

## **Bible Study for Luke 21:1-4    God knows your context**

*You will get more out of this study if you read the verses and ponder the questions several times a day. You'll also get more out of the study if you discuss it with others. Jesus says where two or three are gathered in his name, he is there in the midst of them.*

### **Monday      Romans 8:28 (NRSV)**

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

*If you've been doing these Bible studies regularly, the first half of this week may be review. Our theme this week is "God knows your context" and we'll start by looking at verses on this topic that we've already seen.*

*Today's promise, from Romans, says that all things work for good for those who love God. Notice that Paul doesn't say that all things are good. The Bible is very clear that some events are evil, other events are the consequences of bad choices and other events are unfortunate. Many times things happen that God tried to warn people to avoid. But today's promise is that – no matter how foolish our choices, no matter how unlucky our steps, no matter how sinful our ways – all things will eventually resolve for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose.*

*What do you think about this promise?*

*What have you seen God turn into good in your life that didn't start out good?*

*What are you still waiting for God to transform?*

### **Tuesday      Jeremiah 29:7-11 (NRSV)**

Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the LORD. For thus says the LORD: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

*The people of Israel didn't want to hear Jeremiah's message. They had been captured and taken to a foreign land. They wanted to go home. But God told them through Jeremiah that such desires weren't possible. For two decades, they had ignored God's call to repent, and now their whole nation was in a 70-year time out. In Babylon.*

*Eventually God was going to bring blessing out of it, in line with Paul's promise in Romans 8:28. But Jeremiah told the people that they didn't have to wait that long. They could get the blessing early, where they were, even during their nation's time out. If they would accept their circumstances and seek to be a blessing in Babylon, they would be blessed. In fact, the more they sought to bless the city where they were captive, the more blessing they personally would accrue.*

*You may not like where you are. Sometimes you should do all you can to escape. But other times you should do all you can to bless the place where you find yourself, even if you don't like it.*

*What do you think God is saying to you about your situation?*

### **Wednesday Psalm 139:1-3 (NRSV)**

O LORD, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted

with all my ways.

*If someone were afraid of God, they might not like this psalm. Knowing that God knew everything about them could be frightening rather than comforting. Some people hearing this psalm may also need to hear that God's love for us is so wide and high and deep that it cannot be fathomed or measured. Ephesians 3:18-19 says, "I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."*

*How do you think God views you?*

*Are your views based on what the Bible says or something else?*

#### **Thursday** Luke 21:1-4 (NRSV)

[Jesus] looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on."

*God knows your context. Jesus called attention to the widow's tiny gift because of how much it represented of what she had. Otherwise his disciples wouldn't have valued it.*

*When you are almost out of patience, but give the little you have, God notices.*

*When you are almost out of time, but give the little you have to love your kids and be with them, God notices.*

*When you have almost no hope, but speak words of encouragement, God notices.*

*What so you have in abundance?*

*What are you low on?*

*What are you generous with?*

*Where in your life do you need to grow in generosity?*

#### **Friday** 2 Corinthians 8:-9-12 (NRSV)

You know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something— now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have.

*People often compare their gifts and abilities with others. Paul says that's a false standard. You need to compare your gifts and abilities, not with others, but with what you are capable of.*

*Are you giving what you're capable of at work? At home? At church? In other aspects of your life?*

#### **Saturday**

*What have you done this week because of Jesus?*

*What do you want to do next week because of Jesus?*

*What do you need help with?*

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