

Curiosity ...

Have you read the all-time best-selling series of books that is out?
Are you curious?

The author is world famous. The style is varied and engaging. The story spans many centuries, dating back to the creation of the world and also reaching forward to reveal the secrets of mankind's destiny. At the same time, every page is curiously relevant to readers young and old, poor and wealthy, whole or broken. Have you read this series yet? Be forewarned – once you start them, you'll get addicted, and you'll never be the same. *Are you curious?*

In this week's sermon, we explored a brief part of book #42 in the series. Would you like to keep reading to see what happens next? *Are you curious?*

"But I know what happens. I've heard it a hundred times before. And besides, it's not really true, anyway – it's just religious folklore."

So let me ask you something – do you depend on others to tell you what God says? In this day and age, do you trust others to relay God's messages to you or filter them for you? Did you know that God wants you to come to Him directly? He invites you to do this by reading and thinking about the series of 66 books he wrote for you, which is called the Bible. If you're willing, turn the page and read ahead in the book you started today. If you do, God will reward you with unexpected blessings.

Are you curious?



Luke

*A Weekly Study Guide
Oriented Toward
Next Week's Sermon
Passage*

These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon as inserts in the church bulletin and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>. Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact studieditor@southshorebaptist.com

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Luke Bible Study #80 (for the April 15 sermon passage)

1. Read the following Bible passage and use the chart below to note your observations and any questions you have. What catches your attention? What do you notice about God? What do you learn? What does it make you wonder about?

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p style="text-align: center;">Luke 20:45 – 21:4</p> <p>⁴⁵ While all the people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, ⁴⁶ "Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. ⁴⁷ They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely."</p> <p>^{21:1} As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. ² He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. ³ "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. ⁴ All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."</p>	

Dig Deeper:

2. Take a closer look at the first three verses, observing more carefully what is being said and what it means.
 - a. In verses 46-47, what exactly is Jesus finding fault with about the 'teachers of the law'? What were they doing wrong?
 - b. In your life, when have you encountered people like the "teachers of the law" described in this passage? How did it make you feel?
 - c. Have you personally experienced such hypocrisy in church settings? How does God feel about such behavior? (to gain more insight, turn back in your Bible and read Luke 12:1-4)
 - d. In what ways have you exhibited aspects of these same behaviors in your own conduct? How do you think God wants you to act instead?
 - e. What do you learn about God from his response to their behavior (i.e. stating that they would be punished severely)?

What's Real? Ever get confused or frustrated by “flowing robes” and “puffed up religiousness”? Would you like to know the real, simple truth that Jesus came to tell us about? Well, here it is, in simple terms.

The Real, Simple Truth

God is real! – and He loves you.

The Bible is true! – It's the book God wrote to help us begin to understand Him and love Him and see how He wants us to live and love one another and love Him.

Sin is real! – We are all plagued by it, and it separates us from God.

Judgment is real! – God will judge each of us and hold us accountable for everything we do.

Jesus is real! – He truly is God's one and only son, and He died for you and accepted the judgment and punishment that you deserve, and thereby is able to restore your relationship with God.

Salvation is real! – If you admit and turn from your sin, believe in Christ, and yield control of your life to Him, He will transform your life and give you eternal life.

Heaven is real! – It's an awesome place where all believers will go to be with God and in His family forever.

Life is real! – God made you and put you here on earth to live a life that pleases Him and to build your character to prepare you for heaven.

The Holy Spirit is real! – He is God. He lives within each saved believer and he guides us and helps us see God, hear from God, and serve God.

Prayer is real! – You can talk to God and He hears you. You can share your hurts, your desires, your joys, your needs – and He responds as a Father who loves you.

God is real! – and He loves you!

3. Another form of pretentiousness Jesus dealt with in the second part of our study passage (i.e. Luke 21:1-4) was the giving of gifts.

a. How does Jesus regard this widow's gift? What about it was so praiseworthy?

[If you'd like to explore another example of generosity despite poverty, read about the Macedonians in 2 Corinthians 8:1-15.]

b. How did her gift compare with that of the wealthy? What do you think Jesus was implying about the wealthy givers?

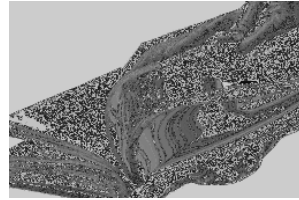
c. Take a few minutes to explore some of the Bible's teaching about giving. Read Proverbs 3:9-10, Luke 18:18-30, and 2 Cor 9:6-11. How would you summarize the Bible's teaching about giving?

d. When have you received a gift from someone who had very little? Or perhaps heard about someone giving such a gift? How'd it feel?

e. What does this passage say to you about your own generosity? In what ways would God affirm your giving? Are there any aspects of your giving that you think He might not be pleased with?

Hungry for more?

Here are three next steps you might take to continue your journey toward knowing God and hearing what He has to say to you:



I. Come back next Sunday to our regular weekly service (8:30am or 11:00am) and to hear a sermon which will specifically delve into this same passage (Luke 20:45 – 21:4), helping you to understand it more thoroughly. Our sermon series is progressing through the book of Luke one passage at a time. We also pass out a Bible study like this one each week, giving you the opportunity to regularly explore first hand what God's Word has to say, and then have your understanding enriched via the following Sunday's sermon. We hope you'll be back.

II. Consider visiting one of our small group Bible studies, which meet weekly or bi-weekly to discuss these Luke studies while also enjoying friendship (and, if you choose the right group, some really good food!). A couple choices are:

Wednesday Evening, 6:30 – 8:00pm
at the church, led by Drew King

Friday Evening, 7:30pm at the Ling's home
2 Autumn Circle, Hingham (directions: 781-749-8848)

Saturday Morning (Men Only), 7:00 – 8:30am
at the church, led by Clay Graham

Sunday Evening (Women Only), 6:45 – 8:15pm
at the Barra's home, 191 Summer Street, Hingham
(directions: 781-741-4511)

[There is also a Small Groups brochure in the church foyer with information about more groups.]

III. Simply keep reading the Bible. Find a time each day to read a few paragraphs or a few pages and to continue to listen to God's Word. You might continue reading the last few chapters of Luke, and then flow right into the gospel of John, where you'll get a great glimpse of who Jesus was, how he lived and loved those around him, and why he came.