

group Bible Study – October 18, 2006

Read Luke chapters 10-13

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Luke 10-13: *Inspiration and Conflict*

Do you ever find the Bible unsettling? When I was in high school, my youth pastor consistently exhorted us to spend a half hour a day reading the Bible. He was right to encourage us in this, but somehow, in my mind I ended up making a strange connection: "If I read my Bible, I will feel close to God, and I will have a good day. If I do not read my Bible, I will feel far from God, and I will not have a good day." The trouble was, many times I would read the Bible expecting to feel good, and instead I would feel confused or sad. It seems Jesus' days had even more ups and downs than a high schooler growing up in suburban Colorado! Who would have thought?

In chapters 10-13, we find some really inspiring and comforting events: Jesus empowers seventy-two people to heal the sick and tell them the Kingdom of God is near (10:9); he relaxes at the home of his friends Martha and Mary (10:38-41); he teaches "The Lord's Prayer" (11:1-5); he reminds us not to worry, for God cares for us more than the birds and the lilies of the field (12:22-32).

Yet, at the same time, Jesus is accused of being in league with Satan (11:14-24); he pronounces judgment on people for the prophets who were killed years before; (11:46-53); people want to kill him (13:31); he says he has not come to bring peace, but division (12:49-53).

Study Questions (for individuals or groups):

- Jesus teaches a lot about the Kingdom of God. Who is he in the Kingdom? If he is the King of this Kingdom, why does he encounter so much conflict? Why does his power seem so broad in some areas (over sickness and disease) and so limited in others (over the Pharisees and other opponents)?
- How would you describe Jesus' "mood" in these chapters? Happy, sad, angry, edgy? How does our faith connect with our mood (if we are right with God, will we always feel happy and comfortable)?
- What do *you* do when you expect the Bible to lift you up, but instead it makes you confused or sad? Are you willing to keep digging?

Keep Digging! We are not the first to ask these questions! The Kingdom of God is near!