

Jesus Marveled!

Luke 7:1-10 (text: v. 9); cf. Mark 6:1-6

Jesus MARVELED (v. 9)! The word marveled means to “wonder”—to arrest one’s attention; to admire; to think incredible. Jesus was IMPRESSED!

Jesus only marveled on two occasions in the Bible. In this message we will examine each of these occasions.

I. Jesus marveled at the **GREAT FAITH** of a Gentile centurion.

➡ One thing that grabs our Lord’s attention is “*great faith*.” He admires it. No one will ever get to first base with the Lord without faith (Heb. 11:6).

➡ “*Great faith*” is attributed to only two people in the Bible—Both were Gentiles! Jesus performed 33 miracles recorded in Scripture, but only two were performed for Gentiles: (1) A Roman centurion; (2) A Canaanite woman (Mt. 15:22-28).

➡ Seven things that made his faith great:

- A. It’s **RECEPTION**— Where did this great faith come from? (v. 3—*“he heard of Jesus!”*).
 1. If no one told him of Jesus, his servant would have died.
 2. This is who people need to hear about! Faith comes by hearing (Rom. 10:17). But how are people going to hear of Jesus? Not from the news media, or our education system. They must hear from someone who is sent (Rom. 10:13-17).
 3. This must be central in all we do—Tell people about Jesus!
 4. How did you hear of Jesus? Aren’t you glad someone told you?
- B. It’s **REQUEST** (v. 3—*“Beseeching...”*)
 1. Unselfish—Comes on behalf of another. His servant was paralyzed, in great pain, and near death (v. 2).
 2. His heart went out to his servant and wanted to help him (v. 2 — *“...who was DEAR unto him...”*).

3. No human skill could heal him. It was a **desperate situation**. It was a GREAT REQUEST that called for GREAT FAITH!

C. It's **RESPECT**.

1. Respect for God's people (vs. 4-5 cf. Gen. 12:3). Romans did not normally exhibit any love or respect for Jews.
2. He had great respect for Christ. He knew He was no mere human being.
 - ➡ He acknowledged Christ's LORDSHIP (v. 6).

D. It's **REQUIREMENT** (v. 6-7).

1. He did not require Christ's physical presence to heal.
 - a) He believe in the power of God's word (v. 7—"...*say in a word...*" / "*Speak the word only...*" —Mt. 8:8).
 - b) Many believers also seek the Lord, but what made the centurion's faith great was his belief that the Word of Christ was all that was needed.
2. Mary and Martha did not have this kind of faith (John 11:21, 32).

E. It's **REASONING** (vs. 7-8). Faith is reasonable!

1. Since Jesus was Lord, Jesus had authority.
 - ➡ He knew what it was like to be under authority and to exercise authority. He had 100 men under his authority.
2. Soldier's reasoning faith: "If I have to obey my superiors and the men under me have to obey me, then You ought to be able to control anything under You, because you are Lord."
3. It reasoned that Christ's Word was sufficient.
 - ➡ Jesus calls this kind of reasoning "*great faith*."
 - ➡ Can you give God a REASON why He should grant your requests?

F. It's **RARITY** (v. 9). Here was a Gentile without the spiritual advantages of a Jew—Yet his faith was greater than any others in Israel. No wonder Jesus marveled!

G. It's **RESULTS**. (v. 10)

1. Jesus honored his faith because this kind of faith HONORED HIM! Does your faith honor Christ?
2. The centurion accepted Christ's answer, went home and found his servant healed!

➡ **The centurion illustrated perfectly what faith is** (Heb. 11:6).

1. It is believing WHO Christ is: He is Lord. All power is subject to Him (Hebrews 11:6; cp. Matthew 8:6).
2. It is believing He'll do WHAT he said... "*He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him*" (Hebrews 11:6; cp. Matthew 8:8-9).

HOW GREAT IS YOUR FAITH???

II. Jesus Marveled at the LACK of faith in His own country (Mk 6:1-6 cf. Mt. 13:54-58).

- Jesus returns to Nazareth, His hometown.
- Shortly after His temptation in the wilderness (Luke 4:16-30), Jesus visited Nazareth and was thrown out of town!
- One year later He visits a second time. Nothing had changed.
- He marveled at their unbelief.

A. The **REVELATION** of the truth (Mk. 6:1-3).

1. The **place** of unbelief (v. 1). Notice where Jesus could do no mighty works—It was among the very ones we would think He would have been able to do His greatest works.
2. The **perception** of unbelief—They heard His words / wisdom. They saw His works. But they could not understand who He was.

➡ Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God—What they saw was just a carpenter, the son of Mary.

"Whence hath this man..." cf. *"...are not his sisters here with us..."* — "We know who this man is. He's the village carpenter. He's no one special. Who does He think He is?"

He's no different than any of us! He is not the Messiah..”
 All they could see was His humanity.

➡ Don't expect God to do any mighty works in your life if you do not recognize who Jesus is!

B. The **REACTION** to the familiar (Mk. 6:3).

1. It was not the world, that hindered His working. It was His hometown.
2. Where is Jesus' hometown today? It's His house. His family. The church. You would think if Jesus could do a mighty work, it would be here! But, we become so familiar with “church” we become complacent and it loses the newness it had when we first got saved.
 - Familiarity with the Bible?
 - Familiarity with preaching and Gospel music.
 - Familiarity with the people of God.

C. The **RESTRICTION** of His power (Mk. 6:5-6).

1. Jesus marveled at their unbelief—What a terrible thing unbelief must be!
2. Unbelief is not ignorance. “Unbelief is the will's rejection of truth and the heart's refusal to be influenced by it's evidence.”
3. Unbelief springs from a wicked heart (Hebrews 3:12 – *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief...*)
4. Unbelief is the only sin that will send a man to hell (John 3:18).
5. Unbelief is the only sin that can hinder the power of God.
 - ➡ In our lives, we may see God work on a limited scale. We see God answering small prayers here and there. But, sadly we seldom see Him doing some mighty work. Why? The problem is not with God—The problem is our unbelief which “handcuffs” God from doing anything mighty.

SUMMATION: Two things made Jesus marvel—Great Faith and No faith. Things we marvel at are no marvel to Him—Not the stars in the heavens, since He created them. Not the complexity of the human body and it's DNA code, since He formed it.

No, Jesus marvels at those who exercise great faith—And those who should have faith, but have no faith.

In Mark 4:35-40 Jesus told His disciples to cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. About half way across, a great storm arose and the boat was about to sink. Jesus was asleep on a pillow. The panicking disciples woke Him up, *“Master, carest thou not that we perish?”* Jesus arose and said to the sea, *“Peace, be still,”* and there was a great calm. Then Jesus said to His disciples, *“Why are you so fearful? **HOW IS IT THAT YE HAVE NO FAITH?**”* If anyone should have had faith, it would have been His disciples! After all, Jesus told them before getting in the boat they would go over the other side! Yet, in spite of what Jesus said, they lacked faith.

How is it that ye have no faith after Jesus has saved you... after all you've read in your Bible... after all the times He answered your prayers?

Do you suppose Jesus still marvels by our unbelief? Could this be one reason why we are not seeing “many mighty works?”

What is the status of your faith? Is it great? Is it weak? Is it missing?
“Where is your faith?”

Are you saved? If you are not saved it is because of unbelief.