

Please do not send this newsletter back to Crossroads.

“Since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.”

– Luke 1:3–4 (NIV)

The Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts are believed to have originated as one book written by a doctor named Luke, a disciple and friend of the apostle Paul. We don't know for certain the identity of the person named Theophilus to whom Luke was writing. Theophilus means “lover of God.” Theophilus might have been a specific person, or Luke might have been writing to all people who love God, including us.

Since the other books of the New Testament hadn't been written yet, Luke wanted to learn and share with others what happened in Jesus' ministry and what the first Christians did. He talked to people who were still alive and had been with Jesus when He was on earth.

This winter, we will be reading the Gospel of Luke. As you read, pay attention to how much Jesus prayed. You will see that the book of Luke focuses on the work of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' birth, baptism, and ministry. Luke also provides more details about the women who were with Jesus than the other three Gospels do.

Changing the Look of Your Lessons

Due to increasing mail restrictions in jails and prisons across the United States, delivering our lessons to students has become more challenging. As part of our efforts to work around these restrictions, you will notice a shift toward black-and-white covers on your lessons.

Instead of relying on an outside print house, we have begun printing black-and-white lesson booklets in our office. This change will benefit our ministry in several ways:

- It will allow us to serve a greater number of students with more efficiency.
- Black-and-white materials should improve our access to facilities with mail restrictions associated with colored ink.

Our primary reason for this is not to cut costs, but it will save some money.

As we continue to use up the lessons we have already printed in color, you may receive a mix of full-color and black-and-white lessons.

We realize it may be disappointing to see less color on your lessons, but rest assured that you will still receive full-color Christmas cards and twice-yearly issues of the *Threads* arts journal (if allowed by your facility).

Coming Soon to a Tablet Near You!

If your facility does not yet have tablet computers, there is a good chance it may receive them soon. Many organizations produce excellent digital content that is made available on tablets. Crossroads has been working hard this past year to provide free content on tablets in prisons and jails. We have just launched a video series

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called *Doing Time*. These videos include interviews with men and women who have served time in prison or have had family members in prison. They are designed to help you make the most of your time and get ready to rebuild your life after incarceration.

The *Doing Time* videos will be available on some cable channels, on tablets provided by several different providers, and on the Pando App from the ministry God Behind Bars. These videos are enjoyable to watch and full of great ideas you can apply to your life right away. They can provide a great opportunity to share your faith with others in your living unit. Each video also informs viewers how to sign up as a Crossroads student. Check them out and let us know what you think—we always love feedback from our students!

Spread the Word

Close to 25,000 men and women in jails and prisons in the United States sign up for the Crossroads mentorship program each year. More than half of those join Crossroads because of a recommendation from another student. If allowed by your facility, we have included two Spread the Word enrollment cards for you to hand out to others who might benefit from Crossroads. The effort that our students have made to share the Gospel through Crossroads is making a big difference in thousands of lives. Ask God to show you who might be interested in studying the Bible through Crossroads. Consider giving the Spread the Word cards as Christmas gifts—give the gift of Jesus!

Please do not fill out a card for someone else—they will need to fill it out on their own and then send it to us.

A Message from Crossroads' President, Joe Pryor

At Crossroads, we are mindful that it is particularly difficult to be away from family and friends at this special time of year. I want to assure you that God's presence is always with you. The birth of Jesus ushered in the opportunity for each of us to be in an inseparable relationship with God, making us joint heirs with Christ and giving us access to His throne of grace, which is sufficient to meet all our needs. Know that we are praying for you and your family, and we offer you Christ-centered relationships as you continue your studies as a Crossroads student. May God grant you the comfort of His presence this season.

Crossroads Run: Hope in Motion Update

On September 30, we held our first-ever Crossroads run. Some joined in person in Holland, MI, while many more joined us virtually, including some of our students! We loved hearing from many of you who dedicated time to run, walk, or pray. If you participated and would like a certificate of participation, please contact Robert Woldhuis at the Crossroads address found on the last page of this newsletter.

Fun Facts About Christmas

- Alabama was the first state to recognize Christmas as a legal holiday in 1836.
- Saint Nicholas, on whom Santa Claus is based, was a fourth-century bishop who gave his inheritance to the poor and rescued women from servitude. (He didn't wear a red suit.)
- The term "Xmas" was not created in an attempt to take Christ out of Christmas. In the 1100s, Christianity was spelled Xianity. X, the Greek letter *chi*, is the first letter in the Greek word for Christ. By 1551, the holiday was known as "Xtemmas," later shortened to Xmas.

Scripture Reading and Prayer Guide: The Gospel of Luke

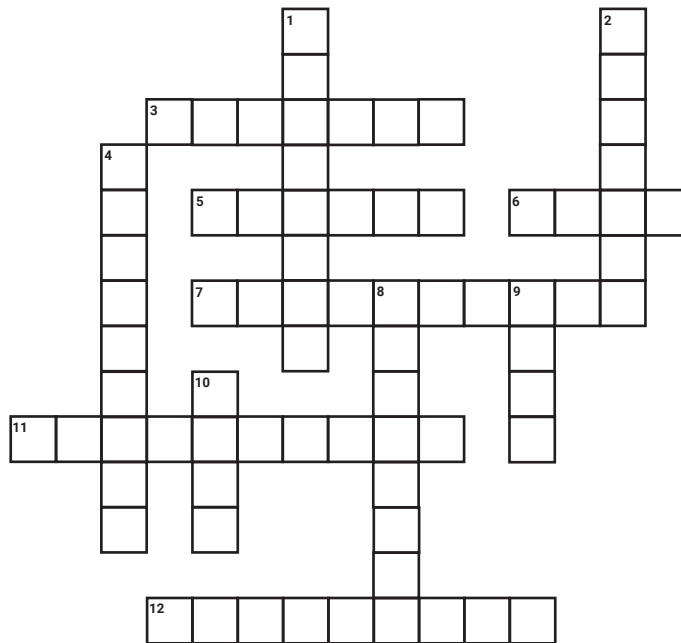
Date	Passage	Reading Topic	Prayer Focus
Dec. 1	Luke 1:1–25	God's promise to Zechariah	For a heart that trusts God's promises
Dec. 2	Luke 1:26–38	The birth of Jesus foretold	That your family will know and follow Jesus
Dec. 3	Luke 1:39–56	Mary visits Elizabeth	For your facility
Dec. 4	Luke 1:57–80	The birth of John the Baptist	For God's Spirit to live in you

Dec. 5	Luke 2:1–21	The birth of Jesus	For spiritual growth
Dec. 6	Luke 2:22–52	Jesus at the temple	For wisdom to understand God’s Word
Dec. 7	Luke 3:1–20	Repent and be baptized	Ask God to reveal His will for your life
Dec. 8	Luke 3:21–38	The baptism of Jesus	Thank God for sending His Son
Dec. 9	Luke 4:1–13	Jesus is tested in the wilderness	For strength to overcome temptations
Dec. 10	Luke 4:14–30	Jesus is rejected	For those who reject Jesus
Dec. 11	Luke 4:31–44	Jesus heals many	For physical healing for your loved ones
Dec. 12	Luke 5:1–32	Jesus calls His disciples	To accept discipline from Jesus
Dec. 13	Luke 5:33–6:11	The Sabbath	For times of rest and refreshment from God
Dec. 14	Luke 6:12–26	Blessings and woes	Thank God for giving us good gifts
Dec. 15	Luke 6:27–36	Love for enemies	For a heart that forgives your enemies
Dec. 16	Luke 6:37–49	Judging others	That you will not have a judging spirit
Dec. 17	Luke 7:1–17	The faith of the centurion	For increased faith
Dec. 18	Luke 7:18–35	Jesus sends John a message	For ears to hear God when He speaks to you
Dec. 19	Luke 7:36–50	Anointing by a sinful woman	For a chance to share the forgiveness of Christ
Dec. 20	Luke 8:1–21	Parable of the sower	For your heart to be filled with good soil
Dec. 21	Luke 8:22–56	Jesus calms the storm	For mental and spiritual calmness
Dec. 22	Luke 9:1–17	The ministry of the disciples	Ask God how you can serve Him today
Dec. 23	Luke 9:18–45	Jesus is the Messiah	For your mentor(s)
Dec. 24	Luke 9:46–62	The cost of discipleship	For willingness to follow God wholeheartedly
Dec. 25	Luke 10:1–24	Sending out the seventy-two	For spiritual leaders at your facility
Dec. 26	Luke 10:25–42	The good Samaritan	For the chance to show kindness to a stranger today
Dec. 27	Luke 11:1–28	Jesus teaches about prayer	For the Holy Spirit to help you in your prayer life
Dec. 28	Luke 11:29–54	The lamp of the body	To shine God’s light through your life
Dec. 29	Luke 12:1–21	Warnings and encouragements	For courage to acknowledge Jesus publicly
Dec. 30	Luke 12:22–48	Do not worry	For things that you are worrying about
Dec. 31	Luke 12:49–59	Not peace but division	For peace in your living unit
Jan. 1	Luke 13:1–35	Repentance	Recommit your life to God
Jan. 2	Luke 14:1–35	The great banquet	Thank God for salvation
Jan. 3	Luke 15:1–32	Three parables	To understand Jesus’ parables
Jan. 4	Luke 16:1–31	The shrewd manager	For wisdom in managing responsibilities
Jan. 5	Luke 17:1–19	Sin and faith	For humility
Jan. 6	Luke 17:20–37	The coming of the Kingdom	That God’s Spirit will move in your facility
Jan. 7	Luke 18:1–30	More parables	For a hunger to learn God’s Word
Jan. 8	Luke 18:31–43	Jesus predicts His death	Thank God for Jesus’ obedience to the cross
Jan. 9	Luke 19:1–27	Jesus and Zacchaeus	Ask God where you need to make amends
Jan. 10	Luke 19:28–48	Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem	Spend time worshiping God as your King
Jan. 11	Luke 20:1–47	The authority of Jesus questioned	For those in authority at your facility
Jan. 12	Luke 21:1–38	Signs of the end times	For strength to carry on in your faith
Jan. 13	Luke 22:1–46	The Last Supper	For strength to overcome challenges
Jan. 14	Luke 22:47–71	Jesus’ arrest and trial	For a tongue that speaks the truth
Jan. 15	Luke 23:1–43	The crucifixion	For God’s grace
Jan. 16	Luke 23:44–56	Jesus’ death and burial	To truly understand God’s love for you
Jan. 17	Luke 24:1–53	The resurrection and ascension	Thank God for all He is doing in your life

Crossword Puzzle: The Gospel of Luke

Use the clues below to fill in the words.

- Words can go across or down.
- Letters are shared where two words cross each other.
- Scripture quotations are taken from the NIV Bible.



DOWN

1. Jesus told the paralyzed man his sins were _____. (Luke 5:20)
2. Jesus said to love these people. (Luke 6:35)
4. Joseph and Mary took Jesus here to present Him to the Lord. (Luke 2:22)
8. During what festival did Jesus meet with the teachers of the law? (Luke 2:41–48)
9. This tax collector held a banquet for Jesus. (Luke 5:29)
10. Jesus said His mother and brothers are those who _____ God's word and put it into practice. (Luke 8:21)

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3. The name of the angel that appeared to both John's father and Mary. (Luke 1:19 and 1:26)
5. When John rebuked Herod for marrying his brother's wife, Herod put John in _____. (Luke 3:19–20)
6. Jesus raised a widow's son from the dead here. (Luke 7:11–14)
7. To whom did Luke write his Gospel? (Luke 1:3)
11. Jesus was tempted here by the devil. (Luke 4:1–2)
12. An angel told him he would have a son that he was to name John. (Luke 1:11–12)

From the Operations Department

- Please don't send *Just for Students* or the crossword puzzles back to Crossroads. They are yours to keep!
- If you move to a new facility or go home and want to continue your lessons, please let us know. To continue studying from home, please wait until you are living there to send us a note with the address.
- We will send the next *Just for Students* newsletter to you in March.



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