

## **Title: Marvelous Faith in a Marvelous Lord**

Text: Luke 7:1-10

Date: February 8, 2026

Proverbs 3:20 says that *"by God's knowledge the deeps of the earth broke open, the clouds dropped down daily, the dew."* And so, if you have your copy of God's word with you this morning, and I hope you do, please turn to Luke 7. Luke 7, where we're going to begin a new chapter in the gospel of Luke in more ways than one. Not only are we literally starting a new chapter in our study with the beginning of chapter 7 here, but we're also starting a new section in this gospel as we've just completed Luke's opening introduction that's found in chapters 1-6 and are now transitioning into the main body of this gospel proper.

Now this main body of Luke is marked by two central movements or sections. If you want to organize your thoughts around them as you're studying in your own study of the gospel of Luke in chapter 7 through most of chapter 9, we see Jesus's ministry in Galilee of Northern Israel. And in this first section, Jesus demonstrates and extends his invitation of saving faith to him to every type of individual from every type of background. He invites all to become his disciples. And then from the end of chapter 9 to the end of the gospel, you see Jesus's movement of ministry south towards Jerusalem, climaxing in his death and resurrection. And in this second section of the gospel of Luke, Jesus begins to disciple those who have responded to him in faith. And he begins teaching them many core doctrines and practices of faith, showing as Luke stated at the very beginning of this gospel, if you remember, that Christianity is not a manmade invention or religion. It is grounded in the very person, work, and teaching of Jesus Christ himself.

Well, today we're starting this grand journey now in earnest. And it all begins right here in chapter 7 and as a natural outflow of the sermon that Jesus just delivered to us last week in chapter 6. If you remember that whole sermon about the transforming compassion and power of Jesus finished in verse 46 with a call to come to Christ in desperate dependency. In the opening verses of chapter 7, tell us how to do that, how to come to Christ and be his disciple. And that is by faith. You and I are called after we've been introduced to the person and work of Jesus Christ. The first thing the gospel of Luke calls on us to do is to trust in Jesus Christ as Lord.

This truth is shown to us very clearly in verses 1-10 of chapter 7 as Luke records for us a powerful illustration of the saving faith that Jesus is calling for. What does it look like for a man to obey the call that Jesus has given in chapter 6 to truly become a disciple and trust in him? It looks like the man that we're going to see this morning in Luke 7:1-10, a man who had marvelous faith in a marvelous Lord. And today we're going to see this example of marvelous faith broken up into three main sections. First in verses 1-2, we're going to see the need for faith. Then in verses 3-8, we'll see the example of faith. And then finally in verses 9-10, we'll see the response of faith. So, the need, example, and response of faith. We have a lot to discover this morning.

So, with that in mind, please stand with me if you're able out of attention and honor for the word of God as I read our passage before us today from Luke 7 starting verse 1 on into verse 10. Luke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit writes these words for us today.

*"After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, 'He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue.' 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. Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. 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.' 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.' And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well."*

This is the word of God by which the Lord has established this earth and holds it fast and by which he endures in his faithfulness to all generations.

Let's pray.

Father, we thank you so much for the privilege we have to come under your word. Father, I thank you for how this passage shows us the glory of Jesus, of his power and compassion, of how he is most thoroughly trustworthy and how those who call upon you in faith are never put to shame. Father, I pray that as we consider from this morning's passage, marvelous faith, and a marvelous Lord that you would work in our body today, and that you would create and cultivate that same type of faith for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. So, give us this faith, Father, that we might glorify you as disciples of Jesus Christ.

We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated.

So, Luke begins his illustration in his example here, what it looks like to truly trust in Jesus Christ and desperate dependency by faith by showing us first through this story, the need for faith in verses 1-2. And here we're given the setting for the story and account. In verse 1, it says, *"After he had finished all of his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum."* So, Luke is directly connecting this account to the sermon that has just preceded it. Jesus is traveling from his teaching on the plane, and he goes into the city. And that's where we're told in verse 2, *"Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him."* So here we're introduced to the two main characters of this account that we're going to be following.

First, there is Jesus, who is obviously the main focus of this entire gospel. And then there's a second individual in this account, who is this centurion. Now a centurion was a Roman officer, a general who is in charge of a hundred men or so. The number would sometimes fluctuate based on their specific posts, but their name came from the amount of soldiers that they would generally be called on to supervise. And centurions, what's interesting about them is that they gained their positions from being battle hardened soldiers. They earned their ranks, not through family lineage or through royalty, but through outstanding valor on the battlefield. These were commanding officers who had earned the respect of their men, who had led their company in the heat of battle in the truest sense of the term, not just by decree, but by example, fighting beside their men and demonstrating the very things that they would command their soldiers to do. Whenever the New Testament speaks of centurions, it's interesting, it's always in a positive light.

Well, this battle-hardened man evidently had a soft heart towards God and towards others that is quite remarkable. Because look at verse 2, we are told that this *"centurion had a servant."* And the word that's used to describe this household servant in verse 7 means child or young boy. So, what had most likely happened is that there was a young boy who had been assigned to this military man to learn about duty and manhood and service and to serve him in whatever ways were needed. And at this time, verse 2 tells us that this *"servant had become sick and was at the point of death and was highly valued by him."* This is significant because servants back then were not always treated as having high value by their Roman masters.

In fact, Cato, a Roman historian, stated once that farmers should examine all of their tools once a year and throw out the broken ones, including the slaves. And back then, a Roman master had the legal authority, in fact, to kill a servant if that servant proved himself to be no longer useful to him. So, a typical master in the Roman empire would have likely just done one of three things in this scenario. One, he would have just treated the servant with basic medical care like a farmer would perhaps for a member of his livestock and left it at that. Two, he could have just ignored this servant's illness altogether and let it just play out. Or three, he could have chosen to put the servant out of his misery when it became clear that he was at the point of death and was not going to recover.

But what's interesting is that this centurion does none of those things. And in fact, he goes far beyond what was typical, seeking out unconventional, miraculous, and supernatural healing at the hands of this astonishing preacher that has appeared named Jesus. And this centurion is going to do all of this because, as we're told here, this young boy was highly valued. He was precious to this centurion. This hardened soldier had great compassion and affection for this young boy, showing us already that there's something unique about this man and his heart. He loves those, he loves those that aren't typically loved. This is the need for faith being presented here. And it helps to remember that this was a real account of real people going through a real experience.

Those of us who have experienced a situation where someone close to us is nearing death can imagine what this centurion was going through. He goes to bed thinking of the young boy. The first thought he has when he wakes up is about the young boy all over again. He gets up quickly and he asks one of his

servants, how's the boy doing? And imagine when he hears the response, he's doing no better. In fact, I don't think there's much time left for him. The boy, that precious young boy, was about to die. And there, standing helpless at the threshold, looking in, stands the centurion, a man marked by action, realizing the serious truth, he can do nothing for this young man. And that if that boy is going to live, something impossible has to be done for him. This is the need for faith, as the centurion is confronted with an impossible situation that he has no power to deal with on his own.

Next, let's see the example of faith in verses 3-8. And here we see four facets to the centurion's exemplary faith in these verses. Indeed, aspects of saving faith. And the first aspect of this centurion's saving faith is that he believed in the pronouncement of Jesus. That's what you see at the beginning of verse 3. The first aspect of this exemplary faith is that he believed in the pronouncement of Jesus. We read, *"When the centurion,"* did what, *"heard about Jesus. He sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant."* I want you to notice something. Hope suddenly shines into this hopeless situation that the centurion is facing when what happens? It's when we're told here he hears about Jesus. When someone tells him about Jesus.

We don't know who that person is, and I think that's completely fascinating. We don't even know their name. But because they opened their mouth and talked about Jesus, at least one centurion, possibly a young servant boy, many, many others are in heaven right now because a nameless individual opened their mouth and shared with this man the good news concerning Jesus Christ. Maybe it was like in 2 Kings 5 where Naaman, who is also a Gentile army commander, was notified about a man of God who could bring healing, and he was notified by one of his servant girls. Perhaps this centurion had a believing servant likewise, or maybe a soldier. And this believer was doing his regular duties, and he finally says this distraught centurion, like the young servant girl did in 2 Kings, have you ever considered asking Jesus? The centurions like who's Jesus? We don't know the details, but evidently this unknown person tells this centurion quite a lot about Jesus.

And it's some solid theology that this individual tells the centurion too, because we're going to see that the centurion exercises extraordinary faith based on the report that he received from this unnamed individual. And they told him about Jesus's great compassion, his preeminent authority, and his unlimited power. And the centurion acts in faith upon that pronouncement. This centurion believed in this pronouncement. He believed in this testimony about Jesus, even though he had never even seen him before. And thus, this centurion serves as a perfect example of faith for us today. For he believed without seeing, just like we do.

We believe in Jesus by faith in a reliable testimony, not by sight in something we have first seen or experienced. 1 Peter 1:8 describes this type of faith that we as believers possess when we read, *"Though you have not seen him, you love him. And though you do not see him now, you believe in him."* And as Jesus says later in John 20:29, *"Blessed are those who have not seen and have yet,"* what, *"believed."* That is this man. He believed solely in the reliable testimony given by someone to him about this person named Jesus.

And that I think is the first thing that we ought to chew on from this passage. Someone told this man about Jesus when he was facing an impossible situation. You and I, every human being is facing an impossible situation. That impossible situation is called the goodness of God. Our God is a good, good God. Therefore, this good, good God hates all things that are evil, all things that are less than good, that fall short of his good and glorious character.

Now there are times when we think about the goodness of the Lord, and it brings great comfort to us. For a good God often brings good things that we enjoy each and every day. But the goodness of God can also cause us to have some concerns. Because if we were to be honest, though God is good, we are not. God has revealed to himself in his word what his goodness looks like when it's lived out by a man or a woman or a child in this world. It looks like the 10 commandments. You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. You shall not lie, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, you shall not commit adultery. You shall worship the Lord God in him, only shall you serve. This is what goodness looks like from a human heart. And the law convicts us because though God is good, we are not. And to sin against an infinitely good and worthy God demands infinite punishment.

As I've used an example many, many times before, if you were to push your mother down the steps, you get in trouble with your father. If you were to push your father down the steps, you'd get in trouble with the police. You push a policeman down the steps, you get in trouble with the law to a greater degree. You push the president of the United States down the steps, we'll never see you again. The consequences of sin are in direct proportion to the greatness of the one you sin against. And when you sin against the infinitely worthy God of this universe, then you have nothing awaiting you but infinite consequences.

We are faced, ladies and gentlemen, with an impossible circumstance. We are sinners before a holy and good God. And you know what someone did for us when we were facing a hopeless circumstance like that? Someone came into your life, they opened up their mouth, and they told you the good news of Jesus Christ. That though you are a sinner, there is a man who did come, who was perfect, who stood in your place, his name was Jesus. And yes, your sins merit infinite punishment, but this Jesus was of such infinite worth, he could take the full penalty of all the sins of all of his people upon himself on the cross and pay it in finality so that you might be forgiven. And you, whose frame is but dust, touched by sin, and would enter into eternal condemnation, Jesus Christ rose from the dead so that you might have eternal living hope in Him. This is the good news that someone cared enough to talk to you about. This is Jesus. Someone told you about Jesus in the midst of your impossible circumstance. And they said, if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you'll be saved. And you believed by the grace of God, you believed in response to the good news of Christ.

So, first application from this sermon. Have you told anyone else about Jesus this past week? I'm so convicted by this. How many headlines have you read this week and shared with someone else because you thought that headline was so important? That news was so important. God the Son came from heaven, from eternal glory, to come to this earth, to die on the cross for sinners so that you could be

saved. And all you must do is believe. Did you tell anyone about that this past week? Then this is what I was convicted about. Then man, what in the world are you doing with your life? This is good news.

Have you told anybody about Jesus this past month, this past year? Or do you think God put you in that college just to get an education? Do you think God put you in that job just to get a paycheck? Do you think God put you into that community just so you'd have community benefits? Do you think God made you retired so you could collect seashells on the shore, started to steel from John Piper? Or are you in all these positions because your one reason why you're still here on earth is to tell people about Jesus? Perhaps this is the call of God upon many of us here this morning that we would, by the end of this coming week, be resolved to have told at least one person around us about Jesus Christ. And maybe it doesn't have to go very far. Maybe some of the people that we've neglected sit around our own dining room tables at breakfast, at lunch, at dinner.

Not to force a decision or to manipulate anyone, but just to be sure that at least the name of Jesus is heard by at least one person who desperately needs to hear it from you. To tell someone that you know Jesus and it might be good if they gave him a call as well. *"For how will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they going to believe in him who they've never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?"* Without someone sharing that good news with them? This man believed in the pronouncement that someone made to him about Jesus. And beloved, who knows how the Lord will use us this coming week in our pronouncement of Jesus Christ.

This man believed in the pronouncement of Jesus. He built his house upon the rock. And we know this because he acted upon it. As James 2:17 says, *"faith without works is dead."* And this centurion moves in faith. When this centurion heard the pronouncement that was shared with him about Jesus, he believed every single word of it. And we know this is the case because he acts. He sends to Jesus, as we find out here, a delegation of elders from the Jews, faith in action. And so, he believed in the pronouncement of Jesus.

Second, he believed in the predisposition of Jesus. That's at the end part of verse 3 and the beginning of verse 6. Luke tells us that these Jewish elders were sent to Jesus so that this centurion, through them, might ask Jesus to come and heal his servant. Here we see another essential aspect of this marvelous faith. Upon the pronouncement given to him, the centurion not only believed in Jesus' ability to heal his servant, but he also believed in Jesus' desire to heal his servant. He believed that if he called on Christ, Christ would not only be able to heal his servant, but there was a hope that Christ might even want to heal him. As shown by his many miracles throughout his entire ministry up until this point. This centurion believed in the merciful, compassionate disposition of Jesus towards those who come to him in need. And as do all of us who have trusted in him because Jesus has declared his predisposition towards those of us as well.

Jesus states in John 6:37, *"whoever comes to me,"* I will what? What does it say? *"Never cast out."* As Romans 10:11 reaffirms, *"whoever believes in him will never be put to shame."* And this has always been the predisposition of the Lord towards the weak and needy. As James 5:11 says, *"you have seen the purposes of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful towards you."* And as Moses reminded Israel of in

Deuteronomy 4:31, *"The Lord your God is a compassionate God. He will never fail you."* The centurion believed this. He believed in the compassionate predisposition of Jesus. And so, he sends these Jewish elders to ask Jesus to come and heal his servant who is at the point of death. He's a Gentile, Jesus is a Jew, and he thinks it might go over better if the request comes from some fellow Jews. After all, he was not worthy to come into the presence of Christ, but perhaps these respectable Jewish elders would be and would relay his request for them. And so, he sends these Jewish elders to Jesus.

Now this is quite something when you think about it. Leaders of the synagogue who served as local judges didn't usually go around doing favors for people. And yet here, these Jewish leaders come to plead earnestly with Jesus on behalf of a pagan Gentile Roman soldier. That, I mean, that is crazy. That is very odd. This centurion was a Gentile whom Jews hated, serving as a Roman soldier whom Jews really hated, serving under Herod Antipas whom Jews really, really hated and was probably stationed in Capernaum to keep the peace and to collect taxes, which the Jews really, really, really, really, really hated.

I mean, for every imaginable reason, these Jewish elders should absolutely despise this guy. And yet they don't. Why? Because there's something unique about this man that we see in verses 4-5. It says, *"And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, 'He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue.'" By his radical, selfless, sacrificial love, this centurion had won over even his enemies. As verse 5 says, he had shown love to the Jewish people who hated him to such a degree that "he himself built for them their very own synagogue," likely the same synagogue that Jesus had just taught from back in chapter 4 & 6. And so, because of those two reasons, on the basis of this centurion's works, and in contrast to the centurion's own self-assessment that he'll give later, the Jewish elders come to Jesus and say, he's worthy. He's worthy of this.*

You know, that's the way organized religion always views, views it, that a man can somehow earn or deserve God's grace by their works. God, I thought about going golfing today, but I didn't. You should be really pleased about that, right? I was thinking about watching television and then I thought, boy, I'd like to do, I would like to watch television all day today. But I broke myself away and I brought myself to church today. Surely that ought to be worth something. God, you really should make my life better this week and give me all the things I want this week because of all the things I've done this week because I deserve it. That's what these Jews were thinking at this moment.

Normally, Jesus, I wouldn't recommend doing anything for any Gentile, but this man is such a kind guy. He deserves for you to be kind to him. And the reason why they emphatically thought this man was worthy of grace was as a result of his good works. And it's because they thought that they were worthy of grace on the same basis of works as well. Their whole religious system was about worthiness, about merit, about having personal worth that earned you divine favor. Well, Jesus doesn't say anything at that point. Verse 6 just says, *"Jesus went with them."* Not for their sake, I think, but for the centurions. The centurion believed in Jesus' merciful disposition and his faith was confirmed, for Jesus, in fact, moved with compassion, answered the call, and he goes with the Jewish leaders towards the centurion's house. And it's at that moment that we learn that the centurion believed not only in the pronouncement and the predisposition of Jesus, but we find out that the centurion also believed in the preeminence of Jesus.

That's at the end part of verse 6 into verse 7. It says, *"and 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. Therefore I did not presume to come to you.'"* Now, do you hear the contrast that exists between those religious leaders and this Gentile centurion? The Jewish elders, with their self-righteous religion, said, he is worthy. He is worthy for you to do this for him. But this man says, *"I am not worthy for you even to come under my roof."* Not even to come and talk to you. I'm not worthy to bring my sinful self into your holy presence. I'm not even worthy to have you come into my house. I'm not worthy for any of this to happen. And Jesus is going to commend this type of humility later when he says in Luke 14:11, *"everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who exalts himself will be exalted."* This is the heart of repentant faith.

It's like what we saw from Peter in Luke 5:8, if you remember, *"Depart from me, oh Lord, for I am a,"* what, *"sinful man,"* not a worthy one. And from the tax collector in Luke 18:13, *"who wouldn't even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his chest, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'"* This is what Jesus was talking about, if you remember, at the very beginning of his sermon back in chapter 6:20, of divine repentance and spiritual bankruptcy, when Jesus said, *"blessed are the,"* what, *"poor in spirit."* This is what repentant faith looks like. It looks like great humility of self and great exaltation of Christ.

Many of you are very concerned this morning about what Jesus is going to give you, and you've never thought about what are you going to give him. Many of you are operating on the basis of the thought that I am worthy for Christ to do something for me, rather than thinking about Christ is worthy for me to give something to him. What is honored is humble faith. This is what repentant faith looks like. Great humility of self and great exaltation of Christ. This decorated soldier looks to Jesus outwardly, a Jewish peasant and says, now I can really see you. You're a Lord. You are the sovereign, omnipotent and preeminent Lord, Yahweh God of the Old Testament. And this is Jesus. He is Lord.

He is the same Lord mentioned 14 times in Luke 1. He's the same Lord mentioned 9 times in Luke 2. He's the same Lord mentioned 6 times in Luke 3-4. Jesus is the Lord, Yahweh God of the Old Testament. This is who Jesus is. The same Lord that is mentioned 29 times before the start of Luke 5 is the same Lord mentioned 46 times after the start of Luke 5. Jesus is Yahweh God himself. And therefore, this man says, I am not worthy not even to come into your presence. I am not a centurion in your sight. I'm a sinner. This man believed in the pronouncement of Jesus. He believed in the predisposition of Jesus. He believed in the preeminence of Jesus. But the only reason why he's doing any of this is ultimately because beyond all of that, he believed in the power of Jesus.

And to the end of verse 7 into verse 8, he says, *"But say the word, and let my servant be healed. 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."* Look at what faith is being described here. This centurion says here at the end of verse 7, *"But say the word, and let my servant be healed."* Lord, you don't even need to come to my house. You don't even have to stand next to the boy, you don't need to wave your hands over him, touch him, slap him in the Holy Spirit or do anything crazy like that. You are

the Lord. Your power is not constrained by distance or space. You don't even need to come close to the servant. You just say the word right now, right where you are and I know he'll be healed.

Listen, this centurion believes in the power of Jesus. That his power is unlimited. He understands that Jesus is divine power personified and that Christ's words are omnipotent in their effect. Jesus, all you have to do is speak it and I know it'll be so. And again, whoever told this centurion about Jesus told him the whole message and this man believed it. He believes in the power of Jesus that he is sent from God and is wielding divine authority. And the centurion explains how he knows this in verse 7 with an argument from the lesser to the greater, saying in essence, I understand authority. Look at verse 8. This is fascinating. He says, *"For I too am a man 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."* In other words, he's saying, Jesus, I understand what it is like to have power behind your words. I get that.

As a centurion, when I speak, my words carry the authority of Rome, and things happen. But when you speak, your words carry the authority of God and the impossible happen. And so just say the word and I know my servant will be healed. This is marvelous faith when you think about it. An esteemed general who belongs to the most powerful army ever to march upon the face of this earth looks upon Jesus's authority and power with reverence and all. He believes in the pronouncement, the predisposition, the preeminence, and the power of Jesus. And as such, he serves as an excellent example of the type of faith that we are given by God's grace. Just say the word and I know that if you will it, heaven and earth will be moved to fulfill it.

Well, after seeing the need and example of faith demonstrated in this passage, we now see the response to faith in verses 9-10. We read, and *"when Jesus heard these things,"* he did what? Think about that. When he heard these things, he did what? Who's Jesus again? *"And he marveled."* In his humanity, Jesus is absolutely astonished in his divinity, he's pleased. In his humanity, he's astonished. He's amazed at what he is hearing coming out of this centurion. For here is a living illustration of literally everything Jesus has just taught the crowd. Jesus has just taught that when someone truly comes to him in faith, they are marked by a yearning hope that is untouched or unaffected by earthly circumstances. And then suddenly here comes this man, unbothered by the fact that this boy is sick and near death. This centurion casts himself completely on Christ anyway. He has a yearning hope. Jesus has just taught that someone who truly comes to him in faith are going to be marked by radical love that reaches beyond all social norms. And then here comes this man represented by people who would normally hate him. Urging, urgently asking for the healing of someone most people would completely ignore, radical love.

And finally, Jesus has just taught that when someone truly comes to him in faith, they are marked by an increasing desperate dependency that grounds one's life and actions on the unshakable person and words of Jesus Christ. And then here comes this man who literally helped build a place where God's word would be taught, saying, you are a man possessing authority, just say the what? Word and I know, he'll be healed as I go. Desperate dependency. And so, Jesus marveled. Here is a living illustration of everything he has just taught about living, saving, and transforming faith. And it's coming not from a Jewish scribe or rabbi or self-righteous disciple from that crowd. It is coming from a Gentile Roman centurion who felt himself so

unworthy he couldn't even draw near to the person of Christ. And so, this man's faith amazed Jesus. Jesus in his humanity marvels at his faith.

And I think for a reason, Jesus does so and to demonstrate for us the type of reaction that we ought to have when we see this same type of living, saving, transforming faith as well. We ought to marvel at it because here's the truth, friends, faith is not something that is natural or inherent or built into fallen human beings. It is something that is supernatural, that is given to us from above. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, *"For by grace you are saved through faith. And this,"* this whole process of salvation, this grace, *"this faith is not of yourselves; it is a,"* what, *"gift of God, not of works so that no one would boast."* Faith is a gift from God. It is something to be marveled at.

Ephesians 6:23 says that we've received faith from where? *"God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."* Faith is a gift from God. It is something to be marveled at. 2 Timothy 2:25 tells us that *"God is the one who grants repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth."* Faith is a gift from God. It is something to be marveled at. Philippians 1:29 says, *"For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake to believe in him."* Faith is a gift from God. It is something to be marveled at. And I could go on and on. Acts 16:14, *"The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said."* Acts 18:27, *"through God's grace they believed."* 1 Corinthians 1:30-31, *"because of him,"* which we read this morning, *"you are in Christ Jesus."* As Jesus will declare to Peter later in Matthew 16:17, after his great declaration of faith, Jesus didn't say, blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, I knew it was in you all along. He says, *"Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."* Faith is a gift from God. It is something to be marveled at. It is not something natural. It is something supernatural. It is a miracle of God's grace.

Friends, if you are a believer here this morning, do you marvel at the faith that is present in your life? You should because faith is marvelous. The very angels in heaven, Jesus is going to teach us later in Luke 15:10. *"Rejoice when one sinner repents,"* because faith is marvelous. It's a miracle of God's omnipotent grace. It is what God does when sinners are in a helpless situation. Saving faith is marvelous. And therefore, as an example for us, when Jesus sees this man's faith, he marvels at it. And then at the end of verse 9, *"and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, 'I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.'"* What an indictment. Israel was so steeped in their pride and self-righteousness that the best example of faith that Jesus could find for them was a Gentile, a Roman, and a soldier. Jesus turns to those following him, most of whom who had doubtless just heard his sermon and his call to come to him in faith. And in marvelous joy, he says, hey, this is faith. And from Dan to Beersheba, I've not seen this type of faith in Israel.

Now, that's a problem if you're an Israelite. Because Jesus responds to Matthew's account of this miracle in Matthew 8:10-12 in this way. *"Truly, I say to you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west,"* that's east and west of Israel, from Gentiles. Many will come from Gentile nations *"and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."* Heaven's going to be filled with Gentiles, Jesus is saying, *"while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness."* Jesus is making the point; your lineage is what matters. Because of their faith, many

Gentiles will go to heaven. Because of their unbelief, many Jews will go to hell. So, do you see what Jesus is teaching here? What matters most is not whether you're a Jew or Gentile, what matters most is whether you have faith in Christ. What matters is that you have fruit in keeping with faith. What matters is whether your life is truly built upon the rock of Jesus Christ. That's what God is looking for.

He's not looking for moral associations or religious ceremonies or intellectual accents, but faith. For faith, *"without faith,"* Hebrews 11:6 tells us that *"it is impossible to please God."* That is what this centurion had, and it was evident by everything that he did. And it produced a response from Jesus, which is the main point here, in conclusion. Jesus saw the man's faith, he marveled at it, he highlighted it, and then he acted. Look at verse 10, he says, *"And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well."* As Matthew 8:13 says, *"to the centurion Jesus said, 'Go; and let it be done for you as you believed.' And the servant was healed at that very moment."* Jesus said the word and it was so. That is a marvelous Lord. Divine power demonstrated through divine word.

Can I just say that that centurion's faith was well-placed, wasn't it? He was wise to have built his house upon the rock, and he was not put to shame. The good news delivered to him about Jesus was trustworthy. He is indeed Lord of heaven and earth, and he uses his power and compassion to all those who come to him in faith. This is marvelous faith in a marvelous Lord. The question that we are confronted with this morning then is this, have you trusted in Jesus like this man has? If you trust in him for your salvation, just like this account, you will not be put to shame. Christ will have compassion on you, and he will abundantly pardon.

This room is testimony to the fact of the compassion and power of Jesus. If you doubt that this morning, just talk to one of the other individuals here and ask them, can you please tell me the story of how you came to know Christ? None of us is beyond the saving power and compassion of Jesus. None of us. He will have compassion on you. He will abundantly pardon. He is a marvelous savior and Lord. He can speak life and hope and forgiveness into you. Call upon him today for he is near.

Second, if you have trusted in Christ, this is a question that burdened me all week. Would your life of faith amaze Jesus? Would he look at my repentance, my love, my devotion, my obedience, my reverence towards his word and marvel at it and say, that was what I was talking about? Would my repentance, my love, my devotion, my obedience draw the attention and amaze anyone? Would my faith amaze him? Would my faith amaze anyone's? This is an area we all need to work on if we're to be honest.

And so, this week, let's strive to be more faithful in coming to Christ as dependent disciples and hearing his words and being more faithful in obeying them for Christ is worthy of it. Perhaps by God's grace, our lives of faith this week might be used to cause others to marvel at a marvelous faith in a marvelous Lord. And perhaps the first way that we can do that will be to follow the example of that unknown evangelist that we discovered this morning and be the unknown, unnamed witness that is used to implant by God's grace through God's word in some other soul this week, marvelous faith in a marvelous Lord for themselves.

So, this is the word of God from Luke 7:1-10, which I consider a great honor to have been able to share with you today, which I now commit to your further study in your faithful obedience until Jesus, who is the great author and finisher of our faith, appears.

To that end, let us pray.

Father, I thank you so much for your word. I pray, Father, that you would help us this week to demonstrate marvelous faith in the Savior and Lord who is far worthy of it. Father, we pray that we would demonstrate to a watching world that the compassion and power of Jesus is worth trusting in as we commit our lives wholly to his word and his commands.

Father, we ask this for your glory and by your grace in Jesus' name, amen.

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