

Simply Study: The Christmas Story, Week 1, Sessions 1-5

Simply Study:
The Christmas Story, Luke 1
One book at a time.
One day at a time.



Are you ready to
simply study God's
Word?

Merry Christmas and welcome to Luke 1, Sessions 1-5 of Simply Study! We pray you will be blessed by the time you simply study God's Word. During this busy last week before Christmas God asks us magnify and rejoice in Him as we wait for His deliverance. This updated link contains the rest of the Bible study sessions for week 1, plus sessions one and two.

Simply Study daily Bible study contains the following simple pieces:

- **Simply read** Repeated readings will help you meditate on truths of God's word.
- **Simply mark** Let loose your creative side as you simply mark the daily scripture reading passage.
- **Simply answer** Look back in the scripture to answer questions about the text.
- **Simply reflect** Consider what God is speaking to your heart and record your thoughts.
- **Simply act** Become a doer of the word as you decide how

to apply what you have learned.

Note: This Simply Study Bible study will only cover the Christmas chapters of the book of Luke, not the whole book.

[Simply Study Week 1, Sessions 1-5](#)

by

Mary Kane

Merry Christmas!

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Lines and spaces

straight lines



I was with my hubby and oldest son on vacay in northern Michigan. We were kayaking the Victoria River. It's such a twisty-turny kind of river, a surprise at every bend (we won't even mention the horse flies). However, one of the male

members of our little crew began complaining about the constant turns and how difficult it makes the navigation. *Imagine how easy our journey would be if this river were a straight line.*

easy is just easy

Straight line journeys are easy, but easy is boring. So predictable. So vanilla. You can see ahead forever and ever. No surprises. No thrills. So straight line, flat line. No heart required. Where is the faith?

I will open rivers in desolate heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys;

I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. Isaiah 41:18

We need a few twists and turns in our God journey. Challenges to keep us pushing and striving for more Jesus. Doesn't every great adventure contain a few nail-biter moments when we aren't sure if we're to make it? I want to travel a few wide open rivers through desolate heights with God before He leads me to some still waters. The shortest distance between two points is a straight line, but I'll take the wild ride. Yes, please.

wild spaces



View from my cabin on
Little Traverse Lake.

Our vacay cottage is on the east end of Little Traverse Lake. Part of the lake is developed, sprinkled with cabins and cottages, but the east side is more remote with many wild spaces. Cedars, birches, and hemlocks line the rugged shoreline. These Eden-like wild spaces are teeming with wildlife. Otters gobbling crayfish and clams, Pileated Woodpeckers chiseling homes and niches, loons diving and calling. Life and growth flourish in the solitude of the wild space.

One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. Luke 6:12

we need some wild spaces

In our structured scheduled urban lives, we need some wild spaces. Wild spaces are chunks of time set aside to meet with God in a quiet place. Maybe your *wild space* is a secluded corner of a city park, a hideaway nook in your favorite cafe, or your porch swing on your backyard patio. The important thing is you meet with God daily. Bring your Bible, pen and journal and forget your phone. Be ready to meet with God and listen as He uses wild spaces to to challenge and deepen your walk with Him.

Where is your favorite wild space?

Leave me a comment below. I'd love to chat with you!

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because you did



“We thought we could go because you did,”

an older lady shouted to me above the traffic.

I was making a dash against the light on a street in my small Midwest town. I turned my head and smiled a feeble apology to my fellow pedestrian as she dutifully scurried back to the curb, pulling her companion, who was in a wheel chair. Thankfully, they made it back to the curb before the pick-up truck rushed through the intersection. I beat the truck (I was in heels and a dress) and hopped up on the sidewalk. Safe.

I was on my way to Veni’s Candy Shop to get some dark chocolate salted caramel turtles (yes, please). Since it was my lunch hour, I didn’t have time to waste. I needed to be back to school before my Bible class arrived. So, I ignored the *do not walk sign* and made a break for it.

I usually follow the rules.

Usually. If they make sense.

If they don't inconvenience me too much.

What does it matter as long as nobody gets hurt, right?

But my decision to break the rules and dash across the street almost caused someone to get hurt. While I was able to beat the traffic, the older lady and her friend were not. My candy dash could have ended in tragedy.

⁹ But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. 1 Corinthians 8:9

While I was waiting for my sweets to be weighed and bagged, the Holy Spirit brought to mind my Bible class who had been entrusted to my care for a semester. What were they learning from their teacher? Where was I leading them? Were my actions giving them permission to do something that wasn't glorifying to God? Were they saying "We thought we could go because you went." ?

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren knowing that we shall be held to a stricter judgment." James 3:1

All of us are leaders.

What we do affects others, and our example influences others for good or evil. Someone is watching you to see how you will handle yourself in the sticky situation you are facing. Where will you lead them? Where will they go because of where you went?

Have you had a similar experience? Leave me a comment below, I'd love to hear from you!

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spit mud sweat blood

“Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind.”

A play on words. Saw and *blind*. Sight and dark. When we are *blind*, the God of Light sees us. He looks into our darkness and sees our blindness.

2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

3 Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. 4 I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.

SPIT MUD

SWEAT BLOOD

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

Day and night. Dark and Light. The Light of the World speaks into the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome Him.

6 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. 7 And He said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So he went

and washed, and came back seeing.

Sent. Went. Washed. Sight.

Do you notice what Jesus uses to heal the blind man? Dirt and spit.

Two of the dirtiest elements on earth.

In the hands of our Savior, dirt and spit bring healing and curing and hope and life. Who does that? Who takes dirt and spit and works miracles? The same God who brings water from a rock, bread from the wilderness, and life from death. The God who makes the limpers into leapers, the stutterers into speakers, the famished into reapers, He does that.

That is how good how pure and clean and holy and powerful our God is. In His hands, dirt and spit are purified and powerfied by His holiness.

And we are healed.

God does the same for us. Vessels of clay made from the dust of Eden. The dirt of our sin mixes with the Living Water and we are mud in His hands. After He heals us, He sends us. From the pool of Sent to the lost of the world.

8 Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?"

9 Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him."

He said, "I am he."

10 Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"

11 He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight."

Spit and mud.

Sweat and blood.

Go, wash, and receive your healing from your Savior.

How has Jesus healed you? Please

leave me a comment. I'd love to hear from you.

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Spiritual Growth Mindset, Part Two



I've been talking and thinking about a spiritual growth mindset.

It's everywhere. What we think and how we think matters. God tells us in His word we are not to be con-formed to this world, but trans-formed by the renewing of our minds. We need to leave the fixed mindset which is motivated by fear and doubt, behind and live on the wild-side of faith aka Spiritual Growth Mindset.

A spiritual fixed mindset means scarcity. Same old same old.

A spiritual growth mindset is water-walking, giant-stalking, mountain-moving abundant kind of life. I want that. It's the kind of mindset that pleases God.

The lunch boy had it.

⁵ Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" ⁶ But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

⁷ Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."

⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, ⁹ "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"

¹⁰ Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. ¹¹ And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples^[a] to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost." ¹³ Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten." John 6:5-13

He wandered out into the wilderness with several thousand other people to hear some preaching. He overheard Jesus talking to His disciples about feeding the people. The

disciples were stuck in a fixed-mindset mode, so they gave nothing, not even offering the little they had. But the lunch boy had a faith that was as big as God. He took a risk and gave it all.

1 boy + 5 loaves + two fish + JESUS= 10,000 lunches. Talk about a spiritual growth mindset.

Spiritual fixed mindset says ***I can't.***

Spiritual growth mindset says ***God can.***

What do you have that you can give to Jesus? A little money? A little learning? A little house? A little talent? Take a chance, step out in faith and exercise a spiritual growth mindset and watch what God can do.

What do you think about a spiritual growth mindset?

Leave me a comment below, I'd love to hear from you!

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To read other posts in this series, please click on the links below!

[**Spiritual Fixed Mindset**](#)

[**Spiritual Growth Mindset \(Part 1\)**](#)