

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 8 Jesus
Preaching in Galilee

Opening prayer: Lord, we come before you to learn more about Jesus. Help us to hear the old story in new ways and apply it to our own life. Amen.

Healing the Centurion's Servant

The first verse of Matthew 8 tells us that Jesus proceeded from the mountain to Capernaum, which was now his home, or headquarters. The multitudes continued to follow him. Their presence showed the popularity of Jesus, and also emphasized the fact that the miracles which followed the sermon were made in the presence of a large crowd of people

Read Luke 7: 1-10

1. What did the centurion want of Jesus? He wanted him to heal his servant. Since the army of Herod was patterned after the Roman Army, we don't know whether this centurion was in the Roman Army or Herod's. He commanded one hundred men. He probably stood politely at the edge of the crowd. He had heard about Jesus and was an uncircumcised believer according to Taylor. The local people said that he built their synagogue. The ruins of Capernaum show the ruins of a beautiful synagogue built of white limestone. It was built in the time of the Herods.

Why did he not come to Jesus himself? He felt unworthy and he commanded men under him so he felt that Jesus could command and His wishes would be followed. Why did he not want Jesus to come to his house? This would have made Jesus unclean according to the Law.

2. How did Jesus respond to this centurion and his request? Jesus praised the man's faith that He could heal his servant at a distance.

Why? This was the kind of faith that Jesus thought that the Jews should have but here He finds it in a Gentile.

Jesus Raised the Widow's Son

Read Luke 7:11-17

3. As Jesus approached the gate of the city of Nain, what did He see?

Jesus had crowds following continuously since the choosing of his twelve apostles. Nain lies on the northern slope of a mountain about sixty feet above the plain, between twenty and twenty-five miles south of Capernaum. A funeral procession carrying the only son of a widow. The death of an only child represented to them as

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 8 Jesus
Preaching in Galilee

to us the extreme of sorrow. This was heightened by the fact that the mother was a widow, and hence evidently dependent upon her son for support.

4. What miracle did Jesus perform in the city of Nain? He raised the son from the dead. Jesus went to Nain to do good.

What effect did this miracle have on the people who witnessed it? Since no prophet had raised the dead since Elisha, this caused Jesus' fame to spread. They praised God saying that Jesus was a great prophet who had come to save his people. The news even reached John the Baptist in prison.

The Baptist's Inquiry

Read Luke 7:18-23

5. When John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to Jesus, what questions did they ask? John the Baptist had probably been in prison about a year. He was held in castle of Machærus or Makor, east of the Dead Sea. Since Herod like to hear John, he was probably given the privilege of having visitors. John while certainly gifted by God was human and here, we see his doubts. Fourfold suggests that he may have been urging Jesus to more publicly announce his Messiahship. His inspiration was for his preaching and at this point he is only preaching to Herod and maybe a few other listeners. He doubts. The disciples asked if He was the one or should they expect someone else.

How did Jesus answer these questions? He told them to report on the actions they had seen. The blind can see, the lame can walk, the unclean or made clean, the deaf hear and the dead are brought back to life. Jesus sums up his work in the form of a climax, wherein preaching the gospel to the poor stands superior even to the raising of the dead. Attention to the poor has always been a distinctive feature of Christianity especially in the Orient.

Read Luke 7:24-30

6. What did Jesus say in reference to the greatness of John the Baptist?

To be Christ's forerunner is to be above teacher and prophet, Levite and priest, lawgiver and king, and all else that the world estimates as great. The prophets had spoken about the Messiah but John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus, who is God among us.

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 8 Jesus
Preaching in Galilee

What does that mean? One commentator compares a tiny diamond to a large piece of flint. The born of woman refers to physical birth, while the Kingdom of God is spiritual and requires a spiritual birth as Jesus told Nicodemus.

Read Luke 7:31-35

7. Unto whom did Jesus liken the "men of this generation?" Oriental market-places were open squares where men transacted business and where children held their sports. Jesus here pictures two groups of little ones, one of which wishes to play, the other of which is sullen and intractable. The mirthful group first seeks to play a wedding game. They pipe and dance, but the sullen group sits unmoved. Not disheartened by failure to succeed, the mirthful ones try their hand again and hope for better luck by playing funeral. But this also fails, causing them to lift up their voices in questioning. It represents the Jews as being invited and refusing the invitation.

Read Matthew 11:20-30

8. Why did Jesus upbraid the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done? Chorazin sat on Galilee's northern shore, just within sight of the other towns that formed the Evangelical Triangle. The Evangelical Triangle, where Jesus spent 80% of His time, is made up of three towns—Bethsaida, Capernaum, and Chorazin. Chorazin's reputation pre-Jesus had been based on agriculture. It fell into ruin after an earthquake in the 4th century, and her black basalt rubble now makes for a fascinating stop. Her crown jewel is a synagogue that, according to a cache of Roman coins found under her, was probably rebuilt in the 3rd or 4th centuries. There was a bench in this and other synagogues called the Moses seat because the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees sat there to teach the Law. They also imposed numerous traditions on the common people but wouldn't help the people with this load. Jesus talks about them in Matthew 23:2-4.

"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So, you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

Capernaum is marked by extensive ruins, including the foundations of a synagogue, columns, and walls of buildings. Bethsaida was probably a suburb of Capernaum.

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 8 Jesus
Preaching in Galilee

Jesus compared Capernaum to what other city? Sodom. Capernaum was the most favored because Jesus lived there. He speaks of it as being exalted to heaven. Why? Sodom was one of the oldest cities of any great importance in Palestine, this reference to its remaining is the more striking, showing that its destruction did not come from the mere operation of natural law, but as a divine punishment—a punishment which might have been avoided by repentance.

Jesus' Feet Anointed in the House of a Pharisee

Read Luke 7:36-50

9. While Jesus was eating at the home of a Pharisee in the city of Nain, what did a woman of the city use to wash his feet? Her tears.

Why? The woman, feeling strongly the contrast between the sinlessness of Jesus and her own stained life, could not control her emotions. "

What did the Pharisee say to himself concerning her action? How could Jesus be a prophet if He doesn't know who this woman is. Her touch according to Mosaic tradition would have made Jesus unclean.

What was Jesus' response to him? A parable about two debtors. The narrative, however, shows that the Pharisee's motives were somewhat akin to those of Nicodemus. He wished to investigate the character and claims of Jesus, and was influenced more by curiosity than by hostility—for all Pharisees were not equally bitter. But he desired to avoid in any way compromising himself, so he invited Jesus to his house, but carefully omitted all the ordinary courtesies and attentions which would have been paid to an honored guest. The parable indicates no more than that Jesus was equally willing to forgive both. But the Pharisee did not seek his forgiveness, and the absence of all love in him proved that he did not have it.

Further Journeying About Galilee

The twelve were now serving an apprenticeship in that work on which he would soon send them forth alone. The ministry from this point became more of a traveling ministry. He probably rarely if ever returned to Capernaum. From now to the end of his ministry his life was a wandering journey, and he and his apostles sustained by the offerings of friends.

Luke 8:1-3 Some time later Jesus traveled through towns and villages preaching the Good News about the Kingdom of God. The twelve disciples went

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 8 Jesus
Preaching in Galilee

with him and so did some of the women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases: Mary who was called Magdalene from whom seven demons had been driven out; Joanna whose husband Chuza was an officer in Herod's court; and Susanna, and many other women who used their own resources to help Jesus and his disciples.

10. Who was Mary Magdalene? What had Jesus done for her? A friend and follower of Jesus who had been cured of seven devils. Mary's name indicates that she was a native of Magdala. The town is named for a watchtower and today is called el-Mejdel.

In return, what were she, along with many others doing for Him? The support of these women shows the poverty of Christ and his apostles, and explains how they were able to give themselves so totally to the work. Some of the apostles also may have some support of the company but in any event the support was small. Fourfold Gospel brings or attention to the fact that Jesus was removing some of the barriers that women faced due to customs.

The Jews' Blasphemous Accusations

Read Mark 3:20-30

11. To whom did the Pharisees and scribes attribute Jesus' power to cast out demons? A demon possessed man who was blind and dumb was brought to Jesus and He healed him. People were amazed at this triple miracle. He freed the man, gave him hearing, sight and speech. The fact that people raised the question of whether He was the Messiah, son of David caused the Pharisees and scribes to fear. They said that His power came from Beelzebub, the god of the fly. There was a tendency among the heathen to name their gods after pests that they were supposed to control. They were groping for an explanation and really didn't have one. Others urged Jesus to perform another miracle to show that God approved of Him. They probably felt that the criticisms of the Pharisees were unjust, and wished for Jesus to "shut them up" by showing some great sign, such as the pillar of cloud which sanctioned the guidance of Moses, or the descending fire which vindicated Elijah. Alford tells us that in Jewish superstition it was held that demons and false gods could give signs on earth, but only the true God signs from heaven".

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 8 Jesus
Preaching in Galilee

How did Jesus respond to this charge? He said that a house divided against itself can't stand. He even pointed to their own followers driving out demons. Jesus here definitely recognizes two important truths: 1. That the powers of evil are organized into a kingdom with a head, Satan. 2. That division tends to destruction. The power of Jesus to dispossess the demon was one of his most convincing credentials.

12. What is "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit"? Fourfold Gospel tells us that blasphemy is any kind of injurious speech. Today we would call it slander and if it is published it, is libel.

Why will it not be forgiven? It is an eternal sin. If one rejects the evidence given by the Holy Spirit and ascribes it to Satan, he rejects the only evidence upon which faith can be based; and without faith there is no forgiveness.

In Matthew 12 Jesus talks about how to have good fruit you have to a good tree. The mouth speaks what is in the heart. Then he gives this warning.

Read Matthew 12:36-37

13. What are "idle" words? An idle word is one that is useless for productive communication and somehow does damage. Our speech is the reflection of our character.

What warning is given concerning them? Your words will be used to judge you.

Sign Seekers and the Enthusiast Reproved

Read Luke 11:29-32

14. Why will "the men of Nineveh" and "the queen of Sheba" condemn Jesus' generation in the judgment? The people of Nineveh repented when they heard Jonah and the queen of Sheba traveled a great distance to see Solomon, but these people are in the presence of Jesus who is greater than Jonah or Solomon and they don't believe him.

Read Luke 11: 24-26

15. When an unclean spirit which had gone out of man came and found "his house empty," what did he do? This parable is about the two states of one man. Jesus is describing the wickedness of the Jewish leaders and how they would become even more wicked. Jesus says there can be no neutrality; there are only two alternatives. Thus, experience of an exorcism without an accompanying trust in

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 8 Jesus
Preaching in Galilee

someone "stronger" still leaves one weak and vulnerable to Satan's destructive designs. Though the house might be clean and ordered, it is still empty. If the spirit returns, the resulting state will be worse than before.

What was Jesus' purpose in relating this fact? He was always giving a chance for repentance.

Christ's Teaching About His Mother and Brothers

Read Luke 11:27-28

16. What was Jesus' reply to the woman who blessed His mother? He accepted the blessing of His mother but referred to His followers as being more blessed. We know that Mary also followed Her Son's teachings.

His family regarded Jesus as carried away by his religious enthusiasm and thought that he acted with reckless regard for his personal safety. They foresaw the conflict with the military authorities and the religious leaders and thought they should intervene. While Mary had been given God's message about Jesus, she didn't know the details.

Luke 8:19-21 Jesus' mother and brothers came to him, but were unable to join him because of the crowd. Someone said to Jesus, "Your mother and brother are standing outside and want to see you." Jesus said to them all, "My mother and brother are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

17. When told that His mother and brothers were outside, what was Jesus' response? He saw his earthly family as an interference with his heavenly mission. He was busy teaching and preaching and knew that they wanted to stop Him. What do you think He meant by that? He is setting priorities, that one must first follow God.

Dining with a Pharisee, Jesus Denounces That Sect

Read Luke 11:37-54

Fourfold Gospel says that this meal was probably a morning meal eaten around ten or eleven o'clock. Of course, the principal meal was in the evening.

18. Why was the Pharisee who asked Jesus to dine with him critical of Him? The Pharisee observed that Jesus didn't wash before eating. The Jewish custom was to wash before eating since you might have touched something or someone who was unclean. If they had been in a crowd, they bathed the whole body so that they

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 8 Jesus
Preaching in Galilee

wouldn't be unclean. So today, with our health precautions, when do you mask? When do you wash your hands or use hand sanitizer? I have become much more conscious of washing my hands and making sure that I wash them long enough. My mind goes back to Suzanne staying in front of the congregation and singing Happy Birthday twice to illustrate how long to wash our hands. This Jewish custom lead to self-righteousness and pride.

How did Jesus respond? Jesus while a guest, didn't let politeness keep Him from telling the truth. God wants both the inside and the outside clean. We may spend more time on our outward appearance than we do on the spiritual.

The Pharisees in paying the tenth part, or tithe, to God, were so exact that they offered the tenth part of the seed even of the spearmint, rue and other small garden herbs. Jesus commends this care about little things, but rebukes the Pharisees because they were as careless about big things, such as justice, and the love of God, as they were careful about herb seed. Rue was a small shrub about two feet high, and is said to have been used to flavor wine, and for medicinal purposes.

19. What was Jesus' criticism of the "lawyers" of the Jews? We have seen in the traditions with regard to the Sabbath how these Jewish lawyers multiplied the burdens which Moses had placed upon the people. They were careful to lay these burdens upon others, but equally careful not to bear them themselves—no, not even to keep the law of Moses itself. If we think that we have gotten away from that, just remember that Congress when it passes a law, often exempts it from applying to them.

How did the scribes and Pharisees react to this criticism? They thought that it didn't apply to them but Jesus went on the emphasize that instead of hearing the message of Old Testament prophets, they had murdered them. The lawyers, scribes and Pharisees had not only disobeyed the law but had prevented others from following it.

Lord, we too are careless about following your instructions. Help us learn to follow Your directions more closely. Amen.

Luke 7: 1-10	Matthew 11:20-30	Luke 7:24-30	Luke 11:29-32
Luke 7:11-17	Mark 3:20-30	Luke 7:31-35	Luke 11: 24-26
Luke 7:18-23	Matthew 12:36-37	Luke 7:36-50	Luke 11:27-28
			Luke 11:37-54