

Session 4: Outsiders

Scripture questions:

Luke 4:16-21

This passage is Christ's proclamation about the beginning and nature of His ministry. In your own words, what kind of ministry do you think Jesus is emphasizing? What kind of people is He focusing on?

Luke 6:20-26

In this passage, what kinds of people are blessed? What kinds of people receive condemnation?

Why do you think this is so?

Luke 16:19-31

Luke 18:18-27

How are the wealthy portrayed in these two stories? What did they fail to do?

Luke 7:1-10

Luke 7:11-17

Luke 7:36-39

Luke 10:29-37

Luke 19:1-10

Luke 11:37-54

Luke 13:10-17

Luke 15:1-7
Luke 18:9-14

How does Christ portray the religious insiders? How would you describe their attitudes?

Gospel of Luke: the third and largest Gospel in the Bible. Luke, the writer of this Gospel, was not an apostle, but was a part of the early Church and served with the apostles.

Christ favors outsiders: the poor, the widows, the non-Jews, those outside the circles of power, and those that society mocks. One of the reasons for this is the compassionate nature of Christ. Outsiders stand in need of compassion that Christ freely gives. After all, Christ came to ransom, heal, and liberate those that needed Him in their lives. Christ's embrace of outsiders is also driven by their attitudes toward God. Outsiders reflect God's compassion and embrace who Christ is and what He teaches.

In contrast to the outsiders are the insiders: the rich, the powerful, and the social elite. They failed to appreciate the work of Christ and lacked God's compassion. Many of the social elite were unconcerned about finding those who were lost. In fact, in the book of Luke, there is not one positive example of an insider. Jesus clearly teaches that wealth and power stand in the way of fully embracing God.

How does the book of Luke relate to you?

Most of us are actually insiders and have wealth, status, and acceptance. We are limiting God's work among others because of our wealth, our social economic standing, and by limiting the compassion and activity of God in the lives of others.

Application Questions:

There are people that you may marginalize or reject because of their background, race, wealth, politics, or views. What groups of people do you find yourself pushing away? How can you overcome these attitudes?

The Gospel of Luke teaches that wealth stands between you and God. Why do you think this is so? What can you do to make sure that wealth does not come between you and God? What daily habits can you implement to achieve this goal?

Jesus embraces the vilest of sinners (liars, swindlers, prostitutes, etc.) without first requiring them to get their lives in order. How should Jesus' actions toward these people shape how you practice your faith and live your life?

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