

A FAITH THAT MADE JESUS MARVEL
Luke 7:1-10

John 14:11
11 ***Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.***

A. We spent several weeks on the character of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

1. Why? Because, for Him to LIVE IN US we must LIVE LIKE HIM.
2. Today we begin a new series that will give us courage to follow Jesus: **His miracles.**

B. Why do the gospels record His miracles?

1. **To show us** His teaching in action; parables are illustrations of His teaching, miracles are life examples of His teaching.
2. **To assure us** that He is God and that He was working for God the Father.

John 3:2
2 this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him,
"Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

3. **To help us** understand the power of God.

- a. He gave vocal commands to creation (John 1:1-5; Mark 4:37-41)
- b. Distance didn't impede Him (John 4:46-54)
- c. Time didn't restrict Him (John 5:1-9)
- d. Insufficiency didn't stop Him (John 6:1-14)
- e. Dilemma's didn't frighten Him (John 6:16-21)
- f. Demons didn't intimidate Him (Mark 1:23-26; 9:25-27)
- g. Death didn't end His life or anyone else He wished to raise (Luke 7:13-15; John 2:19-22)

4. **To prove to us** that He is Christ (Messiah) prophesied in the Scripture.

- a. Isa 35:4-6 // Fulfilled Matt 11:5
- b. Isa 53:4 // Fulfilled Matt 8:16-17
- c. Isa 61:1-2 // Fulfilled Luke 4:18-19

5. **To move us** to respond.

- a. Anger (Matt 12:9-14; John 11:47-48, 53)
- b. Superficial commitment (John 6:26-27)
- c. Genuine faith (John 20:30-31; Mark 16:9)

John 20:30-31

30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; **and that believing you may have life in His name.**

Mark 16:9

9 Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, **He first appeared to Mary Magdalene**, from whom He had cast out seven demons.

[Let's begin our study of Jesus' miracles (Lk 7:1-10).

I. WHAT COMPASSION!

- A. He "highly regarded" (valued) his servant (7:2).

Luke 7:2

2 And a centurion's slave, who was **highly regarded** by him, was sick and about to die.

1 Peter 2:4 (6)

4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and **precious** [same word] in the sight of God,

- 1. An uncommon response for a centurion; a common response...get another.

Matthew 20:24-28

24 And hearing this, THE TEN BECAME INDIGNANT WITH THE TWO BROTHERS. 25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "**You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them.** 26 It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

[A Gentile soldier was giving the great apostles a lesson on shepherding. Amazing!]

II. WHAT A RE [COMMENDATION]!

- A. The Jewish elders gave this centurion a glowing recommendation to Jesus.

Luke 7:3-5

3 When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave. 4 When they came to Jesus, they earnestly implored Him, saying, "**He is worthy for You to grant this to him; 5 for he loves our nation and it was he who built us our synagogue.**"

1. This is downright shocking.
2. The Romans were an occupying force and disliked by the Jews, and Romans didn't care much for the Jews either.
3. But, here are the Jewish elders running errands for a Roman commander and bragging on how good he is.

B. All those complements are nice, but notice their rational.

1. They didn't say, "Jesus! This Roman is a humble, meek and godly man."
2. No, they praised the centurion for his works, the kind of works people think will earn them a right to go to heaven.
3. Those Jews failed to understand (as many do today) is that no one is "worthy" of the Lord's attention and care.

Romans 3:10 (Psa 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Ecc 7:20)

10 as it is written, "**THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOTE EVEN ONE;**

Romans 5:6

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly.**

- Before the 1600's people considered water to be clean if they could see through it.
- But, in 1674 the Dutch scientist Leeuwenhoek (La-vin-hoo-k) filled a glass with water and looked into it with his new microscope and saw "very many small animalcules."
- "I now saw very plainly that these were little eels, or worms, lying all huddled up together and wriggling. The water seemed to be alive..."
- When we turn the microscope of God's Word on our hearts we will find a world of unworthiness.

[Jesus doesn't care for us because we are worthy, or because we've done something to deserve His attention.

He cares for us because He loves us enough to have compassion for us in our present condition.]

III. WHAT A SELF-EVALUATION!

- A. The Jewish elders were saying, “He is worthy for you to grant this to him,” but twice the centurion says the very opposite.

Luke 7:6-7

6 Now Jesus started on His way with them; and when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself further, for ***I am not worthy for You to come under my roof;*** 7 for this reason ***I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You,*** ~~but just say the word, and my servant will be healed.~~

1. “Distance” plays a role in this account; the centurion sees a great distance (gap) between himself and Jesus.
2. The Jews didn’t sense it, but he did; it’s called humility, the absence of pride.

- B. Pride is one of the great barriers between God and man.

1. When Peter wanted to limit the number of times he would forgive someone, Jesus said, “Remember you are an unworthy servant yourself!” (Luke 17:10).
2. When James and John wanted positions of greatness in the kingdom, the Lord shook his head and said, “You don’t get it. In my kingdom the greatest are the servants” (Mark 10:43-45).

3. When the Rich YR was unwilling to give up his position, power and possessions to become a humble disciple and follower Jesus, he proved his unfitness for the kingdom of heaven (Mark 10:17-31).

Indeed, ***“God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble”*** (James 4:6).

[The centurion’s feeling of unworthiness didn’t separate him from Jesus, instead, it made him the object of Jesus help!]

IV. WHAT FAITH!

- A. The most surprising aspect of this event – the thing that caused even Jesus to be surprised – was the faith of this centurion.

Luke 7:7-8

7 for this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but ***just say the word, and my servant will be healed.*** 8 For I also am a man placed under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it."

1. The centurion had a lot of authority;

...he knew what the WORDS OF AUTHORITY could get done,

...and he believed Jesus had A POSITION OF AUTHORITY far greater than his own.

...He believed that Jesus could say A SINGLE WORD and make death run away like a frightened servant.

B. Where did the centurion get this magnitude of faith?

1. There is only one way to “get” faith; God gives us access to faith, saving faith, through hearing His word concerning His Son Jesus the Christ (Rom 10:17).
2. The centurion “**heard about Jesus**”; that’s what it says in verse 3.
3. How did the centurion hear about Jesus?
 - a. Jesus healed the son of a nobleman in this vicinity (Capernaum; John 4:46-54 – speculation).
 - b. At any rate, **what he heard** caused him to believe that Jesus had the authority to speak and make things happen.

C. I don’t know about you, but the Lord’s response to the centurion surprises me.

1. Can you make the Lord “marvel” by something you do? Can you make Him wonder with amazement?

Luke 7:9

9 Now **when Jesus heard this, He marveled at him**, and turned and said to the crowd that was following Him, “**I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith.**”

1. The word “found” implies that the Lord is looking for people with true faith.
2. We tend to think that Jesus wants people with extraordinary gifts to carry out His will in the church and in the world.
3. But here we learn that the Lord simply wants people that will trust His authority.

D. The centurion’s faith caused the Lord to marvel.

1. Only two times in the gospels is it said that Jesus “marveled”.

Mark 6:5-6

5 And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And **He [marveled] wondered at their unbelief**. And He was going around the villages teaching.

2. Nothing gladdens the heart of the Lord more than when we put our faith in the authority of His word.

3. And, on the other hand, nothing saddens the Lord more than when we don't.

The Roman commander shows us all what it means to have Christ to live in us.

[What **compassion**, what a **recommendation**, what a **self-evaluation**, and what a **marvelous faith** -----in a Roman soldier.]

CLOSING

- A. What we learn here is that Lord is looking for people like this centurion.
 1. People who know that Jesus Christ is the true Lord.

 2. People who can say (and believe it), "Lord, speak the word and it will be done. Command me, and I will obey You."

Luke 7:10

10 When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Matthew 8:13

13 And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed that very moment.