

## “Recipe for Right Living”

Text: Luke 7:18-23

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Park Boulevard Presbyterian Church ([www.pbpc.org](http://www.pbpc.org))

Oakland, California

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Today we continue our series “Journey to Justice”. I’ve asked Ella Jane Skinner to share with you an experience she just had.

God used Ella Jane’s prayers to bless the woman in the Emergency Room.

- Ella Jane couldn’t provide medical help.
- She could intercede for the woman before God who, according to Job, gives and takes away.
- Ella Jane’s faithfulness to care for the life of another individual through prayer is part of the recipe for right living as a disciple of Jesus.

We’re looking at justice through the life of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. Justice means for the Christian do what is morally right according to God’s word, the Bible. This morning we’re going to look at “Recipe for Right Living” from Luke 7:18-23.

Ginnie Daniel reads Luke 7:18-23 & Prays!

Jesus’ response to John’s disciples gives us a recipe for right living. Let’s look at a couple of examples in this passage to gain a greater understanding of right living.

### I. Look to Jesus example of compassion.

- A. Luke 7:18-19, *“John’s disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, he sent them to the Lord to ask, ‘Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?’”*
  1. John is in prison for his public denouncement of King Herod Antipas’ marriage to his brother’s wife.
- B. Imprisoned, John the Baptist was confused because the reports he received about Jesus were unexpected and incomplete. John’s doubts were natural, and Jesus didn’t rebuke him for them. Instead, Jesus responded in a way that John would understand: Jesus explained that he was accomplishing what the Messiah was supposed to do.
- C. Jesus was fulfilling what Isaiah prophesied about the Messiah in Isaiah 35 & 61.
  1. Isaiah 35:5-6 – *“Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy....”*
  2. Isaiah 61:1 – *“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.”*
  3. Jesus says, the facts are these: the sick and the suffering and the humble poor are experiencing God’s power and hearing the Good News.

- D. This is not what John was expecting. Luke 3:17 tells us that John associated the Messiah with impending judgment. He would have expected Jesus to say, "The wrath of God is on the march." But instead, Jesus said, "The mercy of God is here." Jesus' answer was, "Go back and tell John that the love of God is here."
- E. One of the reasons Jesus came into the world was to show us how to live. Jesus tells us in John 14:12, *"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."*
1. Through Jesus, God acted in human experience and relieved the suffering of the poor and the afflicted.
  2. In Jesus, God declared that He is on the side of those who suffer and those who are in need.
  3. Followers of Jesus also care about human suffering and minister to them.
- F. Are you willing to get outside your comfort zone and care for people who are suffering? Do other people see you as one who cares for the hurting? How would your life look differently if you were actively ministering to the suffering?
1. Teen Challenge illustration
  2. BART example, auto store example, rent in seedy area example.
- G. How can we get involved with those who are suffering and in need the way Jesus did?
1. Easter Food Drive, summer backpack giveaway, volunteer at City Team or Harbor House in Oakland.
  2. World Impact ministry opportunities in Oakland – online
  3. Volunteer at local hospitals
  4. Mentoring program for High School students (100 volunteers, but 500 more young men want help)
- H. These are some ways we can participate in ministries of compassion.

## II. Look to Jesus' example of speaking the truth in love.

- A. Luke 7:22 – *"and good news is preached to the poor."* Every human being's greatest need is to know God. Jesus cared for people's suffering and proclaimed God's love to them by speaking it into their lives.
- B. Ministry is to speak God's love to people you are helping.
1. George Patterson in Honduras
- C. All people need to hear and know that God is the one who loves them and cares for them. Jesus spoke to the poor in Spirit – and that's everyone who is spiritually separated from God, the "spiritually bankrupt" – because of sin.
1. Example: Canvassing – "I'll be praying for you." "If you ever need someone to talk to you, I'm available."
- D. How can you communicate the good news to those you come in contact?
1. Help them (Bike illustration)
  2. Ask, "How can I pray for you?"
  3. Share with them that God loves them.

- E. I believe that in our secular culture, we have to care for people's needs intentionally and speak about Jesus into people's lives. People aren't thinking about God and we "mind our own business too much."
1. Our job is to help people know that God loves them, forgives them and wants to care for them. That God has a great plan for their lives.
  2. It's important that people know that you are a follower of Jesus, a Christian, that you'll pray for them and are available to help them.

The word Jesus has for us from Luke 7 is that God loves and cares for those who are suffering and in need. Jesus wants us to be His hands and feet for those who are hurting and his voice of Good News to all people. This is the recipe for right living.

**PRAY!**

**God of justice, what a beautiful picture You have painted for us this morning of what right living looks like through the life of Jesus. We confess that to be compassion in action and to speak the truth in love to people is outside of our comfort zone. We need You to empower us to care for people who are suffering and to proclaim the Good News of Your love and forgiveness to them. Help us to become a church family that cares about justice and mercy for all people; to not only care but to become involved. Move us from lip service to action. Thank You for the way You are working in each one of our lives. May we bring You glory in how we live each moment of each day. Remind us every morning that the life we live is not about us but about You and what matters to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.**