

THE GOSPEL OF *Luke*



Week 9: Jesus, The Compassionate Savior

Introduction:

So far, Luke has placed most of the emphasis in his gospel on Jesus' power and status. He is the Son of God, the Lord of the Sabbath, and the judge of all mankind. All of chapter 7 occurs during Jesus' Year of Popularity, after the Year of Obscurity and before the Year of Opposition. Also, the events of the entire chapter occur at Capernaum and the surrounding area in Galilee, away from the growing center of opposition in Jerusalem. Without all of the challenges from other leaders, we get a closer look at Jesus' heart. Not only is He the one who will save the world, but He is also the one who is always looking to mercifully restore His people in every way.

Note: As you discuss questions in your groups or reflect on them by yourself, keep in mind that the goal is not to get all the answers right. Many of us will not know the answers, and that is okay! The goal is to interact with God's Word and give genuine thought to it. If you struggle to even guess a possible answer, that is okay too! The pastors will provide the answers after your discussion so you can know and record them on your study guide.

Questions:

Read Luke 7:1-10

The centurion was a Roman military commander over 100 soldiers. But he faced something beyond his ability: a paralyzed, sick and dying beloved servant. At the end of his rope, he sought supernatural help from the only one who could give it: Jesus.

1. We too have faced something beyond our ability: a pandemic. To what extent have you/people sought supernatural help from Jesus?

Answer:

2. The centurion sent to Jesus first some elders of the Jews (vs.3-5) and then some friends (vs.6-8). How does their approach differ?

Answer:

3. Vs.9 Jesus marveled at him and his faith. The amazement of Jesus is only mentioned here (because of humble trust) and a Nazareth (Mk.6:6 because of unbelief). Only twice does Jesus commend great faith: here and the Canaanite women (Mt.15:28), both of whom were Gentiles/non-Jews. In what ways is that striking?

Answer:

4. Vs. 6-7 The centurion knew his limits. He didn't order, demand or threaten Jesus, knowing he didn't have authority over Jesus. Nor did he claim that he deserved Jesus' help because of all that he had done for the Jews. Note also his trust in the ability and authority of Jesus' words. In your breakout groups, discuss what we can learn from this regarding our prayers

Answer:

Read Luke 7:11-17

Nain was 25 miles from Capernaum and 6 miles southeast of Nazareth.

5. Describe the plight of a widow whose husband and now only son died.

Answer:

6. At the head of one crowd was the Lord of life; at the head of the other crowd was a victim of death. But the people didn't know that yet. This is the first of three instances of Jesus' raising someone from death (Jairus's daughter, Lk.8:40-56; Lazarus, Jn.11:38-44). God had raised the dead through Elijah (widow's son at Zarephath, 1 Kings 17:17-24) and Elisha (Shunamite's son, 2 Kings 4:32-33; note Nain was near Shunem). How might that have been significant to the Jews?

Answer:

7. Vs.13 Jesus' "heart went out to her" is a word/phrase that is used only to designate the compassion of God or Christ. (The one exception is the compassion of the Good Samaritan). In your breakout groups, discuss the value and significance of God's compassion to you.

Answer:

Read Luke 7:18-35

8. Why in vs.19 does John the believer (Jn.1:29) question/doubt? In what kind of situations do you struggle with questions/doubts about what God is up to in your life?

Answer:

9. Vs.22-23 Jesus points to the evidence, which is fulfillment of the OT messianic prophecies (Is.29:18-21; 35:5-6; 61:1). Why is it of such value to have our faith build on facts?

Note: Vs.27 Jesus quotes Mal.3:1, which not only refers to its fulfillment in John the Baptist, but also implicitly declares that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is discipling the people.

Answer:

10. Vs.28- John the Baptist belonged to the age of the old covenant, which was preparatory to Christ. The least NT saint has a higher privilege in Christ than John. In what ways do we have a higher privilege?

Answer:

11. Vs.30 notes that the religious leaders rejected God's purpose for their lives. In your breakout groups, discuss God's purpose for your lives.

Answer:

Read Luke 7:36-50

12. The only thing that we know about Simon is what is in this Bible reading: he was a true Pharisee who omitted common forms of politeness to his guest. Though the reason for his invitation is not stated, the context suggests that he wanted to have a good look at Jesus in order to confirm his derogatory opinion of this famous rabbi. Have you ever found your judgment clouded by bias (e.g. the child is the usual instigator)? No wonder God so highly values justice (and righteousness).

Answer:

13. Vs.38 The sinful woman “wet his [Jesus’] feet with tears... wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.” (The only recorded kissing of Jesus is this woman and Judas.) What does this indicate about her?

Answer:

14. Vs.47 “He who has been forgiven little loves little.” Does this mean that you should go out and sin a lot so that you can love Jesus a lot for forgiveness? If not, then what is the point?

Answer:

Closing Thought:

The compassionate Savior cares provides for a faith-filled centurion, grieving widow, questioning John the Baptist, repentant sinner, and us.