



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

LESSON 6 - STUDY QUESTIONS LUKE 7:1-50

DAY ONE

1. Which of the many sayings of Jesus which were shared in last week's lesson (Lesson 5, Chapter 6:12-49) most stands out in your memory? Share some comments on last week's lesson with your small group.

Read Luke 7:1-10

2a. According to verse 1, after Jesus had finished His "Sermon on the Plain," He entered Capernaum. Luke goes on to describe a Roman centurion and his slave. Record what Luke says about the slave in Verse 2.

NOTE: The title "centurion" refers to a Roman commanding officer and is derived from the number 100, representing the number of soldiers reporting to him. That number was reduced to 80 by the time of Jesus but the title "centurion" remained.

b. This Roman centurion was an interesting man. According to verse 3, what messengers did he send to Jesus and why would this be unusual?

3. When the Jewish elders came to Jesus, they appealed to Him earnestly on behalf of the centurion. In what manner did they describe the centurion (end of verse 4 and verse 5)?

4a. In verse 6 we read that while Jesus and the elders were walking toward the centurion's home they were met by other friends of the centurion. Read and record the end of verse 6 and verse 7,

and consider how amazing it was that these humble words were first spoken on behalf of a Roman officer to Our Lord. (Good memory verse)

b. The centurion then gave examples of the kind of authority he held over his soldiers and slaves by merely speaking a word, and that he understood that Jesus' words had great power. Finish the following "Power" statements of the Centurion from verse 8.

I say (to my soldier) Go!

I say (to my soldier) Come!

I say (to my slave) do this!

5. What was Jesus' reaction to the words of the centurion (verse 9) and what happened when the elders returned to the house of the centurion (verse 10)?

6. CONNECTION: In today's lesson Luke shows us the kind of faith we need to have in the Word of God. It was not necessary for Jesus to touch the centurion's slave in order to heal him. The centurion understood that the disease in the slave's body would obey Jesus' word just as his soldiers obeyed his words. Jesus was amazed by the great faith of the centurion. We, too, need to have a heart full of faith in the power and authority of God over every aspect of our lives even though we do not physically see him. Explain to your small group some of the ways in which God's supreme power is working in your life right now.

Read and record the last sentence of Matthew 17:20 and write a prayer today asking God for the faith of the centurion.

DAY TWO

Read Luke 7:11-17

7a. As today's lesson begins, Jesus, along with his disciples and a large crowd, had left Capernaum and gone to a town called Nain, in the Carmel mountains (verse 11). Find Nain and Capernaum on the map below, and record what was happening as Jesus approached the gate of Nain (verse 12).



b. What do you think would be the future of a woman of that time without a husband or a son?

8a. In what ways did Jesus react when he saw the widow who had just lost her son (verse 13)?

b. In verse 14 we read that Jesus came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And He said, "Young man I say to you, rise!" According to verse 15, what happened next?

9. Read 2 Kings 4:8-37 and briefly summarize the end of the beautiful story of a similar miracle performed by the great prophet Elisha in the town of Shunam, in the same mountain range.

10a. What was the reaction of all that were there and what did they say, glorifying God (verse 16)?

b. Fear can mean more than one emotion. Consider the use of the word "fear" in verse 16 and comment on what emotions you would feel if you witnessed such a miracle.

11. What happened as a result of performing the miracle of raising the son of the widow of Nain from the dead (verse 17)?

12. CONNECTION: The miracles that Jesus worked in Capernaum and Nain continued to build on His reputation as a great prophet of God's kingdom who healed Jew and Gentile, rich and poor. Jesus' healing of the centurion's slave showed that God's kingdom of love extended beyond the Jewish people. Raising the widow's son showed His care and compassion for the needy. God had commanded His people in Old Testament scripture. Old and New Testaments both command us to care for those who most need it, and yet both the Jewish culture of that time and our own culture today often predicate that we keep "undesirables" at arm's length. Think of a time when you or someone you know made an effort to assist someone, a "social outcast" or someone on the fringe of society. What blessings resulted?

Read and record Psalm 68:5, and begin your prayer today that we may all be more aware of God's love for those in need, and our responsibility to imitate His love.

NOTE: Pope Paul VI stated "The Church directs her attention to these "new" poor – the handicapped, the maladjusted, the old, various groups on the fringe of society – in order to recognize them, help them, and defend their place and dignity in a society hardened by competition and the attractiveness of success." The Navarre Bible, page 85.

DAY THREE

Read Luke 7:18-23

13. As today's lesson begins, we learn that John the Baptist had received reports from his disciples regarding all the things that Jesus had done. Remember that John was imprisoned (Luke 3:18-20) by Herod Antipas because John had spoken out against Herod's evil ways. What did John tell two of his disciples to ask of Jesus (verse 19)?

14. What was John asking his disciples to confirm and what might be some reasons he would want to do this?

15. In verse 20, Luke tells us that when John's men came to Jesus, they asked Him if He is the One to come, or if they should wait for another. From verse 21 we learn that they had arrived in time to see some wondrous things. What did they see?

16a. How does Jesus respond to their question (verse 22)?

b. Through His miracles, Jesus is fulfilling the messianic prophecies of Isaiah from the Old Testament. Jesus has driven out unclean spirits, healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law, healed the man with the withered hand and many others. Read and record a few of the beautiful prophecies in Isaiah 35:5-6.

17. Jesus ended his response to John's messengers with verse 23. Read and record it.

NOTE: The USCCB states that this beatitude is pronounced on the person who recognizes Jesus' true identity in spite of previous expectations of what the "one who is to come" would be like. (United States Council of Catholic Bishops, 723)

18. CONNECTION: John's disciples might have been jealous of Jesus' popularity or they might have expected a different kind of Messiah, one more like a conquering king. But with the simple

statement in verse 23, "blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me," Jesus asks John's disciples (and us) to accept Him unconditionally. Think about how you came to believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Did you always have a strong faith, or did you have to overcome previous expectations for your faith to "come alive?"

Read and record [John 6:29](#) and begin your prayer today asking God to continue to strengthen you in faith.

DAY FOUR

Read Luke 7:24-30

19. When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to praise John the Baptist. He first addressed the expectations of the people about John. In verses 24-27 He asked the crowd three times what they expected to see when they went out to find John the Baptist. Complete verses 24 and 25 with the answers Jesus provided:

Verse 24: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at?"

Verse 25: "What then did you go out to see?"

20a. The third question that Jesus asked the crowd leads them to the correct conclusion about John. Complete Jesus' question to the crowd from verse 26:

"What then did you go out to see?"

b. Jesus continued by quoting [Malachi 3:1](#) saying, "This is the one about whom it is written ..." Record the prophecy from verse 27.

21. Jesus continued his praise of John saying "I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John." John was the greatest New Testament prophet because he was chosen by God to prepare the way for the Messiah and to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom during Christ's lifetime. Nevertheless, he lived under the Old Covenant rather than receiving the grace Christ earned for us through His death and resurrection. Thus those who are "the least" in the New Covenant, in Christ's divine kingdom, are greater than John. Read and record the final phrase in verse 28.

22. In verse 29 Luke provided an aside, that "all the people who heard this, including the tax collectors, acknowledged the justice of God," meaning they had accepted John's message of repentance. What does the last phrase in verse 29 tell you about the crowd?

23. Today's lesson ends with a criticism of those who chose to reject John's message. Read and record verse 30.

24. CONNECTION: How blessed was John the Baptist to be so praised by the Savior of the world! And yet while Jesus was praising him, John sat in the dark prison of Herod Antipas. In fact, his testimony as the herald of Christ was completed with his own death by decapitation. In this passage Jesus praised John and yet did not reach out to save him. Just as Christ would suffer and die, so John would suffer and die, and so too will we. Our faith teaches us the redemptive message of Christ's suffering. Share some thoughts with your small group about how you are able to accept and unite your suffering with that of Christ, and even praise God for it!

Read and record 1 Peter 5:10 and write a prayer today asking God to help you offer your suffering for His glorification and the blessing of mankind.

DAY FIVE

Read Luke 7:31-39

25. As today's lesson begins, Jesus continued to preach. He began by posing this question: "To what then will I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like?" How did He answer His own question (verse 32)?

26. In verse 32 Jesus compared the people of His generation to children in the marketplace who chose to complain no matter what game was suggested. In verses 33 and 34, He goes on to say that these "children" (His generation) have also rejected both John the Baptist and Himself (the

Son of Man). Record verse 35, which ends on a positive note acknowledging that those who love God are wise.

27. Verse 36 takes us to another time in which one of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him. What did Jesus do?

28a. A woman of the city who was a sinner, having learned that Jesus was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. According to verse 38, what did she do?

b. There are three other beautiful accounts of women who anoint the head or feet of Jesus with expensive perfumed oils. Read the following accounts in Matthew 26:6-7, Mark 14:3 and John 12:1-3 and note some similarities and differences. Some scholars believe that the woman with the alabaster jar in Luke's account is Mary Magdalene.

29. What did the Pharisee, who had invited Jesus to dinner, say when he saw the woman's lavish gesture (verse 39)?

30. CONNECTION: In today's lesson we see that Jesus, dining in the home of Simon the Pharisee, was lovingly attended to by a "woman sinner" who broke open an alabaster jar of fragrant oil to wash Jesus' feet and wipe them with her hair. Rather than admire the woman's lavish gesture of penitence and reverence, Simon judges her and silently criticizes Jesus for failing to avoid the "sinner." Jesus will deal with him in tomorrow's lesson, but for today, consider Simon's judgment of the woman with the alabaster jar as well as his judgment of Jesus for His acceptance of her courtesies. We, too, can be quick to judge others based on what we may have heard about them, or on first impressions. Think of a time when you may have judged someone for the wrong reasons, and later realized your mistake. What did you learn from this, and how did it affect how you assess those you meet?

Read and record James 4:12, and begin your prayer today asking God to help you see others with HIS eyes.

NOTE: St. J. Escriva said in *The Way*, "Of what little worth are the judgments of men! Don't judge without sifting your judgment in prayer." (p.87, Navarre Bible, St. Luke)

DAY SIX

Read Luke 7:40-50

31. As today's lesson begins, Jesus was still at the dinner table with Simon and his guests. Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." Simon responded, "Teacher, speak." Briefly summarize the story of the two creditors that Jesus gave to Simon in verses 41-43.

32a. Jesus continued by directing Simon's attention to the woman. How did He compare her actions against those of His host in verse 44?

b. How did Jesus continue the comparison in verses 45-46?

NOTE: Simon apparently had not offered the common courtesies to Jesus that hosts were expected to give to counteract the heat and dust of the day (these included the washing of the guests' feet, greeting the guest with a kiss, and anointing with fragrance).

33a. Jesus then applied the parable of the two debtors to the sinful woman. He showed the connection between forgiveness and love. Because the woman loved Jesus much, her sins were forgiven, and because she recognized that her sins were forgiven, she showed great love. Record Jesus' first sentence from verse 47.

b. Jesus next applied the parable of the two debtors to a very different kind of debtor, "who was forgiven little." This debtor had a different reaction. According to the second sentence of verse 47, what love does he feel?

34a. Then Jesus told the woman her sins were forgiven (verse 48). What was the reaction from those at the table with Jesus (verse 49)?

b. For what reason do you think they would question Jesus' right to forgive sins?

35. Jesus' attention was on the sinful woman rather than on the Pharisee or the others at the table. What did He say to her (verse 50)?

36. CONNECTION: Father James Gilhooley calls the Gospel of Luke "the Gospel of Forgiveness." Isn't it amazing that Our Lord appreciated the sinful woman's great love and immediately forgave her sins? We do not have to be perfect to be loved by God. We simply need to love and believe in Him as this woman did, and acknowledge our sinfulness. Like the debtor, the greater our sins, the greater our forgiveness can be! Consider how much we need forgiveness and what forgiveness means to you, and in what ways it causes you to show your love to Our Lord. Share some thoughts with your small group.

"Go in peace" are words that we hear at the end of Mass. Meditate on the true meaning of those words now, remembering that our faith has indeed saved us, and that after Holy Eucharist we are, like the woman with the alabaster jar, being sent forth to begin again, in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

After completing this lesson, read pages 47-53 in the *The Gospel According to Luke* by Michael F. Patella, O.S.B. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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