

In our last lesson, we read the Sermon on the Plain. Jesus lifted up the poor, hungry, grieving, and persecuted and called them *blessed*. Their rewards in heaven will be great; for those who have nothing, are more likely to look to God for consolation and salvation. But for those who seek wealth, power and prestige instead of seeking God, they have already received their rewards. The Lord calls us to love our enemies and pray for them, and he warns us about judging others. If a blind man tries to lead another blind man, they will both fall into a pit. We should look at our own faults and sins first and fix those before judging another. Jesus said that if we build our lives on His words, we will build our lives on a strong foundation that cannot be torn down or destroyed. Also in our last lesson, Jesus healed many, even Gentiles from Tyre and Sidon, as well as the slave of a Centurion, who was also a Gentile.

1. Reflect briefly on the life of Jesus Christ, according to the Gospels. If it were possible, what event or activity in His life do you wish *you* could have witnessed?

2. Read Luke 7:11-17. What do we learn about *Jesus* in this narrative?

Luke 7:11-17 ¹¹ Soon afterward he journeyed to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd accompanied him. ¹² As he drew near to the gate of the city, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the city was with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, he was moved with pity for her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴ He stepped forward and touched the coffin; at this the bearers halted, and he said, "Young man, I tell you, arise!" ¹⁵ The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, exclaiming, "A great prophet has arisen in our midst," and "God has visited his people." ¹⁷ This report about him spread through the whole of Judea and in all the surrounding region.

3. Read again Luke 7:11-17 and footnotes.

What was the (social and economic) fate of a *widow* who has no son in first century Israel? Why was it considered *shocking* that Jesus touched the coffin?

4. Compare Luke 7:11-17 to 1 Kings 17:17-24. How are the two events alike? Why is it that the people in the Gospel of Luke thought Jesus might be a prophet?

1 Kings 17:17-24. Sometime later the son of the woman, the owner of the house, fell sick, and his sickness grew more severe until he stopped breathing. ¹⁸ So she said to Elijah, "Why have you done this to me, man of God? Have you come to me to call attention to my guilt and to kill my son?" ¹⁹ Elijah said to her, "Give me your son." Taking him from her lap, he carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰ He called out to the LORD: "LORD, my God, will you afflict even the widow with whom I am staying by killing her son?" ²¹ Then he stretched himself out upon the child three times and he called out to the LORD: "LORD, my God, let the life breath return to the body of this child." ²² The LORD heard the prayer of Elijah; the life breath returned to the child's body and he lived. ²³ Taking the child, Elijah carried him down into the house from the upper room and gave him to his mother. Elijah said, "See! Your son is alive." ²⁴ The woman said to Elijah, "Now indeed I know that you are a man of God, and it is truly the word of the LORD that you speak."

5. Read Luke 3:19. Read Luke 7:18-23 and footnotes. Why did John have *these questions* asked of Jesus? Whose words does Jesus use in his reply?

Luke 3:19 ¹⁹ But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of his marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done, ²⁰ Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison.

Luke 7:18-23 ¹⁸ The disciples of John told him about all these things. John summoned two of his disciples ¹⁹ and sent them to the Lord to ask, "***Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?***" ²⁰ When the men came to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?'" ²¹ At that time he cured many of their diseases, sufferings, and evil spirits; he also granted sight to many who were blind. ²² ***And he said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. ²³ And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me."***

6. Read Luke 7:24-30 and footnotes, Malachi 3:1 and Malachi 3:23. Jesus is talking to people who had gone to hear John in the desert and many received his baptism.

Which of the verses in Luke describe John? Which verses describe Herod Antipas?

Malachi 3:1 Now I am sending my messenger— he will prepare the way before me;

Malachi 3:23 Now I am sending to you Elijah the prophet, before the day of the LORD comes, the great and terrible day;

7. Read Luke 7:36-50 and footnotes. When Jesus entered the home of Simon, He was not accorded even the most basic of welcoming responses.

What did Simon *not do* for Jesus and in contrast, what did the woman do for Jesus that Simon *should* have done? Read Luke 7:36-50 and footnotes.

8. Read again Luke 7:36-50. Read Romans 3:10-11 and Isaiah 64:6.

What emotions, virtues, or attitudes did this sinful woman exhibit?

What did she seem to understand that Simon did not?

Romans 3:10-11 "***There is no one righteous***, not even one; there is no one who understands, there is no one who seeks God.

Isaiah 64:6 ***All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags***; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind, our sins sweep us away.

9. Read Luke 8:1-3 and review this lesson in general. What roles do *women* have in Jesus' ministry? What was the focus of Jesus' *preaching* according to Luke 8:1-3?