

ST LUKE'S CORE VALUES



Bible Studies on St Luke's Core Values

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Introduction

Most organisations have a set of core values. These are the guiding principles that direct their behaviour and action. Core values can help people know what course of action to take so that they stay true to meeting their goals.

As a Bible based church we have sought to describe our core values that arise out of God's word. These core values will help direct and guide the plans and decisions made at every level of life and ministry at St. Luke's. It has been said that if you aim at nothing then you are sure to hit it. It is hoped that these core values will help us be the church that God would have us be.

You will find our core values outlined at the end of each study.

Living Relationship With Jesus

Mark 8:31-38

Getting Started

1. What would you list as the four most important features of a disciple of Jesus in Australia today? Why?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Investigate Mark 8:31-38

2. Why does Peter rebuke Jesus? (v. 31)

3. Why does Jesus rebuke Peter? (v. 33)

4. How does Jesus describe one of his disciples? (v. 34)

5. What is at stake for those who want to “gain the world” rather than follow Jesus?

6. What does Jesus warn against in verse 38?

Thinking it through

7. How do the following Old Testament passages help us understand Jesus words that the Son of Man must suffer many things? How might this encourage us to follow Jesus?

- Daniel 7:13-14

- Isaiah 53:3-5, 10

8. What do you think that it means for disciples to:

“deny themselves”

“take up their cross”

“follow Jesus”

9. What do you think Jesus’ warning in verse 38 teaches us about Christian discipleship?

10. What can we do to make sure that we will not be ashamed of Jesus and his words?

Prayer Points

We encourage genuine commitment to Jesus Christ as our King and Saviour. We are grateful for his death on our behalf and seek to live our lives under his rule as our risen King. A genuine living relationship to Christ is strengthened through regular Bible reading, prayer and the weekly gathering with the church family. Genuine commitment to Jesus will result in radical living with the priorities we set, the choices we make and the things that we do.

The Centrality Of God's Word

1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

Getting Started

1. List the different possible ways that people could approach the Bible.

Investigate 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

2. Why does Paul give thanks to God? (v. 13)
3. How does Paul describe the activity of God's word in v. 13?
4. What difference did the word of God make to their life? (vv. 14-15)
5. What threat to ministry does Paul identify in verses 15b-16? (see also 1 Thess. 2:1-2)
6. What do the following verses teach us about the word of God?

Matthew 4:4

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Hebrews 4:12-13

Thinking it through

7. What might hinder Christians from speaking the word of God to others?

8. A Canadian study over five years concluded that, “Churches that are theologically conservative with beliefs based on a literal interpretation of the Bible grow faster than those with a liberal orientation, according to a five-year academic study.” Why do you think this might be?

9. Australian commentator Barney Zwartz describes the Bible’s positive legacy in our civic and communal values. He then says, “If the Bible’s influence fades into memory, we will all be much worse off.” How do you think that church and community at large will be “worse off” if the Bible’s influence fades from memory?

10. What positive steps can we take to advocate and advance the Bible’s influence in our church and our community at large?

Prayer Points

We regard the Bible as the Word of God. As the Word of God, the Bible shapes and directs our life and ministry as a church. We value Biblical preaching and teaching that is faithful, authoritative, applicable and persuasive.

Dependent Prayer

Ephesians 6:10-20

Getting Started

1. How do you think the Lord's Prayer should shape our prayer life?

Investigate Ephesians 6:10-20

2. How does verses 11-12 help us understand the context of Paul's encouragement to pray?

3. What is Paul's central concern for Christians and the church in this passage? (vv. 11, 13, 14)

4. How might the "sword of the Spirit" mentioned in verse 17 help us to understand what Paul means by "pray in the Spirit"?

5. Paul offers a comprehensive vision for our prayer life. List the aspects of a Christian prayer life in verse 18 and describe what that might look like in practice. (Hint: look for the word "all")

- 1.

- 2.

- 3.

- 4.

6. In verse 19 what does Paul ask prayer for? (see also 1 Cor. 2:3-5)

Thinking it through

7. How does Paul’s instruction in verses 10-17 differ from the popular message to “toughen up”?

8. How might Paul’s prayer request be an encouragement to us as we make our stand for the sake of the gospel in this world?

9. What dampens or encourages our prayer life?

Dampens prayer life	Encourages prayer life

10. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12. What priorities can we learn from Paul’s prayer for the Thessalonians for our own prayer life?

Prayer Points

We recognise that God rules over all things and that all of our efforts and plans depend on Him alone and so we call on God to do His good will amongst us.

Effective Evangelism

2 Corinthians 5:10-6:2

Getting Started

1. What do you think makes for effective personal evangelism and church evangelism in Australia today?

Investigate 2 Corinthians 5:10-6:2

2. What does Paul remind Christians of in verse 10? How might this shape our approach to personal evangelism?

3. How does Paul describe his evangelistic efforts in verse 11? (see also 2 Cor 4:1-3)

4. What motivates Paul's effort to persuade people with the gospel? (v. 14)

5. What result is Paul looking for through his evangelistic efforts? (v. 15)

6. From verses 18-21 what do we learn about the ministry of reconciliation?

7. Why is the ministry of reconciliation so urgent? (vv. 1-2)

Thinking it through

8. What impact should the final judgement of all people, including Christians, have in our evangelistic efforts?

9. How does the knowledge of Christ's love challenge our self conscious concerns in sharing the gospel with others?

10. What difference does being an ambassador of Christ make to our evangelistic efforts?

11. How do you think Paul would present the gospel in our multi faith society were truth has become "what is right for you"?

Prayer Points

We appreciate deliberate and thoughtful attempts to speak to others about God's offer of forgiveness and a fresh start at life made available through Jesus' death and resurrection. We value the commitment of every member of the church family in this responsibility both individually and corporately. Seeing people saved from God's coming wrath and judgement matters to God, so it matters to us.

Meet Together

1 John 1:5-2:2, Acts 20:28-31, Colossians 3:12-17

Getting Started

1. What would it take to stop you from going to church one Sunday? Why?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> wild horses | <input type="checkbox"/> too cold |
| <input type="checkbox"/> threatening storm | <input type="checkbox"/> too hot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> too tired from Saturday night | <input type="checkbox"/> a family commitment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> no Lord's Supper | <input type="checkbox"/> a difficult person |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good show on TV | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |

Investigate 1 John 1:5-2:2

2. What do we gain from “walking in the light” (vv. 6-7)

3. How does the blood of Jesus impact our life together? (vv. 7-9)

Investigate Acts 20:28-31

4. To whom does the church belong?

5. How much did the church cost God?

Investigate Colossians 3:12-17

6. How will verses 12-13 help our relationships at church?

7. What place does the “peace of Christ” and the “word of Christ” have in our life together as the church of God? (vv. 15-17)

- peace of Christ:

- word of Christ:

Thinking it through

8. What threatens or weakens our fellowship as the church?

9. What sort of effort do other people need to make in order to have fellowship with you?

10. Why are our church gatherings valuable?

Prayer Points

Our God is gathering to himself a saved people who trust in Jesus as their Saviour and King. We value the real and practical expression of this when a person commits themselves to a local congregation of Christian people.

Ministry Partnership

Romans 12:1-13

Getting Started

1. What factors make for a great partnerships?

Investigate Romans 12:1-13

2. How does Paul describe Christian worship in verse 1? How does this relate to the notion of “church worship”?

3. How are we to resist conforming to the pattern of this world? (v. 2)

4. In v. 3 what is Paul seeking to avoid in the life of the church? How might that be evident in the life of the church?

5. How are we to regard others in our church family? (vv. 4-5)

6. What does verse 6-8 teach us about the gifts that God has given to his people?

Thinking it through

7. How are we tempted to conform to the pattern of our world when we are aware of the ministry needs in our church?

8. How does Paul's teaching on gifts help us in our relationships with one another? (see also 1 Cor 12:1-11)

9. How does a God given talent or ability become a gift of God for the church?

10. Paul says to "think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.". Scale yourself between 1 (needs some work) and 5 (I've got this all worked out) for the following challenges in this passage.

Serving the Lord	needs work	1	2	3	4	5	all sorted
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Devotion to others	needs work	1	2	3	4	5	all sorted
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Faithfulness in prayer	needs work	1	2	3	4	5	all sorted
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Generous with others	needs work	1	2	3	4	5	all sorted
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Hospitality	needs work	1	2	3	4	5	all sorted
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11. What practical steps can we take to work on these above areas in our lives?

Prayer Points

We regard every member of St. Luke's as a minister whom God has gifted for the building up of His church. This involves active participation, sacrificial support and our best efforts in gospel ministry.

Servant Leadership

Hebrews 13:7-19

Getting Started

1. What do you think are top three characteristics or competencies for both lay and ordained leadership in the church? Why?

Investigate Hebrews 13:7-19

2. How are the Christian leaders described in verse 7? How might this shape your expectations of a Christian leader? (See Heb. 2:1)

3. What responsibility do Christian believers bear for their own instruction? (v. 9)

4. How are we to relate to our leaders? (v. 17) How might verse 7 shape our understanding of this instruction?

5. What reasons are given for the way we relate to our leaders? (v. 17)

6. What do the following verses teach us about our leaders?

Matt 20:26-28

1 Peter 5:1-4

1 Tim 5:17-20

1 Thes 5:12-13

Thinking it through

7. How might being led in the church be different from being led in a business or a nation?

8. How might the world's pattern for leadership shape and influence our expectations of Christian leadership?

9. How does the following statement from the National Church Life Survey help or hinder the Bible's understanding of Christian leadership?

“Christian leadership strives to inspire and empower, requiring a balance of moving forward with vision as well as encouraging other peoples' gifts. Inspiring leaders can move people towards action. Empowering leaders will help people find their place as part of the body of Christ. These leaders offer a sense of direction, inspiring and encouraging people to join together to make a difference.”

Prayer Points

We recognise that God has given leaders to the local church for the good of all. The leadership, be they appointed or elected has the responsibility to make decisions and take action to advance the mission and vision of St. Luke's. The congregations have the responsibility to follow and support that leadership. We value those who equip us for ministry through teaching and preaching the Bible, through modelling and through training. Our model of leadership is that offered by Christ himself who came to serve rather than be served.

Mutual Loving Relationships

1 John 3:11-24

Getting Started

1. What impact do you think culture's preoccupation with personal rights has on personal relationships?

Investigate 1 John 3:11-24

2. How does John 13:34 help us to understand the command to love one another?

3. How does Genesis 4:2b-5 help explain the actions of Cain?

4. How can we tell a fake Christian from the real one according to verses 13-15?

5. What attitude is John trying to deal with in vv. 17-18?

6. How might our hearts condemn us in the face of meeting the needs of our brothers and sister in Christ?

7. How does verses 23-24 help us know if we are real of fake Christians?

Thinking it through

8. In our life as a church, what do you think it would mean to love in such a way that we lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters? How might that be expressed in practice?

9. What makes it harder or easier to love your church family like this?

Harder	Easier

10. How would your church family at St. Luke’s know that they are loved by you?

Prayer Points

We hope that our relationships towards one another will be marked by mutual love towards one another. This requires each member to be other person centred, rather than self centred. It will require such things as repentance and forgiveness, patience, truth and time. By this all people will know that we are disciples of Christ.

Generous Support

1 Corinthians 9:7-14

Getting Started

1. “In essence, money is a tangible form of power. It represents the stored ability to do things.” How can money be a tangible form of power in your life?

Investigate 1 Corinthians 9:3-14

2. What is the answer to Paul’s rhetorical questions in verse 4-5?

3. What is the answer to Paul’s rhetorical questions in verse 7?

4. How does verses 9-10 advance the point that he has been making in his rhetorical questions?

5. What sort of right is Paul describing in verses 11-12a?

6. Why does Paul relinquish his right to financial support from the Corinthians? (v. 12b)

7. What do the following verses have to teach us about our responsibilities and the financial impact they have on us?

Passage	Responsibility	Financial Impact
1 Tim 5:3-4		
Rom 13:6-7		
1 Tim 5:17-18		

Thinking it through

8. What do these rhetorical questions teach us about the financial support of gospel ministry?

9. Why do you think that churches often struggle financially?

10. What would be a good way to assess your generous support for gospel ministry at church?

11. What things work against us being faithful in meeting our obligation to our church family?

Prayer Points

That God funds ministry through the generosity of his people. That we have to be responsible stewards of the resources he has given us and financially supporting gospel ministry is one of the ways that we partner together in the cause of the gospel.

Christ Centred Unity

Ephesians 4:1-16

Getting Started

1. List the different possible ways that a church might find unity?

Investigate Ephesians 4:1-16

2. Our calling includes the blessing of salvation for both Jew and Gentile under the rule of Christ. How does verses 2-3 help our understanding of a life worthy of the calling you have received?

3. In your own words describe each of the 'ones' mentioned in verses 4-6 that emphasise our Christian unity?

"body" (see also Eph. 2:14-16)

"Spirit" (see also Eph. 2:17-18)

"hope" (see also Eph. 1:18)

"Lord" (see also Eph. 1:15)

"faith" (see also Eph. 1:4-8)

"baptism" (see also Rom 6:4)

"God and Father" (see also Eph. 1:3)

4. What has Christ given to each of us to achieve unity? (vv. 7-8)

5. How are the gifts mentioned in verse 11 contribute to the unity of the church? (vv. 12-15)

6. What is God's expectation for each member of the church? (v. 16)

Thinking it through

7. How might a person promote unity or disunity in the church?

Unity	Disunity

8. How would you describe St. Luke's in terms of childish or mature? Why?

9. If Paul was writing a letter to St. Luke's calling on us to live a life worthy of our calling, which characteristics would he highlight for us and why?

10. How might the difference between people in society at large threaten our unity as a church?

11. What can you do to encourage and contribute to St. Luke's growth into maturity as a church?

Prayer Points

While there is much that can divide us, but as a church we are committed to seeking unity in the gospel that saves people from every nation, language tribe and people.

Gospel Confidence

Matthew 16:13-23

Getting Started

1. What practical efforts can we make to “grow” St. Luke’s?

Investigate Matthew 16:13-23

2. Read Matthew 13:54-58. How do the people of Nazareth fail to understand Jesus? What was the result?

3. How does Daniel 7:13-14 help us understand the issue in verses 13-14?

4. What is Jesus claiming in verse 15?

5. What is Peter’s answer to the question and how did he come to know the answer? (vv. 16-17)

6. Who will build the church and how? (v. 18)

7. How does Jesus' teaching in verse 21 conflict with the identity of Jesus in verses 13-16?

8. How does Peter become a "stumbling block" so quickly after his God given answer in verses 16-17? (v. 22-23)

Thinking it through

9. How might 1 Cor 3:10-11 help us understand "the rock" on which Jesus will build his church?

10. What confidence can we have in Jesus' commitment to build his church in an increasingly secular culture?

Prayer Points

That as we look to the future we can have confidence that as the gospel is proclaimed and taught to believer and unbeliever alike, Christ will build his church. To this end we continue to work with God's plan to build his church