

# Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

## Notes on Lesson Seven: The One?

### Lesson Seven: The One?

Luke 7: 11-23

#### Central Message

Jesus had just raised a man from the dead. Only the Messiah could do something like that! When John heard about it, he sent his disciples to find out if Jesus was really "The One." Jesus gave a very clear answer; he did the works of the Messiah. Blessed is everyone who can understand that.

#### Life Application

Do you have doubts and questions about God? What questions would you like to ask Jesus? Write them down. You will find that God is very patient with you. You will not find 100% proof that the Christian faith is true, but you will find good answers to your questions. Ask God to help you search.

#### Community-Building Activity and Introduction<sup>42</sup>

##### *Funerals*

**Preparation:** Write the instructions on a board, or print the worksheet from the supplementary materials. If you use the instruction strips, copy and cut enough strips for each person. Note that there is a new way to use these strips.

**Instructions:** The lesson begins with a funeral. 1. Have you ever been to a funeral? If you want to talk about it, tell us what happened. 2. What different traditions are there for respecting or remembering a dead person?

**Teaching Notes:** Use any type of activity for sharing this information. If someone has lost a loved one recently, they may not want to share. This is why the instructions say, "if you want to talk about it." When you are finished with the community-building activity, read the introduction in the workbook together. Please note that there are questions in the introduction.

Can we question God? Can we doubt and still believe? Wouldn't you love to ask Jesus yourself, "Are you the One?" What other questions would you ask? Here are two stories about life and death, faith and doubt.

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<sup>42</sup> The community-building activities and the introductions are often combined in the lesson notes because sometimes the introduction is first, and sometimes the activity is first.

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These questions are intended to get them thinking. Just read the questions rather than discussing them at this time unless someone has a burning question on their mind. They are asked to make a list of their questions after the class session.

### Lesson Notes

#### Part One: The Funeral      Luke 7: 11-17

#### Preparation:

Note that the numbers below refer to the numbers in the workbook.

- 1.2. Only look over the two verses indicated. A verb phrase is the verb, the object, and/or its modifiers. [Jesus] saw her, [his heart] went out to her, [he] spoke (“...he said, “Don’t cry.”), went up and touched the coffin, spoke again (“said, “Young man...,” (and he brought the man back to life). Then he gave him back to his mother.
3. They should first locate the verses that tell about the setting, 6:11-12. They are to write the words WHO, WHEN, WHERE, WHAT IS HAPPENING above the answers to those questions. When did this happen? “...soon afterwards..” (We might want to find out soon after what, but that is another assignment.) Who was there? Jesus, his disciples, and a large crowd. We want them to be able to picture the dramatic scene. Two large crowds were coming towards the city gate. Jesus and his crowd watched the procession coming through the gate just as they were about to enter it.
4. They marked their own paper with the questions so that they could easily ask each other questions about the setting. They may not need to mark the text first.
5. The answer will reflect a personal preference. Ask them to point out some of the details, then ask them which they think is most important and why.

LINK If no one has been to a funeral in their country, you can share with them some traditions of your own.

6. Jesus’ heart went out to the widow. The details give us a clear picture of Jesus’ emotions.
7. This woman has lost her husband, and now with the loss of her son, there is no one to take care of her when she is older (or even now, for we don’t know her age.)

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8. The first thing many will think about is, "What if Jesus touched the body and nothing happened?" This is a good question. We assume Jesus knew he had the power to do it, but on the other hand, he had never done it before. There were other risks, such as becoming unclean, but who worried about that after this incredible miracle! Nevertheless, Jesus risked opposition any time he let people know something important about who he was. The next section will get into this point in more detail.
9. 7:16 "They were all filled with awe and praised God. 'A great prophet has appeared among us,' they said. 'God has come to help his people.'" The words the people used were the words from the Old Testament that spoke of the coming Messiah and of the judgment he would bring. The second phrase is more closely translated, "God has visited his people." The same word, "visited," is used in Luke 1: 68 and 78, and the same idea is in (King James) Luke 19: "...because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."
10. There are several ways to do this. a. One person can read the passage while various others act it out silently. b. One person can tell the story while others act it out silently. c. A group can take a few minutes to determine the speaking lines. They can use a narrator or create other speaking lines to tell the full story. When speaking the lines, they can do this with or without acting it out.

## Part Two: John's Question from Prison      Luke 7: 18-23

### Preparation:

Note that the numbers below refer to the numbers in the workbook.

- 1.2. In the first text, Luke 7: 11-17, we underlined verb phrases to show the drama of the situation. This time, the verb phrases point out the words of Jesus when he replies to the disciples of John. Perhaps the readers will be reminded of the text that Jesus read in Luke 4: 18-19. (See note below. If you discuss this before reading, ask them to find the reference in their own Bible.)

LINK The quote at the beginning of this section is from Luke 3, but when they cross-reference Luke 3 for the LINK section, they will need to go back to the Bible or lesson two. John knew that Jesus was from God because the Holy Spirit appeared as a dove and a Voice from Heaven spoke as John was baptizing Jesus. In Luke 7:22, Jesus told what he had done, but he was also quoting a prophecy from Isaiah 61: 1-2a. Ask the readers to find the source in Luke 4 unless they already did that. He quoted this in Luke 4:18-19. The missing words are "proclaim freedom for the prisoners."

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3. "These things" include raising the widow's son from the dead.
4. The question is, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" John was in prison when he sent his disciples. The readers are asked "Why?" There answers are opinions. Sometimes doubts come when we have difficult situations. Perhaps John was wondering why Jesus did not get him out of prison (remember the missing words). Perhaps John was not really doubting, but wanted Jesus to tell people who he was, to "hurry up" the coming of the kingdom. (See footnote #18.)
5. Jesus answers, as we have seen, by quoting prophesy about the Messiah. Is he The One? This text shows clearly that Jesus is saying that he is the One, the Messiah.
6. 7:23 "Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." Jesus is not saying that John has fallen away. Jesus is telling everyone that the question of his identity is THE important question, but some fall away because Jesus does not meet their expectations. Blessed are those who do not fall away. Read the note in the workbook after discussing this question.

LIVE Choose one of these questions or a combination.

1. Are doubts good or bad? Give them time to explain their reasons. Jesus answers John's disciples directly and respectfully. In fact, he praised John. Jesus will help us work through our doubts when we come to him and ask him for help. Note that even Christians have doubts, just as John did. Sometimes we don't see God's plan because it is different than what we expected. Similarly, we are disappointed in God because he does not do what we think he should do. Yet if we could understand God completely, he would not be God.
2. Earlier we discussed the question of whether Jesus took risks in raising the man from the dead. We certainly do take risks. We risk our health and our money. We risk praying for something and not seeing results. We risk getting in trouble, perhaps even being sued by the person we tried to help. We risk being misunderstood.
3. This is a very different type of risk. If the group members are shy about answering, tell them that they can answer this whether they are Christians or not. Perhaps the Christians will help the non-Christians think about this. What would their family say? If they became a Christian, would it change them? Would that be good or bad? What if it is not true? What would they lose? What if it is true, and they do not believe? What would they lose? Do they

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agree with this statement? "If the Bible is true, then we should follow Jesus." Perhaps they do not know enough to answer that, but perhaps they are ready to pray, "Jesus, if you are real, show me." Remind them to keep an open mind. If they expect Jesus to do one thing, they may miss his answer.

You can conclude with this summary, the words in the "Consider" section, and perhaps the final verse: Jesus had just raised a man from the dead. Only the Messiah could do something like that! When John heard about it, he sent his disciples to find out if Jesus was really "The One." Jesus gave a very clear answer; he did the works of the Messiah. Blessed is everyone who can understand that.

Do you have doubts and questions about God? What questions would you like to ask Jesus? Write them down. You will find that God is very patient with you. You will not find 100% proof that the Christian faith is true, but you will find good answers to your questions. Ask God to help you search.

(You might suggest that they email some of their questions to you during the coming week.)

### **Background Paper** "Vocabulary about Death"

The following background paper is for those who are learning English. It is meant as a "take home" paper, not for class. Please look it over before you hand it out. Here is a copy of the text.

## **Vocabulary about Death**

### **For Students Learning English**

emetry	A place for graves or tombs. It is also called a "graveyard."
offin	A box for a dead person. It is made of wood or metal. In Jesus' day, bodies were put on a piece of wood called a bier.
orpse	A corpse is a dead body. Sometimes people refer to it as the "remains."
uneral	A funeral is a ceremony or religious service for burying a dead person. It can be at a funeral parlor, a church, or other religious building. Sometimes it is at the cemetery.

# Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

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- grave, gravesite This is the place where the dead person's coffin is placed. This is usually in the ground, although in Jesus' day it was in a tomb (a hole in a rock or a cave.) The words "grave" and "tomb" can be used for either place. The marker with the person's name is called a "tombstone" or "grave marker."
- memorial service This is sometimes part of the funeral and sometimes on another day. It is a time to remember and honor the dead person. For Christians, the memorial service is also a time to think about heaven. We sing and pray, thanking God that we are never separated from Jesus. He is with us every moment through death and on into heaven. In heaven, we will live with Jesus forever. We also believe that we will see our loved ones in heaven if they are also followers of Jesus. We are sad to say "goodbye," but we are filled with peace and joy as we think about the future.
- procession Some people carry the coffin and others follow. In Jesus' day this would be from the house to the tomb outside the city. In our day it is often a long line of cars that follow the hearse, the car with the coffin. The procession goes from the funeral to the cemetery or gravesite. All traffic must wait for the funeral procession to pass by. Those who carry the coffin are called the "bearers."
- to be killed To say someone "was killed" is a strong way to say that someone died. People "are killed" by accidents, by storms, by murder (some other person kills them) or by war. Notice the passive tense. Something happened to this person instead of this person doing something themselves.
- to bury, burial To bury means to put a coffin and corpse into the grave. The word means putting something down into the ground, but sometimes corpses are put into buildings called mausoleums.
- to commit suicide To commit suicide is to kill yourself.
- to cremate, cremation To cremate means to burn a corpse and save the ashes. The ashes are put into an urn, like a bottle. The urns can be placed in a mausoleum or a loved one's home. The ashes can also be scattered over the land or sea.

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- o embalm            To use chemicals or herbs on a dead body to keep it from decaying (breaking down). In the United States, corpses are usually embalmed before burial.
  
- o pass away        This is another way of saying “to die.” We say, “My grandmother passed away.” If the person has been dead for awhile, we say they are “no longer living.” We sometimes avoid saying the word “dead” (the state of being) or “died” (the past of “to die”) when talking about people.
  
- o rise from the dead (Also “the resurrection”) To come alive again after being dead. Jesus is the only one in history who rose from the dead. Jesus brought at least three people back to life again, but no one brought Jesus back to life. It is good to look at the historical evidence for the resurrection because if Jesus had the power to rise from the dead, then what he said about himself must be true.
  
- widow, widower    A widow is a woman whose husband is dead, and a widower is a man whose wife is dead.

### **The Final Word**

“I am the way and the truth and the life.  
No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Jesus in John 14:6

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### The One?

**In the last lesson**, Jesus taught his disciples what the Heavenly Father<sup>5</sup> is like, and how the Heavenly Father wants them to live.

**This time**, the lesson is about Jesus. The disciples will learn from his actions and his words. Could he be “The One”?

### Community Time



### Funerals

The lesson begins with a funeral.<sup>6</sup>

Have you ever been to a funeral?

If you want to talk about it, tell us what happened.

What different traditions are there for respecting or remembering a dead person?

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<sup>5</sup> Jesus calls God in Heaven, “Our Heavenly Father.”

<sup>6</sup> A funeral is a ceremony to honor a person who just died. These questions can also be answered during the lesson. See the LINK section.

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