



# **STORIES OF LIFE!**

**The Gospel of Luke**

## **Changing Your Story**

**Luke 3:21-38**

**Message #10 of 50 – S784**

**Sermon given on March 25, 2018**



**Sunday Morning Service**

**Pastor Rick Lancaster**

# Changing Your Story

**Luke 3:21-38**

## Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 3**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- Throughout this series through the gospel of Luke, I have been saying that life is a story – a story that God is writing – Jesus is the main character – you are the pen in God’s hand
- Let’s be real for a second – have you ever wanted a different story for your life?
- All of us, at some time in our life, thinks about what it would be like if our lives were different
- We might imagine different circumstances or different relationships
- We might imagine something different about ourselves that would make our lives better
- Most of what we see advertised has that very reality in mind
- They are trying to sell you something to change your life – to make your life different and therefore better
- Sadly, most of those things only address the externals of life
- One good example of that is diet plans
- This is something I have been struggling with
- Over the last 10 years, my weight has been creeping up
- At the beginning of this year I was close to 50 pounds overweight
- It has been affecting my health and my quality of life
- We have tried lots of things, and sometimes they work for a little while
- For as long as I can remember, my doctor has been telling me to eat right, to get regular exercise, and to lose weight
- I literally hate having to think about what I am eating, I would rather do anything than exercise, and I didn’t concern myself with how I looked because I was already with the most beautiful woman I can imagine being with

- God brought me to a place of extreme conviction earlier this year about all that
- He showed me that my attitude was disrespectful to Kelly and then later He showed how my attitude was disrespectful to Him
- My life needed to change – and that change needed to happen in my heart and mind
- We are going to look at an event that changed the course of Christ’s life, and ultimately changed the course of human history
- And through this event, with the Spirit’s help I hope to share with you some things to help you to change your story for the better
- Let’s pray and then look at those things
- **Pray**

### Teaching

- **Changing Your Story**
- We are in Luke 3 – looked at the account of John the Baptist and his message
- Then something happens that John doesn’t expect
- **Luke 3:21a**
- Turn to **Matthew 3**
- John is baptizing people as a spiritual response to a message calling them to repent from living how they wanted to, calling them to live for God, show that decision by being baptized
- So important was this event that all four gospel writers describe it
- Luke just says that it happened, Matthew includes a couple more details
- **Matthew 3:13-14**
- Earlier John said, someone greater than I, not worthy to untie his sandals
- John is acknowledging the sinless perfection of Christ
- In John’s mind, Christ should be baptizing him
- It would be like me receiving a call asking me to do the memorial service for Billy Graham
- Jesus is sinless, He has nothing to repent of, doesn’t need a baptism of repentance

- **Matthew 3:15**
- ‘fulfill all righteousness’ – it was the perfectly right thing to do – Why?
- Jesus did not need to be baptized because of, or for Himself
- Lots of reasons have been put forward as to why Jesus was baptized
- To show support for John’s ministry
- To give us an example to follow
- To inaugurate His public ministry
- To confess sin on behalf of the nation – like Isaiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah
- To identify with the penitent people of God
- His baptism may have accomplished all those things, but they are not why he did it
- Jesus was baptized because that was what was right in the sight of God – because that was what God wanted Him to do – **He obeyed**
- The first step to changing your life – obey God
- Once I realized that my attitude was wrong, I started trying to figure out what the right attitude should be
- And then looking for the steps of obedience that would reflect that change in attitude
- Turn back to **Luke 3**
- Christ was baptized, not because He needed to but because the Father wanted Him to, and because we needed Him to
- He related Himself to us and gave us the example to follow of faith and obedience
- Then Christ does something else that plays a part in our changing our lives
- **Luke 3:21b**
- ‘...He prayed...’ What did He pray and why? Don’t know – He prayed
- As Jesus’ life is about to change – **He Prayed**
- If Jesus, God the Son, felt a need to pray, how important must it be for us to pray
- I imagine that he was talking to God about what he had just done by being baptized

- As God has been dealing with my bad attitudes, He and I have had lots of conversations
- If you want your life to change – start talking to God about it
- Three radical things happened after Jesus obeyed and prayed
- **Luke 3:21-22**
- After Jesus obeyed and prayed – **God responded**
- One of the great mysteries, at least in my own mind, is that God responds our obedience and prayer
- Turn to **Psalm 8**
- God is sovereign, He is greater than the whole universe and anything in it – He dwells in unapproachable light – He needs nothing – He is total and complete – perfect in every way
- And yet, He responds to humans
- King David wondered about that too
- **Psalm 8:3-5**
- Turn to **Malachi 3**
- Three things happened when Jesus obeyed and prayed
- First thing – **The heaven opened**
- Mark’s gospel uses a word that says it was torn open
- There is a fascinating phrase in the middle of a promise in the last book of the Old Testament
- **Malachi 3:8-12**
- Turn back to **Luke 3**
- ‘windows of heaven’ = source of blessing – opened through faith (or prayer) and obedience
- When we obey and pray, we eliminate any barriers between ourselves and the blessings God has for us
- Second thing that happened – **The Spirit descended**
- ‘in bodily form like a dove’ – rare that the Holy Spirit takes a form
- This is why Calvary Chapels often use a dove in their logo
- Spirit descended ‘upon’ Christ
- This symbolized and acknowledged a change in the life of Christ
- He was embarking on His ministry to draw all men to Himself by going to the cross and dying for the sins of the world

- To accomplish this work, He was going to need the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit
- All believers have the Holy Spirit in them **1 Corinthians 3:16**  
Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?
- It is the Holy Spirit that enables and empowers us to live the natural Christian life – loving God and serving others
- But sometimes the story that God is writing crosses over into the supernatural
- Nothing supernatural is described in Jesus’ life until after the Holy Spirit has come ‘upon’ Him
- One of the sad realities of the modern church, at least in America, is that we have mostly lost the belief that God does things that are supernatural
- When we obey and pray we remove any barriers that keep God from blessing us, and we make ourselves open to the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit working through us
- Third thing that happened when Jesus obeyed and prayed – **The Voice spoke**
- This is God the Father speaking audibly – likely that everyone there heard it
- Turn to **Psalm 2**
- God had already written the story of the life of Christ
- A careful study of the Old Testament reveals that story, written hundreds to thousands of years beforehand
- The Jews knew a Messiah was coming because the Scriptures told them so
- **Psalm 2:6-12**
- Turn to **Isaiah 42**
- ‘blessed are those who put their trust in Him’ (the Messiah)
- Another one
- **Isaiah 42:1-4**
- Turn back to **Luke 3**
- Jesus obeyed and prayed, and God was well pleased
- It pleases God when His children obey and pray

- As an aside – the whole Trinity was present at this event – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – three in one
- Luke closes this account with the insertion of a genealogy
- **Luke 3:23-38**
- There are some interesting things in this genealogy, especially if you compare it to the one in Matthew 1
- If you want to hear about some of those things come to the class starting at 11:30 in the Youth Room
- If you want your life to change – two simple things – obey and pray
- And then you can expect God to respond to you
- But I need to warn you – that doesn't mean that God is going to somehow supernaturally change your life
- I believe it was Warren Wiersbe that said, "God will not do by miracle what he expects you to do through obedience."
- God is not going to make me eat right, or exercise, or supernaturally cause me to lose weight
- Seek to obey God and get help from God's people if you need it
- Talk with God about your life and His will for your life
- And then you put your trust in Him and wait for Him to respond
- I am growing in my understanding that my unfaithfulness in the area of my health may be getting in the way of God doing other things in my life that I want to see Him do
- I am working to change my story by seeking to take better care of the temple of the Holy Spirit
- I don't know how this will change the story that God is writing in my life, but I believe that it will
- How would God like to change your story? What area of obedience is He bringing to your mind? For me it was my attitude about my health
- For you it might be forgiveness, or bitterness, or fear, or worry
- Maybe it is selfishness, or apathy, or anger, or maybe some sin
- The answer is the same – obey and pray
- I want God to do something supernatural in and through my life
- And that is my prayer for each of you
- Let's pray about that together
- **Pray!**