

May 26/24 – Leader’s Guide - Luke 8:40-56 “He will Satisfy our Hunger”

Read Luke 8:40-56

1. (vs. 40) The crowd was all waiting for him, hungry for his presence. What things stir up our hunger for the presence of Jesus? Hinder our hunger?

The crowd have already had encounters with Jesus that stir up their desire to see him again. The sense is that once we taste the fullness of who Jesus is we desire ever more of his presence.

There are likely two major threads of hindrance. One would be our sense of potential unworthiness, which would relate to a second major hindrance, how will he respond to me in light of my sense of unworthiness? If we sense in our sin that we are unworthy we will fear that Jesus will respond to us in repulsion.

There are other things that we believe satisfy our hunger. Wealth, pleasure, comfort, romance, etc... Perhaps we believe we can find satisfaction for our hearts in those other things so never consider Jesus?

2. These two healing stories are beautifully intertwined. They invite us to note the similarities and differences between the two recipients. As you compare the two intertwining stories what do you note?

The man is named, the woman is nameless

The man is wealthy, the woman impoverished.

The man is at the height of social standing, the woman is unclean.

The man has profound public faith, the woman has superstitious faith.

The man has an acute problem, the woman a chronic one.

3. In light of question number two above what do we learn about the character of Jesus?

Jesus’ response upends all of his cultural values. He places a woman before a man. Poverty before wealth. Superstitious faith before well-articulated. Chronic need over acute. Outcast over power. In this we see his holy, glorious, grace-shaped love. A love that would see a different response to others in our hearts in the presence of Jesus.

4. One of the major cultural surprises of this text is that the religious, wealthy, powerful man with an acute problem must wait, while the unclean woman with the chronic problem and superstitious faith is healed instantly. What impact would this wait have on... the ruler? Crowd? Disciples? Woman?

There are likely differences between the ruler, crowd, disciples – but they would I think all be different faces on the same struggle. Really?? why is he spending time with her? My / His daughter is dying, could he not come back to attend to her? There may even be a sense of his being entitled to Jesus' attentiveness because of what he had done for his community. That sense of entitlement coming to the surface in light of Jesus' love of the woman could potentially lead to deep repentance and profound heart change for all involved.

Woman – she likely is wondering why Jesus isn't now that she's healed moving on to serve the ruler. She would have a deep sense of her value in this exchange and her healing would be brought to its fullness. She has been welcomed into community. She has been brought into a transformed relationship with Jesus by faith. She will forever bear witness to the glory of God.

5. Have you had an experience where a delay in answer to prayer has had a powerful impact on you? How does seeing the character of Jesus change your experience of delayed or unanswered prayer?

This is a personal reflection question. Once again, your openness will set the tone. Try to think through the question ahead of time so that you can help others reflect themselves.

I (Tim) have had many moments of unanswered prayer. In the delay, in the presence of Jesus, I have been shaped, formed, given God's perspective on my prayers. I have seen my sin that leads me to pray in the way that I did. I have had my idols exposed revealing that I was seeking what I believed God could give me rather than God himself. In the end it made me thankful that Jesus didn't answer or didn't answer in the way that I wanted.

Is this the case with every unanswered prayer – or course not! But the more and more we behold the character of Jesus it leads us to wonder - Why would we want to rush someone like this?

6. In Jesus death is but a nap to be awakened from. What impact does such a truth have on us?

The following is a quote from J.C. Ryle (former Bishop of Liverpool) that brings to the surface many of the impacts of this truth...

It enables us to feel that the great business of life is a settled business, the great debt a paid debt, the great disease a healed disease and the great work a finished work; such that all other business, diseases, debts, and works are by comparison small. As a result we are patient in

tribulation, calm under bereavements, unmoved in sorrow – not afraid of evil tidings, in every condition content, for it gives us a fixedness of heart. It sweetens our bitter cups, it lessens the burden of our crosses, it smooths the rough places over which we travel, and it lightens the valley of the shadow of death. It makes us always feel that we have something solid beneath our feet – and something firm under our hands – [and in light of his love] – a sure friend by the way – and a sure home at the end.

7. Throughout the sermon Tim kept asking – “Are you hungry, hungry for the presence of Jesus” – what did that question stir up in you?

The prayerful hope of this sermon was to stir up our hunger to be in – and live from - a place of resting in the presence of Jesus.

Reflect on the question yourself and if a story of how you have lived out of the presence of Jesus, or a season where your hunger was stirred up please do share it. We are mutually encouraged by such an offering, and the offerings of others yours may bring to the surface.