

The Discipler's Commentary
Answer Outline for the Discipler
Luke 7

7:1-10 – The healing of the centurion's servant; the centurion's life was characterized by love

- *Perhaps the first thing that needs to be explained to the disciple is what a centurion is.*
- *Explain the consequences for a holy Jewish man to be responding to a Gentile and what implications there would be if Jesus were to enter the centurion's house?*
- *The discipler will certainly want to point out the love exhibited by the centurion, both concerning his servant and in his help for the Jewish people, as well as his respect for Jesus.*
- *Explain what a "bond-servant" is, and how one became a bond-servant in biblical times (as opposed to an ordinary servant).*
- *Ensure that the disciple understands why Jesus said of the centurion, "...Not even in Israel have I found such great faith."*
- *Ensure that the disciple understands that Jesus' interaction with the Gentile centurion will have great implications in the Book of Acts when Peter is called by God to visit the centurion Cornelius.*

7:11-17 – The raising of the widow's son from the dead; a sign of Elijah (1 Kings 17)

- *Help the disciple see the relationship between the spiritually "dead" centurion (from a Jewish point of view) and the physically dead son of the widow.*
- *Explain to the disciple why the loss of a widow's son was such a terrible thing in Jesus' day.*
- *Explain the implications of a Jewish person touching a dead body (clean vs. unclean), and why it was an important act that Jesus touch the dead son.*
- *The discipler might want to have the disciple look up the passage in 1 Kings 17 to see the comparison with Elijah.*
- *Have the disciple find the "love message" in this incident.*

7:18-22 – The query by the disciples of John the Baptist: "Are You the Expected One?"

- *Remind the disciple who John the Baptist is, and not to confuse this John with the writer of the gospel.*
- *Define "Expected One" and, if necessary, review for the disciple the Jewish expectation of a Messiah.*
- *Allow the disciple to speculate why John the Baptist may be questioning whether or not Jesus is the Expected One. Perhaps the disciple might want to look up the passages from Isaiah.*
- *This is a good place to introduce the concept of "One Messiah but two comings of the Messiah."*
- *Ask the disciple what expectations he or she has from becoming a Christian. Are those expectations realistic and according to God's plan, or are they unrealistic, based on hope, and not substantiated with Scripture. Apply that to John and what expectations he may have had.*
- *See if the disciple can figure out why the second coming of Christ has not taken place. (The answer is simple: God is delaying Jesus' return so that as many people as possible can hear the gospel message and be saved.)*

7:23-30 – The results of the call for repentance by John the Baptist: some accept, others reject

- *If this hasn't been done already in chapter 3, review the ministry of John the Baptist compared to other Old Testament prophets, and in light of Malachi 3:1.*
- *See if the disciple can figure out the answer to verse 28; that is, that there is "no one greater than John," yet "he who is least...is greater than he." (The answer is in the commentary.)*
- *Explain to the disciple that the phrase "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" have the same meaning.*
- *Very important for the disciple to comprehend is why both John the Baptist's and Jesus' messages were rejected by Israel's spiritual leaders. (Hint: it all has to do with the issue of personal sin and the need for repentance.)*

7:31-35 – Jesus' judgment on the generation: not only is the generation like children (childlike), it is illogical

- *Explain the difference between music made by a flute and music that is a "dirge." Show how these two types of music are associated with both John the Baptist's and Jesus' messages.*
- *Make sure the disciple understands that what Jesus is saying in verses 31-35 is that it is a lose-lose situation for the messenger. The spiritual leaders will always find something wrong with the message and the messenger. However, verse 35....*
- *See if the disciple can figure out the meaning of verse 35. The key word is "Yet," and the meaning is essentially this: those who choose to believe and follow John the Baptist and Jesus will eventually be vindicated (proven correct; avenged) in the end.*

7:36-50 – The incident in a Pharisee's house: the woman's faith in Jesus resulted in her being saved

- *Explain to the disciple how a Jewish dinner took place; that is, reclined at a table (as opposed to da Vinci's painting of the Last Supper!).*
- *Explain what were the normal customs for inviting a guest into a house, and how Jesus was neglected in regard to those customs. Show how that relates to the behavior of the woman.*
- *As a good exercise, have the disciple tell the story in his or her own words. It's a good way to get the story right!*
- *Make sure the disciple picks up on the irony of who is the "greater sinner" and the real sinner here.*
- *Ask the disciple why the Pharisee's answer to Jesus question in verse 42 is so ironic.*
- *How do the Pharisees betray their true heart by asking the question, "If this man were a true prophet...."*
- *Have the disciple describe the relationship between love and forgiveness. Make sure the disciple understands why this concept is so important in understanding the gospel.*
- *Help the disciple see the contrasts of love from the woman and the lack of love from Simon.*
- *Help the disciple sort through these three concepts: faith, love and forgiveness of sins. Which came first? What resulted in sins being forgiven? (The answer is this: faith comes first, then comes the forgiveness of sins, then comes the love and gratitude for Jesus once one knows that their sins have been forgiven. The woman's acts of love were the result of her faith. It was not love that saved her...it was her faith in Jesus.)*