

The only thing that matters is that you are reading God's word regularly. While that is still true with this schedule, the goal with this one is to get a better understanding of the entire story of the bible. There is no substitute for reading God's word. Keep reading! My website is at <http://graceofourlord.wordpress.com>. I encourage you to get the actual reading plan I am currently following. You can get it from the same place I do - at [this link](#). They have some great guidance for the reading plan there as well, and they have it all in both PDF and in Kindle format!

August 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
(Week 31)	John 1	Luke 1	1 Luke 2	2 Matthew 3	3 Matthew 4	4
5 (Week 32)	6 Matthew 5	7 Matthew 6	8 Matthew 7	9 John 2	10 John 3	11
12 (Week 33)	13 John 4	14 Luke 6	15 Luke 7	16 Matthew 13	17 Matthew 15	18
19 (Week 34)	20 Mark 6	21 Matthew 16	22 Luke 9	23 Luke 10	24 Luke 15	25
26 (Week 35)	27 John 9	28 John 11	29 Mark 10	30 Mark 11	31 Luke 20	

August Week 2 (Week 33) Summary

John 4, Luke 6, Luke 7, Matthew 13, and Matthew 15- Click the chapter below to go to the ESV Bible passage for that chapter and read or listen.

[John 4](#) - In order to get to Galilee from Judea, one had to either go through Samaria or cross over the Jordan to go around it on the east side. A strict Jew would do the latter to avoid being defiled by setting foot on Samaritan soil. After the Assyrians captured Samaria, the Assyrian king brought foreigners from various places in to settle in 722 BC ([2 Kings 17:24](#)). Some Jews remained and intermarried with these foreigners, and the animosity between this mixed race of people and the Jews grew strong over time.

Jesus, however, had come to seek and save the lost and would naturally not avoid these people. As He approaches Jacob's well, verse 6 indicates His humanity by saying that He was weary from the journey. Jesus intentionally turns the subject of the conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well to her "husband" in verses 17-19. His thorough knowledge of her history is enough to convince her that He may be who He says He is in verse 26, when Jesus makes a rare admission that He is the Messiah. After she told others, many came from the town and believed by their own encounters with Jesus that He was the "Savior of the world" (verse 42).

When His disciples return in verse 31, Jesus gives them a lesson about sowing and reaping in the kingdom in verses 34-38. He points out that the sowers and reapers can rejoice together now, as new believers are brought into His kingdom.

Arriving at Cana in Galilee, he heals the son of an official from Capernaum that was dying, but does so from without going with him because the official believed. When the man returned, he asked the hour at which his son had started improving, and knew it was the same hour that Jesus had told him "your son will live." Note that verse 54 says that this was "the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee" - not that it was the second sign He had done.

Side note: There is an interesting about the area at Shechem and a picture of what is believed to be Jacob's well in [this article at Ferrell's Travel Blog](#).

[Luke 6](#) - Verses 1-5 have been used to link Biblical teaching to situation ethics, but this comes from a lack of understanding of the scriptures. The disciples in verse 1 plucked and ate the grain with their hands, not with a sickle. This was expressly allowed in the Law given in [Deuteronomy 23:24-25](#). But the Pharisees had made their own interpretation and decided it was the law, rather than God's word. Jesus challenged them to speak against David and his men eating the Bread of the Presence, or shewbread ([1 Samuel 21:1-6](#)) - which He said in verse 4 was unlawful. He settles the matter in verse 5, saying that He is "lord of the Sabbath," with the unstated conclusion that the Pharisees are not.

Verses 6-11 are another Sabbath encounter with the Pharisees, as Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. Knowing that they are waiting to see if He will heal the man with the withered hand, He poses the question of whether it was lawful to do harm or to do good on the Sabbath. They would not answer, but when he healed the man, they were angry. Notice that their malice and desire to do harm to Him blinds them to the fact that the miracles prove He is the son of God.

In verses 12-16, after spending all night in prayer, He chose the twelve apostles from his disciples. Verses 17-19 show the magnitude of the vast amounts of people He ministers to in the rest of this chapter. People from Tyre and Sidon would almost certainly be Gentiles.

Some believe that the rest of this chapter is just Luke's account of the Sermon on the Mount, but we must realize that similar sermons by the Lord would be taught at different times and to different crowds. Note that in verse 17, after having spent the night praying on the mountain, He "he came down with them and stood on a level place." This has resulted in people referring to

this as the Sermon on the Plain. In comparing the "blessed" and the "woes" in this sermon, Jesus is not saying that it is wrong to be rich or that the poor are more righteous. He is stating the poor and those less fortunate who are in His kingdom will have their reward, while those who may be rich but not part of the faithful already have their reward.

[Luke 7](#) - A centurion was a Roman soldier in charge of a hundred men. This one was a friend to the Jewish people (see verses 3-5). When Jesus went with the elders to go to heal the centurion's servant, he sent people to meet Jesus along the way, and told him not to trouble Himself. Verses 6-8 show his faith in Jesus was strong enough to believe that his servant would be healed simply by Jesus saying so. Jesus's statement in verse 9 "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith" foreshadows the welcoming of Gentiles into the kingdom.

His compassion for the widow whose son had died (his death would also mean economic hardship for her) causes him to bring her son back to life in front of a great crowd of people, including those carrying the body. Imagine the fear among them as he sat up and spoke! His fame grew even more as verse 17 says "this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country." As word spread back to John the Baptist, he sent two disciples to go and ask Jesus point-blank if He really was the Messiah. Apparently, even John was expecting a very different savior than this. After they witnessed Jesus healing numerous people (verse 21), he sent them back to him quoting from [Isaiah 35:5-6](#) and [61:1](#).

The woman whose sins He forgives in verses 36-50 is not Mary who anoints His feet before the crucifixion in [John 12:3-8](#). The Pharisee (who we learn in verse 40 is named Simon) had invited Jesus into his home to eat, and did not know that Jesus knew what he was thinking. He was convinced that Jesus could not be a "prophet," or else He would not be letting a known sinful woman like this touch Him. Jesus answers with a short parable and a question, and forgives the woman of her sins, prompting those at table to say in verse 49 "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"

[Matthew 13](#) – The Book of Matthew is considered by many to have five major discourses by Jesus. The first obviously was the Sermon on the Mount of chapters 5-7. The second was chapter 10 - the Messiah's preparation of His disciples for their mission. Chapter 13 is made up almost entirely of His parables. In fact, verse 34 says that He said nothing to the crowds on this occasion without a parable.

As Jesus sat beside the sea, crowds gathered and he got into a boat and sat to address them. Jesus first tells the parable of the sower in verses 3-9. We are not told about the chronology in the text, but most surmise that Jesus spoke all of the parables from the boat, and the explanation came later, after he went into the house in verse 36 (verse 34 seems to bear that out). When the disciples came to ask Him why He spoke to the people in parables, He quoted from [Isaiah 6:9-10](#) in verses 14-15, explaining that the difference between them (the disciples that want to learn) and the crowds (those that do not really want to understand, much less accept, the truth) is in their hearts. Those who do not understand and accept what He speaks of to them in plain speech, will never accept what He teaches in parables. This may be the point He made to Nicodemus in [John 3:12](#).

This is followed up by the explanation of the parable of the sower in verses 18-23, which is the key to understanding all of the parables. In this case, Jesus is the sower, but it applies to us as sowers as we teach others about the kingdom. It is up to the individual receiving the seeds to prepare their ground for their proper growth - to plow up the hard ground of their hearts ([Jeremiah 4:3-4](#)).

The parable of the weeds, or tares (verses 24-30), is like that of the net (verses 47-50), and refers to the fate of those who will not accept the truth. It is not our job to gather up the weeds, lest we uproot the righteous as well. The parables of the mustard seed (verses 31-32) and leaven (verse 33) show that the kingdom may be starting very small, but will grow into something very large. The parables of the hidden treasure (verse 44) and the pearl of great value (verses 45-46) demonstrate that those who truly understand the value of our place in His kingdom will be willing to give up anything in this ordinary world in order to attain it. The prophecy He cites in verse 35 is [Psalm 78:2](#). Verse 52 means that true disciples who study God's word will use their training for the kingdom to teach others, using knowledge of the old law with the new.

One might wonder why verses 53-58 are in this chapter, but all of God's word teaches something. The rejection of Jesus in His own hometown resulted in Him not wasting much time there (verse 58). It illustrates very well the points that He made in the earlier parts of the chapter. The hearts of the people there were hardened to the truth and they could not see. The ground of their hearts needed plowing as well.

Side note: Though the scriptures do not tell us the location at the Sea of Galilee that Jesus gave the Parable of the Sower, there is a cove that has been suggested as that location. Interesting studies have been conducted on the acoustics at that cove; and a great article with photos and a sound file made in a test is in [this article at BilbePlaces.com](#).

[Matthew 15](#) - The Pharisees and scribes that came from Jerusalem in verse 1 would have been of considerable import and influence during the day. They accuse the disciples (and therefore, Jesus) of breaking the tradition of the elders by eating without having washed their hands. This was not a matter of hygiene on their part, but is a good example of the extra-biblical customs they were fond of imposing upon people - this one is supposed to have been based on the ritual purity commandments for priests (i.e. [Exodus 30:17-21](#)), extending them to apply to people and situations beyond that of God's word .

The response from Jesus is to throw it right back at them. The Pharisees were breaking the commandment of God - not the traditions of elders! By making a claim that their money or property was vowed as a gift to God, they would exclude it from their wealth in consideration of their parents in need, and be excused for not caring for them by their own interpretation of the law - and who knows if they ever actually would give the possessions anyway, even after they died? Jesus does not mince any words in exposing this hypocrisy (verse 7-9). The prophecy quoted in verses 8-9 is from [Isaiah 29:13](#). The disciples then point out the obvious to Jesus - that the Pharisees were offended by what He had said. But Jesus is not surprised by the opposition of the Pharisees, and tells the disciples that they are intentionally blind to the gospel. Verses 10-20 then are His lesson to them that it is not what goes into the body that corrupts us, but what comes from our hearts.

The conversation with the Canaanite woman in verses 21-28 seems to be harsh toward her, but we must realize that Jesus came to the regions of Tyre and Sidon (verse 21) not by accident - He would be expecting encounters with Gentiles! And her faith did pass the test, and her daughter was healed. Remember that He had already healed the Centurion's servant.

He then goes on by the Sea of Galilee healing still more in verses 29-31. Verses 32-39 detail the feeding of the four thousand - this was just the number of men, not including women and children. This numeration, as well as that of the feeding of the five thousand could be an indication of what sort of size crowds the scripture speaks of in other places. All were fed and satisfied with just seven loaves of bread and a few fish, and the seven baskets of food gathered up afterward seems to represent more than what they even started with.