

# Grow in confidence – with Luke’s Gospel

*MATERIAL for Life Groups and for Discipleship Triplets*

## 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting **THEME: Be blessed!**

**Prepare** Pray for your meeting and read Luke 24:50-53

**20.00 – 20.05 Icebreaker to begin with:** Each of the Christian feasts has its comforting and joyful meaning for the Christian believer. If you think of the Lord’s ascension, how is this a blessing for us?

**20.05 – 20.10 Pray** Ask God for His Holy Spirit to speak to you through His Word today.

With the verses we study tonight, Luke’s Gospel ends. It mentions where and how the Lord ascended and what this resulted into for the Lord’s disciples. Whereas very recently they had had troubled and doubtful hearts, even when they saw Jesus, they would now be full of joy and praise, though they would no longer see Him. They now know that the Scriptures are completely reliable and are about Him. Now that His work on earth (suffer, die and rise) is accomplished, His work from heaven – work through His Spirit in them to proclaim repentance for the forgiveness of sins to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem - will soon start (see the book of Acts).

**20.10 – 20.35 Bible passage** Read Luke 24:50-53 twice

### **Verse 50a. The place of the ascension: not on mount Zion (Jerusalem), but near Bethany.**

The expression ‘to lead out’ is often connected with judgement that is upcoming. (Gen. 19:16, Ex. 20:2). Jerusalem, on Mount Zion, could look like a beautiful place for the Lord to ascend. But as the Lord led them out, this indicates judgement is upcoming. Though first, before judgement comes, Jerusalem will hear the Gospel preached (see Acts 2-7). As once Shiloh had been the place and then Jerusalem, it now seems that the Lord’s presence will no longer be bound to that place. (Jer. 7:4, Jer. 7:11-14). He led them out, literally ‘until near Bethany’ which means: on the Mount of Olives, until you could see Bethany (and could no longer see Jerusalem).

- What do you know about Bethany?  
[Bethany lit. means ‘house of affliction’.  
See: Matthew 21:17, compare with Luke 2:7 and with Luke 9:58  
See: Mark 14:3 See: John 12:1
- The place for the glorious fact of his ascension was near Bethany, not Jerusalem. What do we learn from this?

### **Verses 50b-51. The picture of the ascension: not cursing, but blessing.**

Jesus went to heaven, blessing his disciples. He was doing what Zechariah, in the beginning of Luke’s Gospel, was not able to do (Luke 1:22). The blessing was what was missing since Adam and Eve had sinned. Ever since the curse was on the world and on humanity, because God curses sin. However, the blessing was given and promised to Abraham and his offspring. Here we finally see the One, through Whom the blessing comes back! He has taken the curse for those who are His, so that they can be blessed and spread the blessing!

- What were probably the last words the disciples heard from Jesus? (See: Numbers 6:22-27)
- How can this be helpful for us?

### **Verses 52-53. The people witnessing the ascension: not lamenting, but joyfully praising.**

After each pilgrimage you would go home with the blessing of the priest, in order that you would live a blessed life and so that the nations around would see that and become curious about your God. (See Psalm 67). Here we see that the apostles are now able to continue with joy and praising God, though they no longer see Jesus. They know of their great High Priest, seated at God’s right hand, praying for them and blessing them.

- What strikes you in these verses?

## 20.35 – 20.50 Digging deeper: Be blessed!

We have spent a long time now in reading Luke's Gospel. It was written that we might grow in confidence (and joy). Take some moments of silence. Think back to the past time and also of what you learnt tonight. Could share one thing (of probably many more) that you have learnt (and do not want to forget)?

Take some minutes of silence and then share.

20.50 – 21.00 **End** Pray with each other. Thank God for what He has given you through the Bible studies.