

## Week 7 - Luke 7-8

### Before you begin...

In the previous chapter, Jesus redefined for us what it means to be truly “blessed.” He showed us that true greatness is not defined by riches and popularity, but by laying down our rights in order to be transformed into the likeness of our generous, meek, and loving Savior, who will reward us richly in this life and the life to come.

This week, we will hear that our worth is not rooted in any accomplishment or association on this earth, but in our position of belonging to the kingdom of God. We gain access to the kingdom by faith, but not everyone who hears Jesus’ words or sees his miracles will believe. Pay attention to the surprising people who demonstrate faith in these chapters, and watch out for the obstacles that block others from hearing and believing God’s word.

Above all, “Be careful how you listen.” Jesus will show us this week that it’s not enough to simply hear the word, or even to see miracles performed. We must listen with a heart to trust and obey, and be willing to share the good news with others, no matter the cost.

*Father God, please draw me near to Jesus this week as I come to your word. Guard me from the enemy’s tactics to snatch your truth from my heart. Use this study to give me deep roots in your word. Show me the cares and concerns of this world that I have held in my heart that are robbing me from really understanding your word and obeying it. I expect you to change me because of this word. Give me ears to hear. Amen.*

### Day 1 - Luke 7:1-17

1. **Read Luke 7:1-17.** Underline or mark some things that stand out to you. **Read it again** and notice:
  - **who** is in the passage
  - **what** is happening
  - **when** and **where**
  - **repeated words** or **ideas**
2. Read Luke 7:1-5. What is unusual about the request brought to Jesus? (Note: A “centurion” is a Gentile commander of one hundred Roman soldiers.)
3. Why did the centurion send the Jewish elders to Jesus instead of going himself? Why did they agree to go to Jesus on behalf of a Roman centurion?
4. What does the centurion understand about Jesus (and about himself) in Luke 7:6-8?
5. What do you find remarkable about Jesus’ response in Luke 7:9-10?

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6. Read Luke 7:11-15. How does Jesus' interaction with the widow impact how you think about Jesus?

7. How do people react to this miracle (Luke 7:16-17)?

❖ **Deep Dive:** In Luke 7:16 the people say, "a great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" Read **Exodus 4:29-31** and **Deuteronomy 18:15-19**. What is a prophet? How is Jesus a prophet like Moses? How is Jesus a better prophet than Moses? (Consider **Hebrews 3:3-6**.)

8. What difference would it make in your life if you really believed that Jesus has the power even to raise the dead?

**Praise** God for what you have seen in this passage. **Ask** for him to bring his resurrection power to bear where you need it most.

### Day 2 - Luke 7:18-35

1. Read **Luke 7:18-35**. Underline or mark some things that stand out to you. **Read it again** and notice:

- **who** is in the passage
- **what** is happening
- **when** and **where**
- **repeated words** or **ideas**

2. In Luke 7:18-19, John sent a message from his prison cell questioning whether Jesus was the Christ.

- a. How was Jesus different from what John expected the Messiah to be? (See Luke 1:60-71 and 3:15-17.)
- b. How does Jesus respond to John's doubt in Luke 7:21-23?

3. "Blessed is the one who isn't offended by me." What do people find offensive about Jesus today?

❖ **Deep Dive:** How can Jesus say that John was greater than any other prophet in Israel? What was true of John that was not true of even Moses or David?

4. In Luke 7:28, Jesus is contrasting those "born of women" with those "in the kingdom of God."

- a. How does someone enter into the kingdom of God? (See John 3:3-5.)
- b. If you are part of the kingdom of God, what do you have that John the Baptist never had in his life on earth?

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5. How did John prepare the way for Jesus according to Luke 7:29-30?
6. Why do you think Luke mentions the tax collectors in verse 29?
7. What adjectives would you use to summarize how Jesus described the people of Israel in Luke 7:31-35?
8. In Luke 7:16-35, both John and Jesus are called *prophets*. Luke quotes Malachi 3:1, which refers to two “messengers”: the one who will “prepare the way,” and also “the messenger of the covenant.”
  - a. According to Acts 7:52, how did the people of Israel treat the prophets of Israel?
  - b. Why would people reject and persecute someone who is bringing a true message from God?
9. Where do you risk being rejected or misunderstood for speaking the truth about Jesus? What encouragement do you find from Jesus’ words back in Luke 6:22-23?

**Pray** in response to what God has shown you.

### Day 3 - Luke 7:36-50

1. **Read Luke 7:36-50.** Underline or mark some things that stand out to you. **Read it again** and notice:
  - **who** is in the passage
  - **what** is happening
  - **when** and **where**
  - **repeated words** or **idea**
2. According to Luke 7:44-46, what kind of welcome did Jesus receive from the Pharisee? What does this tell you about his attitude toward Jesus? (Compare this to the centurion in Luke 7:6-7.)
3. What happened while Jesus was dining with the Pharisee in Luke 7:37-38? How do you think the people in the room might have felt witnessing this display?
4. In Luke 7:39, why does the Pharisee question whether Jesus is actually a prophet? What does he misunderstand?

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5. Why do you think Luke tells us the name of the Pharisee, but not the name of the sinful woman?
6. How does Jesus explain the woman's bold behavior (Luke 7:41-47)?
7. Jesus tells the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." (Luke 7:50) What do you learn about faith from her example?
8. What does this story reveal about Jesus?
9. Lately is your approach to Jesus more like Simon the Pharisee, or the sinful woman in this story? Explain.

**Pray** about these things.

### Day 4 - Luke 8:1-21

1. **Read Luke 8:1-21.** Underline or mark some things that stand out to you. **Read it again** and notice:
  - **who** is in the passage
  - **what** is happening
  - **when** and **where**
  - **repeated words** or **ideas**
2. What do you find surprising or encouraging about Jesus' traveling companions in Luke 8:1-3?

In Luke 8:4-15 Jesus tells a parable about sowing seeds. A "parable" is a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson.

3. According to Luke 8:9-10, why did Jesus explain the meaning of the parable to his disciples, but not to the crowds?

✦ **Deep Dive:** Read Isaiah 6:8-12, which Jesus quotes here. Why would God send a message to his people but not grant them an understanding of the message? Consider Paul's explanation in Romans 9-11, especially 11:11 and 11:25.

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4. In the chart below, describe what happens to the seeds using pictures or words (first row). Then explain what each seed and soil represents (second row).

What happens to the seeds			
Along the path:	On the rock:	Among the thorns:	On Good Ground:
8:5	8:6	8:7	8:8
What each seed and soil represents:			
8:12	8:13	8:14	8:15

5. What one thing do you think Jesus really wants his disciples to understand from this parable?
  
6. Which worries, riches, and pleasures in this life tend to distract you from focusing on the kingdom of God?
  
7. The good soil produced a hundred times what was sown (Luke 8:8).
  - a. How could one person hearing the word of God and obeying it produce “a hundredfold crop” in the kingdom of God?
  
  - b. What does it mean to you personally to be good soil? Where is God calling you to “hold fast” the word and patiently produce fruit?

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8. In Luke 8:16-17, Jesus explained that the secrets of the kingdom of God (Luke 8:10) are not meant to be kept a secret, but are meant to bring light to all people. What does this mean for your personal study of the word?
9. Give an example of how a person could hear the word of God, think they have gained something, but not actually have anything to show for their listening (Luke 8:18).
10. What additional insights do you gain about good listening from the story in Luke 8:19-21?
11. What are the implications of this passage for evangelism and discipleship?

Pray about what God has shown you:

- **Praise** God for generously sharing the secrets of his kingdom through Jesus.
- **Thank** him for how he has personally sown the word into your heart and given you faith to believe.
- **Confess** where you have been a shallow listener. Where have you listened without seriously intending to obey, or neglected diligent pursuit of the things of God?
- **Ask** God to give you ears to hear, and make the soil of your heart ready to hold fast his word.
- **Ask** for opportunities to shine the light to others. Who comes to mind? Pray for them now.
- **Yield** the things of this world that have distracted you from the kingdom of God.
- **Commit** to hearing the word with the goal of obeying and sharing.

### Day 5 - Luke 8:22-56

1. **Read Luke 8:22-56.** Underline or mark some things that stand out to you. **Read it again** and notice:
  - **who** is in the passage
  - **what** is happening
  - **when** and **where**
  - **repeated words** or **ideas**
2. Read Luke 8:22-25. It was natural for the disciples to feel fear in a life-threatening storm, yet Jesus wanted them to have faith. What does it look like to exercise faith in a frightening situation?
3. Describe the state of the man Jesus encountered in the Gentile region of the Gerasenes in Luke 8:26-30.
4. Mark every instance of the word “beg” or “ask” in Luke 8:28-39. Who is begging Jesus? For what? What does each person’s (or demon’s) begging reveal about how they view Jesus?

❖ **Deep Dive:** Using a tool like [biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com), compare the greek words translated “beg” or “ask” in Luke 8:28, 31-32, 37 and 38. The HELPS Word Studies tool is particularly useful here.

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5. In Luke 8:35 the man has been completely delivered from his miserable state. What is surprising about the reaction of his neighbors in verses 34-37? Why do you think they rejected Jesus instead of glorifying God? What are they afraid of?
6. Jesus allowed others to come follow him, like Mary Magdalene who had been delivered from seven demons (8:2). Why do you think he did not grant this man's request (8:38-39)?

**Read Luke 8:40-55.** When Jesus returns to Galilee, the mood around him has reached a fever pitch. We are nearing the climax of this first section of Luke, and you can feel it in the text. The crowd is pressing in around him, "nearly crushing him." There is a desperation in both Jairus and the bleeding woman that causes them to come to Jesus.

7. According to Jewish law, a woman was considered "ceremonially unclean" while menstruating, and anyone who touched her would be made "unclean" as well (Leviticus 15:19). Mark the word "touch" every time it appears in verses 43-48.
  - a. What do you notice about how this woman approached Jesus for healing?
  - b. What happened when she touched Jesus? How does Jesus respond?
  - c. How does this woman demonstrate faith? How does her faith inspire you?
8. In Luke 8:49-56, Jesus raised Jairus's daughter from the dead. How was this miracle related to faith?
9. Consider all four miraculous events that took place in Luke 8:22-56.
  - a. What do these events demonstrate about Jesus' power and authority?
  - b. What do you learn from these stories about the kind of people who have access to the kingdom of God by faith?

**Pray** about these things.

### **Pulling it all together**

1. What do you think Luke really wants us to understand from these stories? If you have time, skim all of Luke 7-8 before answering.

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2. What do these events demonstrate about Jesus' power and authority? If you were to really believe these things about Jesus, what difference would it make in your life?
  
3. What do you learn about faith from these stories? Who demonstrated faith? How? Who lacked faith? Why?
  
4. What do these passages show about how Jesus regards women?
  
5. What do you notice about the relationship between fear and faith in these passages?
  
6. What is your most important personal take-away from this chapter?

In what area of your life does this seem to matter most, and how?

One of the best ways to **apply** the Word of God to your own life is to really **pray** about what you have seen in the passage. Try this acronym: **P.R.A.Y.** - **Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield.** Use the prompts below to guide your prayers.

**PRAISE.** Thank and praise God for who he is and what he has done. Be specific.

**REPENT.** Confess your sin to God and turn from it. Agree with God about the things that need to change. Be specific.

**ASK.** What will you ask God to do based on what he has shown you? Be specific.

**YIELD.** What will you surrender to God? How can you trust and obey him in response to what he has shown you? Be specific.



## Luke Study Guide: Week 7 - Luke 7-8

### Small Group Discussion Guide:

1. Which story in Luke 7 or 8 impacted you the most this week? How?
2. What do these passages tell us about the kind of people who have access to Jesus and to the kingdom of God?
3. What do these events demonstrate about Jesus' power and authority? If you were to really believe these things about Jesus, what difference would it make in your life?
4. What do you learn about faith from these stories? Who demonstrated faith? How? Who lacked faith? Why?
5. What did you notice about the relationship between fear and faith in these passages?
6. In Luke 8:18, Jesus said, "Take care how you listen." What did you find personally convicting or encouraging from Jesus' teaching in Luke 8:4-21?

What is your big take-away from this passage or this discussion? Is there anything you need to confess or yield to God in response to this truth? What will you praise God for? What will you ask God to do?