

Cultivate Gospel of Luke Study
Lesson Fifteen

Read and meditate on Luke Chapter 7 this week
and prayerfully answer the following questions before Tuesday's class.

Have you ever experienced doubt about your faith? You are not alone. Even those with the strongest faith may have had doubt. It is no surprise to God that you have questions. It is how you handle those questions that is important.

Read Verses 18-30

Poor John, he had the privilege and honor of announcing The Lamb of God's arrival, and was not able to witness Jesus' work afterwards. Perhaps he envisioned being in the place where the Apostles now were, working alongside the promised Messiah. It almost seems unfair.

Being in prison must have been very difficult for him, spiritually as well as physically. He began to doubt what he knew to be true.

Warren Wiersbe- "There is a difference between doubt and unbelief. Doubt is a matter of the mind: we cannot understand what God is doing or why He is doing it. Unbelief is a matter of the will: we refuse to believe God's Word and obey what He tells us to do. "Doubt is not always a sign that a man is wrong," said Oswald Chambers; "it may be a sign that he is thinking." In John's case, his inquiry was not born of willful unbelief, but of doubt nourished by physical and emotional strain. You and I can look back at the ministry of Christ and understand what He was doing, but John did not have that advantage."

1. What can we learn from John's doubt? How did John handle the questions that crept up in his mind regarding Jesus? What did he do about it?

2. What was Jesus' attitude towards John's disciples bringing up his questions? Was He angry? Disappointed in John? Bothered?

3. How do you think Jesus will respond whenever you have doubts and questions?

4. What was Jesus' answer to John in verses 22, 23?

John the Baptist knew that one would come after him who would be the Christ (John 1:26-27). Jesus's answer in verses 22 and 23 is confirmation that He is indeed the Christ, the long-awaited One. Read Isaiah 26:19, 35:5-6, 61:1. Jesus fulfilled these prophecies through His ministry.

David Guzik – “We might phrase John's question like this: ‘Jesus, why don't You do more?’ Morgan answered this: ‘To all such restless impatience, He utters the same warning... For the most part, the way of the Lord's service is the way of plodding perseverance in the doing of apparently small things. The history of the Church shows that this is one of the lessons most difficult to learn.’”

Jesus reminded John, from the Scripture, that He is who John *knows* He is. What a comfort and boost to our faith when we remember what Jesus has done and who He is.

Verses 24-30

Jesus confirms that John is the prophet spoken of in Isaiah 40:3 .

5. What does Zechariah's prophesy say about his son in Luke 1:76?

6. In what ways was Jesus's ministry vastly different from what the Jewish people expected in the Messiah?

7. To whom is Jesus referring in verses 28 when He says, "yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he (John)"?

8. What does Jesus mean when he says in verse 35, "And yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children"?

Verses 36-39 Anointing in Galilee

David Guzik – “It was bold for a woman with a sinful reputation to come into the house of a Pharisee, but she was willing to do anything to express her love for Jesus.”

Charles Spurgeon – “...She served Christ himself... when our love is in active exercise, our piety will be immediately towards Christ – we shall sing to him, pray to him, teach for him, live for him.”

This is one of the most beautiful stories in scripture. It shows us the heart of Christ for sinners, that He truly came to seek and save the lost. We are all in need of the grace only Jesus can give. He is our Savior and forgiveness is found only in Him.

We tend to view sin in one of two ways: We minimize it, convincing ourselves that our sins are “small” or insignificant compared to the “giant” sins of others, or we let it engulf us and keep us in a cycle of guilt and shame, feeling powerless to overcome it. Neither is an accurate way to deal with and address sin in our lives. In this passage, Jesus shows us that we defeat sin by placing our faith in Christ; He washes our sins away. Much like the posture of this woman bowing at the feet of Jesus, we place our sins at His feet, and He removes them from His sight.

We are told in verse 47 that those who have been forgiven much, love much. And have we not been forgiven much? If we minimize our own sin, like the Pharisee in this story, our love for others might be hindered. If we are swallowed by our sin, we minimize the work of Jesus on the cross and His freely given grace. Like this downcast woman, we must rest in His love, His mercy, and His forgiveness. As He says to the woman in verse 50, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Take a moment to consider the weight of Jesus’s sacrifice for you on the cross and the magnitude of His forgiveness. Read Romans 3:23, 6:23, 8:1-2. We have been set free from the power of sin!

9. How do you express your love for Jesus? Do you live like you love Jesus? Are there any ways you could further demonstrate your love for Jesus as a joyful response to what He has done for you?

Verse 39- “Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner!””

This comment by Simon prompted Jesus to reply. Jesus was a guest in this man’s house; however, He was never deterred from sharing the Truth, but always did so in love.

10. Do you ever avoid sharing the Truth because it may be awkward?

Verses 40-50 The Two Debtors

David Guzik- “**Do you see this woman?** Simon the Pharisee thought that *Jesus* was the one who could not see her. His thought was, “Jesus, don’t you see this shameful woman associating so closely to You?” Jesus turned the thought around on Simon, saying, “**Do you see this woman?** Simon, do you see her love, her repentance, her devotion? That’s what I see.”

i. Simon the Pharisee did not see the woman as she *was* (a humble sinner seeking forgiveness, pouring out love for Jesus) because he looked at her as she had *been* (a notorious sinner).“

11. Do you still have people in your life who knew you before you repented from your sin? Do they still see you as your old self?

Do you ever have difficulty “seeing” others as the new creation that they are in Christ?

Warren Wiersbe, “The parable does not deal with the amount of sin in a person’s life but the awareness of that sin in his heart. How much sin must a person commit to be a sinner? Simon and the woman were both sinners. Simon was guilty of sins of the spirit, especially pride, while the woman was guilty of sins of the flesh (see 2 Cor. 7:1). Her sins were known, while Simon’s sins were hidden to everyone except God. And both of them were bankrupt and could not pay their debt to God. Simon was just as spiritually bankrupt as the woman, only he did not realize it.”

12. In verse 40, Jesus shows us that “He can read the heart of man” (David Guzik). What does the Bible say about the heart? How was Christ able to know the hearts and minds of people during His earthly ministry?

13. How do you know your sins are forgiven?

Warren Wiersbe shared a story-

“But God’s forgiveness is not automatic; we can reject His grace if we will. In 1830, a man named George Wilson was arrested for mail theft, the penalty for which was hanging. After a time, President Andrew Jackson gave Wilson a pardon but he refused to accept it! The authorities were puzzled: should Wilson be freed or hanged? They consulted Chief Justice John Marshall, who handed down this decision: “A pardon is a slip of paper, the value of which is determined by the acceptance of the person to be pardoned. If it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must be hanged.” If you have never accepted God’s pardon, now is the time to believe and be saved.”