

Saving Faith | Luke 7 Sermon Discussion Participant Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To reflect on what saving faith looks like through three encounters between Jesus and people, like us, wrestling to have genuine faith.

Icebreaker: David Cover started worship asking what song, album, or band hooked you after first hearing them. Is there an artist like this for you?

Transition: Luke 7 gives us three interactions with people wrestling for genuine faith. The first is a centurion, a Roman military commander, who has shocking faith.

Read:

Luke 7:1-10

¹ When Jesus had finished saying all this to the people who were listening, he entered Capernaum. ² When a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. ³ The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴ When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, ⁵ because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." ⁶ So Jesus went with them.

He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to say to him: "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof.

⁷ That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁸ For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go' and he goes; and that one, 'Come' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this' and he does it."

⁹ When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." ¹⁰ Then the men who had been sent returned to the house and found the servant well.

1. Based on this passage, how does the centurion show he had saving faith?

THE **crossing** **small groups**

2. Jesus “was amazed” by the centurion. He, a Roman military commander, saw himself as unworthy to receive anything from Jesus. How can we grow in this same reverence for Jesus?

Read:

[Luke 7:18-23](#)

¹⁸ John’s disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, ¹⁹ he sent them to the Lord to ask, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

²⁰ When the men came to Jesus, they said, “John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?’”

²¹ At the very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses, and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. ²² So he replied to the messengers, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ²³ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

3. John the Baptist sends people to ask if Jesus is the promised one. How does Jesus respond?

4. John, imprisoned, wrestles with doubt – his thoughts probably looked something like this... *if* Jesus is the Messiah, my circumstances *should* look different. Especially for *me!* *I* was the prophet who prepared the way for him. So, *why* am *I* in prison?

How have you seen people do the very same thing as John the Baptist? How do you do the same thing?

5. Jesus doesn’t definitively answer John’s doubting question. And there’s a sweetness in how Jesus treats doubt. Paraphrased, Jesus is saying: look around, dig into my character, see the restoration I’m bringing about.

How can our group better remember Jesus’s faithfulness? How can we better remind each other of what’s true of Jesus when doubts exist?

THE **crossing** **small groups**

For Further Study:

Dave talked about Exodus 14, when the Israelites, being chased by Pharaoh and the Egyptians, step into the riverbed of the Red Sea. Never had I considered the real emotions and doubt the Israelites would've been experiencing. (i.e. "Will the waters crash down on me?") The Gospel Coalition has a great article called "Get Out! Tim Keller on the Exodus Story" from June 2019 if your group wants to dig deeper into the doubt and faithfulness of the Israelites.

Read:

[Luke 7:36-47, 50](#)

³⁶ When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. ³⁷ A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. ³⁸ As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

³⁹ When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."

⁴⁰ Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

⁴¹ "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

⁴³ Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

⁴⁴ Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not

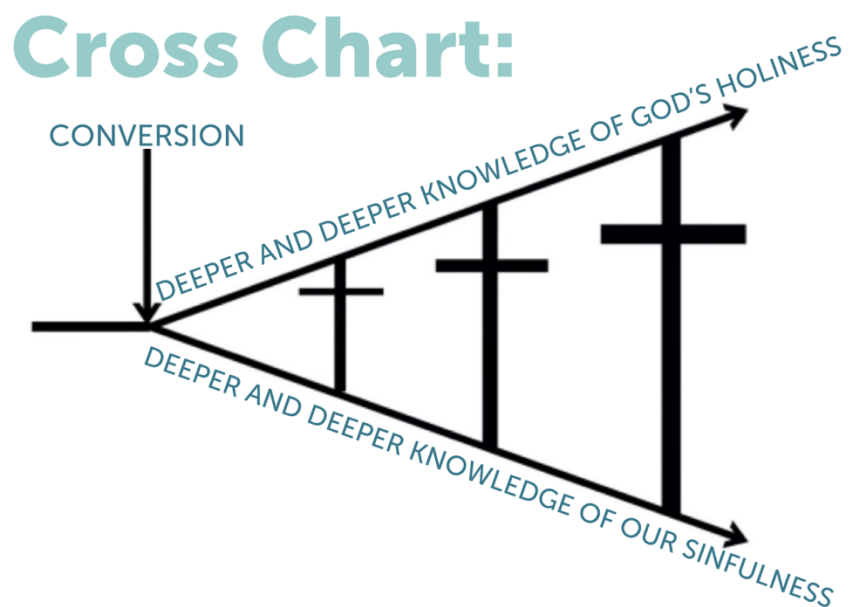
THE **crossing** **small groups**

put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. ⁴⁷ Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

⁵⁰ Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

6. How would you describe Simon?
7. Simon struggled to see his own sinfulness. How are we the same way?
8. The Gospel-Centered Life has a chart to display what a growing Christian looks like. Simon needed to grow in his awareness of his own sinfulness.

Do you need to grow, like Simon, in your awareness of your sinfulness? Or, do you need to grow in your awareness of God’s holiness, being more like the centurion?



THE **crossing** **small groups**

Sharing and Prayer:

Luke 7:50 "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

In the three interactions of Luke 7 about saving faith, where are you feeling tugged to grow?

1. **Grow in awe & reverence for God (modelled by the centurion)**
2. **Grow in creating space and gentleness for doubting; but not let my circumstances overrun my faith (challenged by Jesus to John the Baptist)**
3. **Grow in my awareness of my sin, humbly admitting my need for Jesus (challenged by the sinful woman and Jesus' interaction).**

Once the group has shared, close in prayer. Praying that we all grow in the peace promised in Luke 7:50, that with saving faith, peace abounds.