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Bible Study on Luke Chapter 7 - Overview

This chapter teaches us faith, compassion, humility, repentance, and forgiveness are at the heart of Jesus. Throughout the chapter, Jesus interacts with individuals who society considered outsiders. The text contrasts their deep humility and faith with the pride and skepticism of the religious establishment.

There are four powerful encounters that highlight Jesus' authority over sickness, death and sin, while demonstrating that faith and God's grace extends to all people.

Main themes in Luke Chapter 7:

~The Centurion's faith in Jesus (vs. 1-10)

~Jesus raises up the dead son of the widow of Nain (vs. 11-17)

~John the Baptist sends messengers to question Jesus (vs. 18-23)

~John the Baptist was a great prophet (vs. 24-35)

~A sinful woman is forgiven by Jesus (vs. 36-50)

Centurions Faith in Jesus (Verses 1-10)

Scripture

7 Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. ² And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. ³ So when he heard about Jesus, he sent the elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. ⁴ And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, ⁵ "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue."

⁶ Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. ⁷ Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁸ For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does *it*."

⁹ When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" ¹⁰ And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well ^[a] who had been sick.

Key point: The extraordinary, humble faith of the Roman centurion.

In all of the gospel accounts we only see records of Jesus marveling in faith or lack of faith in two accounts of the bible, (Mark 6:6a) and (Luke 7:9). This makes us aware of how important our faith in God is!

Jesus raises the son of the widow of Nain Verse (Verses 11-17)

¹¹ Now it happened, the day after, *that* He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. ¹² And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, **“Do not weep.”** ¹⁴ Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried *him* stood still. And He said, **“Young man, I say to you, arise.”** ¹⁵ So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother.

¹⁶ Then fear ^[a] came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has risen up among us”; and, “God has visited His people.” ¹⁷ And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

Key Point: Jesus’s deep compassion for the widow’s sorrow.

Jesus had compassion yes, because her only son died, but also her livelihood and ability to live and survive had been taken away. Jesus wanted the widowed woman to continue to live with the support of her son.

John the Baptist sent Messengers to Question Jesus Verses 18-35

Verse 18-35 is broken down into three parts:

1. John's Doubt and Jesus' Proof

- **The Question verse 18-20:** John the Baptist is imprisoned by Herod Antipas. He likely expected a Messiah who would bring fiery judgment and overthrow oppressors. Because Jesus was instead offering a gentle, healing ministry, John sent his disciples to ask: *"Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?"*
- **The Response verse 22-23:** Rather than scolding John for his lack of faith, Jesus tells the messengers to report what they see: the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised. This fulfills Old Testament prophecies (Isaiah 35:5-6 and Isaiah 61:1 Jesus' ministry), proving His Messianic identity through actions rather than words.

****In the previous verse 17 there was the report about the miracles that Jesus was performing that went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.***

¹⁸ Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. ¹⁹ And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to ^[a] Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or ^[b] do we look for another?"

²⁰ When the men had come to Him, they said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' " ²¹ And that very hour He cured many of ^[c] infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

²² Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that *the* blind see, *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed, *the* deaf hear, *the* dead are raised, *the* poor have the gospel preached to them. ²³ And blessed is *he* who is not ^[a]offended because of Me.”

Keypoint: Let's take all our questions to God and trust His answer.

Like John the Baptist, sometimes we may be disappointed or discouraged waiting for God to help us because we know he can!! Some may be wondering if God is going to do something to get me out of this circumstance or situation. Some of us may be struggling in our faith journey.

2. The Praise of John the Baptist (vs 24-28)

After John's messengers leave, Jesus defends and honors John. Jesus approves of John's ministry. He asks the crowds what they expected to see when they went to the wilderness—a weak person swayed by the wind (a reed) or a pampered elite in a king's palace (vs 24-25) Jesus declares John to be far more than a prophet (vs. 26); he is the ultimate messenger sent to prepare the way for the Messiah. John was unique among the prophets because he was sent to prepare the hearts of the people for the immediate disclosure of their Messiah.

²⁴ When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵ But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is *he* of whom it is written:

'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before You.'

²⁸ For I say to you, among those born of women there is ^[a]not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

3. Finally The Parable of the Fickle Crowd (vs 29-35)

Jesus uses a metaphor to describe the critical, hard-hearted people of His generation. The Pharisees rejected John the Baptist for being too austere or strict (they called him demon-possessed) and rejected Jesus for being too accessible and eating with sinners (they called him a glutton and a drunkard), (Verse 33-34). Was it true that John the baptist had a demon? The correct answer to that is No. Was it true that Jesus was a glutton or a wine Bibber. No, that's not true and was it true at least in the sense that the religious leaders said that Jesus was a friend of tax collectors and sinners. No it was not true in the sense that they meant it. But this is what we know, there is another sense in which it is entirely true and we are saved by the fact that Jesus is indeed a friend to tax collectors and sinners.

²⁹ And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors ^[b]justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and ^[c]lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

³¹ [d] And the Lord said, “To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying:

‘We played the flute for you,

And you did not dance;

We mourned to you,

And you did not weep.’

³³ For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ ³⁴ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a [e]winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ ³⁵ But wisdom is justified by all her children.”

The Pharisee’s are disappointed in Jesus because he is not playing the game they want him to. They are acting like children because they are not getting their way. God is not doing what they want. Because of their self-righteous pride the Pharisees rejected the will of God for themselves and the ministry of both Jesus and John the Baptist.

A Sinful Woman is Forgiven (Verses 36-50)

³⁶ Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸ and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped *them* with the hair of her head;

and she kissed His feet and anointed *them* with the fragrant oil. ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, “This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this is* who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.”

⁴⁰ And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.”

So he said, “Teacher, say it.”

⁴¹ “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him more?”

⁴³ Simon answered and said, “I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more.”

And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” ⁴⁴ Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she washed my feet with her tears and wiped *them* with the hair of her head. ⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss my feet since the time I came in. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but this woman has anointed my feet with fragrant oil. ⁴⁷ Therefore I say to you, her sins, which *are* many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little.”

⁴⁸ Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

⁴⁹ And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

⁵⁰ Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

Keypoint: The Sinner woman had a revelation of who Jesus Christ was. Simon the Pharisee did not.

***Now we compare the heart condition between the woman and Simon:**

Comparison of the /Greeting/Hospitality/Anointing between the woman and Simon

Simon the Pharisee:

Offered no water for Jesus' feet

Simon gave Jesus no customary kiss of welcome

He did not anoint Jesus' head with basic oil

The Sinful unnamed woman:

Wet Jesus' feet with her tears; wiped them with her hair

She never stopped kissing His feet since entering the house

She Anointed Jesus feet with expensive perfumed oil

The Pharisee's Reaction The dinner host, a Pharisee named Simon, reacts with silent disgust, self-righteousness, and **skepticism towards Jesus. His reaction breaks down into three key elements:**

1. Skepticism of Jesus' Prophetic Status (vs. 39): Simon concludes that Jesus cannot be a true prophet. He thinks to himself that if Jesus were actually from God, He

would possess the spiritual discernment to know "what kind of woman" was touching Him.

2. Ritual Defilement Fear: In the Pharisaic tradition, physical contact with an immoral person caused spiritual contamination. Simon is appalled that Jesus openly allows a ritually unclean woman to touch and kiss His feet. (Guzik, 1996)

3. Contempt and Judgment: Simon views the woman strictly through the lens of her past identity and sins. He is completely blind to her emotional brokenness, humility, and current state of repentance. (Guzik, 1996)

Jesus' Response to Simon Vs. (40-43): Jesus reads Simon's unspoken thoughts and delivers a **sharp rebuke** via a parable about a moneylender who forgives two debtors one with a large debt 500 pence (today's value of \$220) and one with a small debt 50 pence (today's value of \$22). When Simon correctly notes that the debtor forgiven more will love more (vs. 43). **Jesus exposes the contrast between Simon and the woman; Self-Righteousness vs. Humility.** Simon was a sinner who didn't think he was. The woman was a sinner and she knew it and was grateful to God for his forgiveness of her sins. The Pharisee failed to see his own spiritual need for grace.

Luke Chapter 7 review and life applications:

THE CENTURION'S FAITH

1. Have Faith trust in God's power (Luke 7:1–10)

LIFE APPLICATIONS

Genuine faith believes God can work even when we cannot see how (Hebrews 11:1)

Without faith it is impossible to please God. (Hebrews 11:6)

We should have faith and trust Jesus' authority in every situation. Do we give our cares and burdens to God and leave them there?

JESUS'S COMPASSION FOR THE WIDOW WOMAN

1. Show compassion to those who are hurting (Luke 7:11–17)

LIFE APPLICATIONS

Just as Jesus cared deeply for the grieving widow, we can be assured that he cares deeply for us when we go through hard trials.

Do we have compassion for others?

As Christians we are called to notice people's pain and respond with kindness and compassion.

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S QUESTION TO JESUS

1a. Bring your questions to God (**Luke 7:18–23**).

LIFE APPLICATIONS:

John the Baptist honestly asked Jesus if He was the Messiah. **Do we fully trust God?**

Who better to trust than Him? God's ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9).

1b. Jesus recognized John the Baptist as a great prophet. (Luke 7:24–35). We should Honor those who faithfully serve God. **Ministry is not easy. John didn't have a comfortable ministry. God's calling is in His terms, not ours.**

1c. Jesus praised John the Baptist for his faithful ministry. **We should pray for and encourage each other and those who are our church leaders** and who live faithfully for God.

SINFUL WOMAN IS FORGIVEN (LUKE 7:36-50)

1. Forgiveness leads to love.

2. God offers grace and a new beginning to everyone who turns to Him.

LIFE APPLICATIONS:

Do we receive God's forgiveness with humility? Humility is more important than outward appearances (Luke 7:36–50). The sinful unnamed woman came to Jesus with humility and repentance.

Do we respond to God's grace with love and gratitude? Jesus taught that those who have been forgiven much will love much. Forgiveness changes lives for the better. Those who understand how much God has forgiven them respond with greater love and gratitude.

Do we hold grudges or judge others by their past? We should both receive God's forgiveness and extend forgiveness to others.

Do we welcome people who don't look like us? God looks at the heart, not a person's color, reputation or status.

References:

David Guzik Enduring Word Study Bible 1996 - Thomas Nelson Bibles

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