need of prayer.

In Luke 6:12–19, Luke still has Mark's Gospel in mind but he does a little rearranging. Luke specially mentions Jesus' praying on the mountain ^{☐1}. Then he mentions the choosing of the twelve ^{☐2} and the multitudes that were following Jesus at that time ^{☐3}. (Mark mentions the multitudes before he mentions the choosing of the Twelve; see Mark 3:7–12; 3:13–19a.)

2. **Jesus trains colleagues** ^{☐1}. Jesus has a vision for the future. He is not simply keeping a small ministry moving, He has plans to reach an entire nation and more. When a ministry is to expand it will be necessary for it to increase the number of workers. Jesus is led by God

^{☐1} Mark 1:14–3:6; Luke 4:14–6:11

^{☐2} Mark 3:6; Luke 6:11

^{☐3} Mark 3:7–6:6; Luke 6:12–8:56

^{☐4} Mark 3:7–12
^{☐5} 6:12

^{☐6} Mark 3:13–19; Luke 6:12–16

^{☐7} 6:17–19
^{☐8} 6:20–49

^{☐1} 6: 6:20– 49

^{☐2} 7:1–10

^{☐3} 7:11–17

^{☐4} 7:18–35

^{☐5} 7:36–50

^{☐1} Mark 3:19b-21

^{☐2} 8:1–3

^{☐3} Mark 41–35; Luke 8:5–21

^{☐4} Mark 4:35–5:43; Luke 8:22–56

^{☐1} 6:12

^{☐2} 1:8

^{☐3} 2:36-40

^{☐4} 3:21-22

^{☐5} 5:16

^{☐1} 6:12

^{☐2} 6:13-16

^{☐3} 6:17-19

^{☐1} 6:13-16

• *Plans to reach the nations and beyond*

3. Jesus heals the sick

• *He brought His Disciples into a state of physical and mental peacefulness*

4. Jesus guides His disciples in the life of godliness

• *Lengthy teaching – the main points*

• *Practical guidance on matters that need special attention*

• *Jesus' objective – training to produce spiritual men living godly lives*

to choose these crucial twelve men who will be the leaders of the work in years to come and will assist in laying the foundations of the churches. He gives them a special name, 'apostles' (perhaps using the Hebrew word *shaliach* or its Aramaic equivalent).

3. **Jesus heals the sick** ^{☞1}. His ministry was a ministry of power, as well as of teaching. God is willing to meet the needs of our entire life. He wants workers who are fit in body and in mind, ready to serve Him. So Jesus heals the diseases of those who have come with Him to the hill country, and He releases them from the power of demons. Sometimes the body has to be attended to before we are ready for spiritual teaching. Luke records that before the famous 'Sermon on the Mount' He brought His Disciples into a state of physical and mental peacefulness.

4. **Jesus guides His disciples in the life of godliness** ^{☞1}. Jesus has now taken His disciples aside for a while. The famous 'Sermon on the Mount' is given at this point. It was actually given at a level piece of ground on the hillside ^{☞2}. It was obviously a very lengthy piece of teaching that must have taken at least all day, if not several days. Luke just gives a selection of some of its main points. (Matthew gives a fuller summary in Matthew 5:1–7:29.) Luke's selection includes 'beatitudes' (sayings beginning with 'Blessed...') and 'woes' ^{☞3}, an extract of Jesus' teaching about love ^{☞4}, and a non-judgemental attitude ^{☞5}, and he includes Jesus' appeal for obedience ^{☞6}.

What exactly is this 'Sermon on the Mount'? It is not a programme for social reform (Jesus is not talking to society at large or addressing the Jewish leaders). It is not an evangelistic sermon. Rather, it is a piece of practical guidance into the life of godliness focusing on matters that need special attention.

Jesus was concerned to train His disciples in the life of godliness. They are not simply managers of an organisation. They are not simply teachers in a school. They are leaders and pioneers in a programme of salvation. Jesus is a trainer of spiritual men who will carry on His work. Part of that training will be training in the life of godliness.

☞1 6:17

☞1 6:20-49

☞2 6:12,17

☞3 6:20-26

☞4 6:27-36

☞5 6:37-45

☞6 6:46-49

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