

Sent Week 5: Look for the spiritually hungry.

Illustration:

Jr. high was a fun season of life. I know many people hated it. Zits, awkward voice cracks, patchy facial hair and that girl who had cooties now kind of looks cute. Here, I have a picture of Leslie and I.

Middle school is a mess. Yet, those were also amazing days. Like all of us I met a lot of people during those years.

Most of our friendships during those years start with a common interest, mission or frustration. It's two people really hating school finding kinship in their "enemy". The core of the relationship is venting about their teachers.

It's two people playing sports. Their common objective of winning the game binds them.

It's two people liking video games. They daily sit at the lunch table talking about their progress. Most of us have all grown apart. What bonded us was our common interests and they changed over the years.

Yet, a few became lifelong best friends.

One guy is named James. I have a picture of him. Looking back I realized the staying agent for us was a common deep spiritual hunger.

At that age we couldn't articulate it well, we couldn't define or defend it, but it was there. As the years passed this common bind grew stronger and stronger.

We were spiritually hungry. We both wanted something that we didn't grow beyond but into, together.

We came from very different homes. Mine was spiritually well educated and generationally deep believers. James was from a single parent home with loose spiritual connections. Yet our hearts were the same. Hungry for more.

There is something about spiritually hungry people. It doesn't matter if they are lifelong Christians in their latter days of life or brand-new baby believers who still have messy lives. You can tell when you are with someone who is spiritually hungry.

This is James. This is me. Nearly every conversation we have will dwell on faith.

Luke 7:1-10

After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ² Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. ³ When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴ And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, ⁵ for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue." ⁶ And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. ⁷ Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸ For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." ⁹ When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to

the crowd that followed him, said, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.”¹⁰ And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well.¹

- Remember context. Just a few weeks ago we talked about Luke saying the good news was for the poor. The good news of Jesus is for the poor or *Ani* in Hebrew (Luke 4:18; referencing Isaiah 61:1-2). The poor refers to so much more than those who don't have money. It refers to people of low social status, social outsiders, and those who have made poor decisions.² When you think of the poor think of those with little money, but also think of Levi the tax collector, the sick, the prostitutes, and ultimately even the Gentiles (non-Jews).
- Luke chapters 7-8 is a block of stories showing this truth. There is a story about a healing of a bedridden sick woman, a man with a skin disease, Jesus welcoming into his community a tax collector and a prostitute. They are all forgiven and restored. The new binding agent isn't their bloodline, but their faith in the new Adam, Jesus.³ He even makes these spiritually hungry people the New Israel (Luke 6:12-49) by appointing 12 new leaders called disciples. They correspond with the 12 tribes.
- There is a heart posture that God seeks and seeks out God.
 - You will seek me and find me when you seek with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13
 - God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. James 4:6
 - Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them. John 14:21
 - When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him (the non-Jewish Roman Centurion) and turning to the crowd that followed him said, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.” Luke 7:9⁴

What does this mean for us?

- There I was, a zit covered, voice squeaking, lanky middle school kid. James and I began to have a spiritual conversation and I realized something in him is hungry for God like I am. There is a heart posture that God seeks and seeks out God. These aren't necessarily mature people, educated people or even people of the same race.
- I feel in my heart a desire to connect with more people like this. I feel like our church needs spiritually hungry people of every age, maturity, race and education to come together. Where spiritually hungry people gather we find revival.

Next Steps:

Let's pray that God would increase our spiritual hunger. Trinity is a place of passion for Christ! Not just knowledge about Him but a deep hunger for the living God!

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Lk 7:1–10.

² "Watch: Luke Acts Book Collection Video Series | Bibleproject™". 2021. Bibleproject. <https://bibleproject.com/explore/category/luke-acts-series/>.

³ "The Gospel of Luke Tells the Story of How Jesus Creates a New Israel.: BibleProject™." BibleProject. Accessed February 04, 2021. <https://bibleproject.com/learn/luke/>.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Lk 7:9.