

# Luke 7 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[Luke 7:1](#)

[Luke 7:2](#)

[Luke 7:3](#)

[Luke 7:4](#)

[Luke 7:5](#)

[Luke 7:6](#)

[Luke 7:7](#)

[Luke 7:8](#)

[Luke 7:9](#)

[Luke 7:10](#)

[Luke 7:11](#)

[Luke 7:12](#)

[Luke 7:13](#)

[Luke 7:14](#)

[Luke 7:15](#)

[Luke 7:16](#)

[Luke 7:17](#)

[Luke 7:18](#)

[Luke 7:19](#)

[Luke 7:20](#)

[Luke 7:21](#)

[Luke 7:22](#)

[Luke 7:23](#)

[Luke 7:24](#)

[Luke 7:25](#)

[Luke 7:26](#)

[Luke 7:27](#)

[Luke 7:28](#)

[Luke 7:28](#)

[Luke 7:30](#)

[Luke 7:31](#)

[Luke 7:32](#)

[Luke 7:33](#)

[Luke 7:34](#)

[Luke 7:35](#)

[Luke 7:36](#)

[Luke 7:37](#)

[Luke 7:38](#)

[Luke 7:39](#)

[Luke 7:40](#)

[Luke 7:41](#)

[Luke 7:42](#)

[Luke 7:43](#)

[Luke 7:44](#)

[Luke 7:45](#)

[Luke 7:46](#)

[Luke 7:47](#)

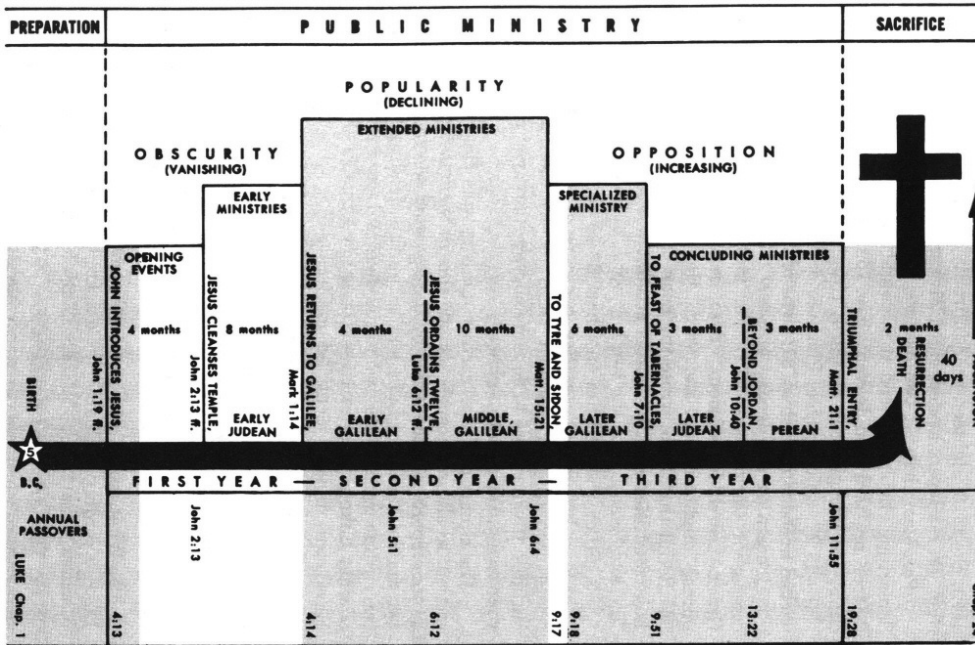
[Luke 7:48](#)

[Luke 7:49](#)



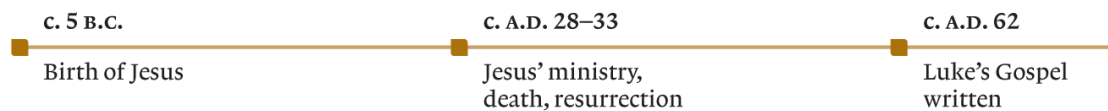
PRAISE Chap. 1 ELIZABETH--MARY 1 2 3 4:14 5 6:12 7 8 9:51 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19:28 20 21:5 22 23 24 PRAISE 24:30-33	MAINLY PECULIAR TO LUKE		ABOUT 60% PECULIAR TO LUKE											
	PREPARATION	IDENTIFICATION	INSTRUCTION										SACRIFICE	
		GALILEE	LATER JUDEAN AND PEREAN MINISTRIES TO JERUSALEM										AT JERUSALEM	
		MIRACLES AROUND HERE	PARABLES AROUND HERE										THE GREAT & GRAND SACRIFICE	THE GREAT & GRAND MIRACLE
		"MIGHTY IN DEED" →	AND WORD" (24:19)										LAST MESSAGES	MISSION ACCOMPLISHED
30 YEARS	1 1/2 YEARS	6 MONTHS										8 DAYS	50 DAYS	
KEY PHRASE: "SON OF MAN"		KEY VERSES: 19:10; 24:19												

From [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) by permission  
 John MacArthur's [Introduction to the Gospel of Luke](#)  
 Charles Swindoll's [Introduction to Luke](#)  
 Luke Overview Chart by Charles Swindoll



Click chart to enlarge LIFE OF CHRIST IN GOSPEL OF LUKE (See Shaded Areas)  
 Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

Ryrie Study Bible - Borrow



Source: [ESV Global Study Bible](#)

- Luke 7:1 Christ finds a greater faith in the centurion, a Gentile than in any of the Jews;  
Luke 7:10 heals his servant, being absent;  
Luke 7:11 raises from death the widow's son at Nain;  
Luke 7:18 answers John's messengers with the declaration of his miracles;  
Luke 7:24 testifies to the people what opinion he held of John;  
Luke 7:31 inveighs against the Jews, who with neither the manners of John nor of Jesus could be won;  
Luke 7:36 and suffering his feet to be washed and anointed by a woman who was a sinner, he shows how he is a friend to sinners, to forgive them their sins, upon their repentance.
- 

## John Hannah Outline

### The authentication of the Son of Man (Luke 7:1-8:56)

- a. **The healing of the Centurion's servant** (Luke 7:1-10)
  1. The setting (Luke 7:1-5)
  2. The Centurion's attitude (Luke 7:6-8)
  3. Jesus' response (Luke 7:9-10)
- b. **The raising of the widow's son** (Luke 7:11-17)
  1. The setting (Luke 7:11-12)
  2. The miracle (Luke 7:13-15)
  3. The response (Luke 7:16-17)
- c. **The explanation of John the Baptist** (Luke 7:18-35)
  1. John's inquiry (Luke 7:18-20)
  2. Jesus' reply (Luke 7:21-23)
  3. Jesus' message of John (Luke 7:24-28)
  4. The varied response (Luke 7:29-30)
  5. Jesus' characterization of Israel (Luke 7:31-35)
- d. **The gratitude of the sinful woman** (Luke 7:36-50)
  1. The setting (Luke 7:36-38)
  2. The Pharisee's reaction (Luke 7:39)
  3. Jesus' explanation (Luke 7:40-48)
  4. The result (Luke 7:49-50)
- e. **The preaching of the kingdom of God** (8:1-21)

**Luke 7:1 When He had completed all His discourse in the hearing of the people, He went to Capernaum.**

**KJV** Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

- **when** Matthew 7:28,29
- **he entered** Matthew 8:5-13
- For Capernaum see [map of Jesus' Ministry in Galilee](#)
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:1-2 The Man Who Amazed Jesus, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

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Ruins of Home in Capernaum  
[Purported to be Peter's Home](#)

## JESUS ON THE MOVE

See Jensen's charts above to get a good sense of where you are in the Gospel of Luke and in Jesus' life. You will note that while He has aroused significant opposition with the religious hierarchy, He is still relatively popular with the populace.

**When** (time phrase) **He had completed** ([pleroo](#)) **all His discourse** ([rhema](#)) **in the hearing of the people**- What **discourse**? Chapter breaks have a way of obscuring the context which is always vital to establish in order to arrive at the most accurate interpretation. The message in Lk 6:20-49 given on a plain (which some take as Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount). **MacArthur** points on that this follow-up to His **discourse** was of great significance. Why? Because "The theme of the Lord's sermon was true discipleship, and this Roman soldier was a living model of the genuine faith of a disciple of Jesus Christ. Everything that Jesus said was characteristic of a true disciple marked this man." (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY NOTE** - Notice the phrase "in the **hearing** of the people." What does "**hearing**" mean? Remember that just as a diamond is best cut by another diamond, the best commentary on Scripture is another Scripture. So do we see any Scriptures in context which help us discern what "**hearing**" means? Let's look at Lk 6:47+ and compare it with Luke 6:49+. In both passages Jesus uses the same Greek word (akouo) for hearing, but He describes two ways one can **hear** the Words He speaks, which is a principle applicable to all of Scripture. What are the two ways to **hear**? Do you see them in the description of Jesus? In Lk 6:47-48- He describes those who have a "rock" solid foundation as those who **hear** His Words and do His Words. In other words they **hear** and they obey in the power of the Spirit. In stark contrast, in Luke 6:49- He describes one who **hears** and does not do or does not obey His Words. Jesus' half-brother James said a similar thing in the form of a command to his readers to "**prove** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves **doers** of the word, and **not merely hearers** who delude (present tense) themselves." (James 1:22+) What is the danger of hearing the word "[in one ear and out the other](#)?" Such a person is continually deluding or deceiving themselves by their false reasoning, the false reasoning being that they think that because they have heard the Word, that is enough and that no response is necessary. Remember that when a person is deceived, by definition, they do not even know that they are deceived! Self-deception is a sad state! We could also have observed Lk 6:27+ where Jesus said "But I say to you who**hear**, **love** your enemies...." The implication is that these individual really **hear** Him and in this case they do love their enemies. And the only ones who could truly **hear** and do would be those who were poor and had entered the Kingdom of God (born again - Jn 3:3+) as He had just described in Lk 6:20-22+. It is worth noting that in Jesus' last message to the 7 churches, His Word to each church was (is) "He who has an ear, let him **hear** what the Spirit says to the churches." (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29+; Rev 3:6, 13, 22+) Hearing and obeying Jesus is vitally important!

**He went to Capernaum** ([Kapharnaoum](#)) - Locate **Capernaum** on the map above. It was probably relatively close to the location of the previous sermon. As alluded to earlier, this town was Jesus' home base so to speak and had repeated exposure to Him which helps understand Jesus' prophetic warning to the citizens who live there (Mt 11:23,24+). But Jesus was a Man on the move. He had a mission and had only a finite amount of time to complete it and so He gives us a perfect example of One who [redeemed the time](#).

Man is like a mere breath; His days are like a passing shadow.

-- Psalm 144:4

**THOUGHT**- Are you redeeming the time beloved, the "time of your life"? As James says "you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." (James 4:14+) If you are still not convinced that your time is short and precious and must be used wisely for our King and proclamation of His message, take a moment to meditate on a few "short" passages that deal with the shortness of our lives: Job 7:6, 7 Job 9:25, 26 Job 14:1, 2, Ps 37:2 39:5, 6, Ps 90:4-6, 9, 10 Ps 102:3, 11, Ps 103:15,16 Isa 38:12,13 40:6,7 Jas 1:10, 11 4:14 1Pe 1:24 2Ki19:26 Tomorrow - Pr 27:1; Lu 12:16-20

**Rod Mattoon** - After Jesus taught the people that you can identify a person by the fruit of their actions (Lk 6:43-49+), He entered the city of Capernaum. Of the 33 miracles performed by the Lord Jesus, eleven of them were done in **Capernaum** and only two were done for Gentiles. This is one of them. This passage marks a turning point in Luke's account of Jesus' ministry. Up until this point, Jesus has dealt exclusively with the Jews; here he begins to include the Gentiles. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**J C Ryle** - Let it be remembered that a remarkable miracle of healing had already been worked at**Capernaum** in the cure of the ruler's son, described at the end of the fourth chapter of St. John. This cure was distinct from that described here. The Centurion had

in all probability heard of it. Few places, let it be noted, witnessed more of our Lord's miracles than Capernaum. This circumstance probably throws light on our Lord's expression, "Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven." (Matt. 11:23.) (Luke 7)

**Completed** (4137) (**pleroo**) means filled to the brim (a net, Mt 13:48, a building, Jn 12:3, Acts 2:2, a city, Acts 5:28, needs Phil 4:19), to make complete in every particular, to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally, to flood, to diffuse throughout, to pervade. Figuratively pleroo means to be permeated with thus to ultimately to control. to be filled as in Acts 13:52 where "the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. (passive voice = divine passive = filled by/controlled by the Spirit = saints acted on and energized by the outside force, the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus to empower His saints for service - how much "service" are you doing energized by the Spirit? What if the Spirit were taken away? What services you are doing would disappear?) **Gingrich** summarizes the meanings of **pleroo**. 1. fill, make full Mt 13:48; Lk 3:5; Jn 12:3; 16:6; Ac 2:2, 28; 5:28; Ro 1:29; Eph 5:18; Phil 4:18; 2 Ti 1:4.—2. of time fill up, complete, reach its end pass. Mk 1:15; Jn 7:8; Ac 7:23, 30 ; 9:23; 24:27.—3. bring to completion, finish something already begun Jn 3:29; 17:13; 2 Cor 10:6; Phil 2:2; Col 1:25. Gal 5:14 may be classed here or under 4 below.—4. fulfill a prophecy, promise, etc. Mt 1:22; 5:17; 13:35; 26:54, 56; Mk 14:49; Lk 9:31; 22:16; Jn 18:9, 32; 19:24, 36; Ro 13:8; Gal 5:14 (see 3 above); Col 4:17.—5. complete, finish, bring to an end Lk 7:1; 21:24; Ac 12:25; 13:25; 14:26; 19:21

**Luke's uses of pleroo** - Lk. 1:20; Lk. 2:40; Lk. 3:5; Lk. 4:21; Lk. 7:1; Lk. 9:31; Lk. 21:24; Lk. 22:16; Lk. 24:44; Acts 1:16; Acts 2:2; Acts 2:28; Acts 3:18; Acts 5:3; Acts 5:28; Acts 7:23; Acts 7:30; Acts 9:23; Acts 12:25; Acts 13:25; Acts 13:27; Acts 13:52; Acts 14:26; Acts 19:21; Acts 24:27

**Discourse** (4487) (**rhema** from verb rheo = to speak - to say, speak or utter definite words) refers to the spoken word, especially a word as uttered by a living voice. Laleo is another word translated speak but it refers only to uttering a sound whereas rheo refers to uttering a definite intelligible word. Rhema refers to any sound produced by the voice which has a definite meaning. It focuses upon the content of the communication. The significance of rhema (as distinct from logos) is exemplified in the injunction to take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, Ep 6:17+ here the reference is not to the whole Bible as such, but to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need, a prerequisite being the regular storing of the mind with Scripture. **Friberg** - (1) as what has definitely been stated, with focus on content, (single) word, saying, utterance (Mt 27:14); often translated according to the context: prediction or prophecy (Mt 26:75), command or direction (Lk 5:5), threat (Acts 6:13); plural, as a unified communication sermon, proclamation, speech (Lk 7:1 ); message (Jn 3:34), teachings, doctrine (Jn 5:47); (2) Hebraistically, as a happening thing, matter, business, transaction (Mt 18:16; Lk 1:37) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

Luke's uses of rhema - Lk. 1:37; Lk. 1:38; Lk. 1:65; Lk. 2:15; Lk. 2:17; Lk. 2:19; Lk. 2:29; Lk. 2:50; Lk. 2:51; Lk. 3:2; Lk. 5:5; Lk. 7:1; Lk. 9:45; Lk. 18:34; Lk. 20:26; Lk. 24:8; Lk. 24:11; Acts 2:14; Acts 5:20; Acts 5:32; Acts 6:11; Acts 10:22; Acts 10:37; Acts 10:44; Acts 11:14; Acts 11:16; Acts 13:42; Acts 16:38; Acts 26:25; Acts 28:25

**Capernaum** (2746) (**Kapharnaoum** of Hebrew origin - **kaphar** - a village + **Nachum** = Nahum) is literally the village of Nahum that was located on the NW shore of Sea of Galilee Matthew recording that Jesus left "Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali" and this village served as His headquarters during His ministry in Galilee (Mt 4:13; 9:1; Mk 2:1). **Capernaum** must have been a sizable town because Matthew was a tax collector there when he was called by Jesus (Mk 2:14). In addition a high officer of the king (Herod Antipas) had his residence there and built a synagogue for the people (Mt 8:5-13; Lu 7:1-10). The Lord performed many striking miracles there, healing of the centurion's palsied servant (Mt 8:5-13), a man sick of the palsy borne to Jesus by four friends (Mk 2:3-12), and the nobleman's son (Jn 4:46-54). In spite of Jesus' miraculous works and teachings, the people did not repent and Jesus predicted the judgment of the town "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you." (Mt 11:23, 24; cf Lu 10:15).

**Capernaum** - 16x in 16v - Mt. 4:13; Mt. 8:5; Mt. 11:23; Mt. 17:24; Mk. 1:21; Mk. 2:1; Mk. 9:33; Lk. 4:23; Lk. 4:31; Lk. 7:1; Lk. 10:15; Jn. 2:12; Jn. 4:46; Jn. 6:17; Jn. 6:24; Jn. 6:59

[What is the significance of Capernaum in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Luke 7:2 And a centurion's slave, who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die.**

**KJV** And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

- **centurion's** Lk 23:47; Mt 27:54; Acts 10:1; 22:26; 23:17; 27:1,3,43
- **who** Ge 24:2-14,27,35-49; 35:8; 39:4-6; 2 Kings 5:2,3; Job 31:5; Pr 29:21; Acts 10:7; Col 3:22-25; 4:1



- **was sick** Lk 8:42; Jn 4:46,47; 11:2,3
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
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**Parallel Passage** in Matthew 8:5-13+ - text in **bold** not in Luke's account

And when Jesus entered Capernaum, **a centurion came to Him, imploring Him** ([see note below](#)), **6 and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, fearfully tormented."** **7 Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal** ([therapeuo](#)) **him."** **8** But the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. **9** "For I also am a man 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." **10** Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel. **11** **"I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; 12 but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."** **13 And Jesus said to the centurion,** "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed ([iaomai](#)) that very moment.

## CHRIST'S CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTER WITH A CENTURION IN CAPERNAUM

**And a centurion's** ([Hekatonarches](#)) **slave** ([doulos](#) - will complete subject to will of master), **who was highly regarded** ([entimos](#)) **by him** - Centurions were mainstays of the Roman army, commanding a "century" of about 100 soldiers. And for context, a [Roman legion](#) could be composed of up to sixty "centuries." That the centurion had high regard for his slave says much about this Roman soldier's character. **Gaius** noted that it was universally accepted that masters possessed the power of life and death over their slaves (Institutes, 1.52). The Roman writer **Varro** insisted that the only difference between a slave, an animal, and a cart was that the slave talked (Agriculture, 1.17). Slaves were often abused, young boys in particular, since pedophilia was not uncommon. This centurion was different than most Romans for he had a tender concern for his lowly servant! As an aside the NT mentions 3 centurions who seem to have giving evidence of genuine faith (Mt 27:54; Acts 10:1-48).

**POSB** on the **slave** - In the society of that day, a slave was nothing, only a tool or a thing to be used as the owner wished. He had no rights whatsoever, not even the right to live. An owner could mistreat and kill a slave without having to give an account. But this soldier loved his slave. This reveals a deep concern and care for people. It would have been much less bother to dispose of the slave or to ignore him and just let him die, but not this soldier. He cared. Note how he personally looked after the slave, a person who meant nothing to the rest of society. But his arms and love were wide open to do all he could to help this person who was helpless. This alone, helping a person who meant nothing to society, was bound to affect Christ dramatically. (See also Mt 22:39, Jn 15:12, Ro 12:9, 1 Th 3:12, James 2:8) (Borrow [POSB Commentary](#))

**Mattoon** adds that "The attitude of love and concern of this soldier was quite unusual about his slave. In Roman law, a slave was defined as a living tool. He had no rights. In fact, a master could abuse him and even kill him if he chose to do so. A Roman writer on estate management recommended the farmer to examine his implements every year and to throw out those which were old and broken, and to do the same with his own slaves. Normally when a slave was past his ability to work, he was thrown out to die. The attitude of this centurion, however, was not like this at all." **Bishop Hall** adds the interesting observation that a "Great variety of visitors resorted to Christ. One comes to Him for a **son**; another for a **daughter**; a third for **himself**. I see none come to Him for his **servant** but this one Centurion." ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Life Application Study Bible** - This passage marks a turning point in Luke's account of Jesus' ministry. Up to this point, Jesus has dealt exclusively with the Jews; here he begins to include the Gentiles. Notice who the main characters are in this short drama: the Jewish elders, a Roman officer, and the officer's slave—very different racial and religious backgrounds, and vastly different standings on the social ladder. Jesus broke through all those barriers, all the way to the sick man's need. The gospel travels well across ethnic, racial, national, and religious barriers. Are you willing to work through them as well? Jesus was no respecter of artificial divisions, and we should follow his example. Reach out to those whom Jesus came to save.

As **Gene Brooks** says "This centurion, obviously a Gentile serving in the oppressive Roman Army, models what Luke calls "great faith," illustrating two of Luke's key themes of walking in faith vs. unbelief and in the Gospel's extension to the Gentile nations....Since Roman troops were not stationed in Galilee until AD 44, this centurion may have served under Herod Antipas,

tetrarch of Galilee (Luke 3:1), performing police, security, or customs services. He seems to have been a "God fearer" like Cornelius (Acts 10:2), a Gentile worshiping the God of Israel but has not converted to Judaism. Apparently he financed the construction of the Capernaum synagogue (Luke 7:5) because the local Jewish leaders first come to Jesus, asking him to do something for the man. There is, in fact, archaeological evidence on inscriptions that Gentiles supported synagogues, and Josephus says that Gentiles frequently supported synagogues. These people were highly respected by Jews."

**Was sick ([kakos](#)) and about to die ([teleutao](#))** - The slave was at "death's door" as we say today. The centurion had seen men die in battle and he knew his slave was fighting his last battle, so to speak. Matthew records the details about his illness (surprising that the tax collector reports what the physician does not report!) stating that he was "**lying paralyzed at home, fearfully tormented.**" (Mt 8:6+)

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**Centurion** ([1543](#))([Hekatonarches](#) from **hekaton** = one hundred + **archo** = to command) means a commander of a hundred soldiers, and would be our equivalent of an army captain or company commander. **Centurion** is from Latin *centurio* an officer in charge of a hundred soldiers (the Latin equivalent being used by Mk 15:39-45). These veteran soldiers maintained discipline and commanded great respect, and were paid 15 times an ordinary soldier's wage. They were highly motivated, competent soldiers, and generally decent persons. "The favourable references to **centurions** in the New Testament suggest that they may have been carefully chosen because of their quality of character. Some even became believers in Jesus Christ (Matthew 8:5-13; Matthew 27:54; Acts 10:1-2; Acts 23:17-18; Acts 27:43)." (Bridgeway) **Centurions** received double the salary of ordinary soldiers. It usually took fifteen years or more of military service to work one's way to the rank of centurion.

**Polybius** says "that the **centurions** were chosen by merit, and so were men remarkable not so much for their daring courage as for their deliberation, constancy, and strength of mind." Another translation says "They wish centurions not so much to be venturesome and daredevil as natural leaders, of a steady and sedate spirit. They do not desire them so much to be men who will initiate attacks and open the battle, but men who will hold their ground when worsted and hard pressed and be ready to die at their posts" (Histories 6.24.9). Barclay translates it this way "Centurions are desired not to be overbold and reckless so much as good leaders, of steady and prudent mind, not prone to take the offensive to start fighting wantonly, but able when overwhelmed and hard-pressed to stand fast and die at their posts."

**IVP Bible Background Commentary** - The nearest Roman legion was stationed in Syria, but many troops were also stationed at Caesarea on the Mediterranean coast; perhaps smaller groups were stationed or settled (after retirement?) at various points in Palestine. Centurions commanded a "century" (i.e., 100), which in practice consisted of sixty to eighty troops. Centurions were the backbone of the Roman army, in charge of discipline.

**Vincent on centurion** - A centuria was originally a division consisting of a hundred things of a kind; and thence came to mean any division, whether consisting of a hundred or not. In military language it meant a division of troops, a company, not necessarily of a hundred, the captain of which was called centurio. The numbers of a century varied from about fifty to a hundred. The Roman legion consisted of ten cohorts or *σπεραι*, bands, as "the Italian band," of which Cornelius was a centurion (Acts 10:1). The commanders of these cohorts were called chiliarchs, or chief captains (John 18:12, Rev.). Each cohort contained six centuries, or companies, of which the commanders were called centurions. The duty of the centurion was chiefly confined to the regulation of his own corps, and the care of the watch. The badge of his office was the vitis, or vine-stock. He wore a short tunic, and was also known by letters on the crest of his helmet. Dean Howson ("Companions of St. Paul") remarks on the favorable impression left upon the mind by the officers of the Roman army mentioned in the New Testament, and cites, besides the centurion in this passage, the one at the cross, and Julius, who escorted Paul to Rome. See, further, on Acts 10:1.

**NET Note on centurion** - A centurion was a non-commissioned officer in the Roman army or one of the auxiliary territorial armies, commanding a centuria of (nominally) 100 men. The responsibilities of centurions were broadly similar to modern junior officers, but there was a wide gap in social status between them and officers, and relatively few were promoted beyond the rank of senior centurion. The Roman troops stationed in Judea were auxiliaries, who would normally be rewarded with Roman citizenship after 25 years of service. Some of the centurions may have served originally in the Roman legions (regular army) and thus gained their citizenship at enlistment. Others may have inherited it, like Paul.

**POSB** - Centurion: an officer in the Roman armed forces. He commanded about one hundred soldiers. To the Jew, the centurion had three things against him: he was bitterly hated because he was non-Jewish, a Gentile; he was of the nation that had conquered Palestine, Rome; and he was of the armed and occupying force. Every time a centurion is mentioned in the New Testament it is with honor. Every time a centurion is mentioned in the New Testament it is with honor.

1. There was the centurion who had great faith in the power of Jesus (Mt. 8:5).
2. There was the centurion who recognized Jesus hanging on the cross as the Son of God (Mt. 27:54).

3. There was the centurion, Cornelius, who was the first Gentile convert to the Christian church (Acts 10:22).
4. There was the centurion who recognized that Paul was a Roman citizen and rescued him from the rioting mob (Acts 23:17–23).
5. There was the centurion who took steps to deliver Paul from being murdered after being informed of the Jews' plan (Acts 24:23).
6. There was the centurion whom Felix ordered to escort and look after Paul (Acts 24:23).
7. There was the centurion who escorted Paul on his last journey to Rome. He treated Paul with great courtesy and accepted him as the leader when the storm struck the ship (Acts 27:43).

The structure of the Roman military was built around the Roman legion which consisted of 6000 men.

⇒ The Roman legion was divided into cohorts: each cohort had 600 soldiers. This means there were ten cohorts in each legion.

⇒ The cohort was divided into centuries. Each century had 100 men and was led by a centurion. The centurions were the backbone of the Roman legions. They were the leaders in closest contact with the men; therefore, they were the officers upon whom the top brass depended so heavily (Borrow [POSB Commentary](#))

**Highly regarded** (1784)(**entimos** from **en** = in + **timē** = honor, esteem, price) means held in honor, honored, highly esteemed, costly, valuable, estimable, dear (Lk 7:2; 14:8; Phil. 2:29; Nu 22:15; Neh 2:16; 4:14); precious, highly valued, costly, spoken of Christ as a Stone (1 Pet. 2:4, 6 cf. Is. 28:16 = "**costly** cornerstone"). In classic Greek **entimos** was descriptive of honored or respected men or "valued" objects. **Entimos** is descriptive of honored or respected men or "valued" objects. It was used to refer to a distinguished guest at a banquet (Lk 14:8). In Php 2:29 Paul used it to describe Epaphroditus and other men who were to be honored in the church, while Peter used it to describe the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Pe 2:4, 6 drawing from Isa 28:16). Paul asked that his fellow-worker Epaphroditus be welcomed with "honor" or "respect" (Philippians 2:29). Substantively it denotes "men of high rank or office" (see Liddell-Scott). According to papyri one common application of **entimos** is to military veterans who were discharged "with honor" (see Moulton-Milligan). In the Septuagint of God's "**honored** Name" (Dt 28:58), of David considering Saul's life **precious** (1 Sa 26:21), of **nobles** in Nehemiah (Neh 4:14; Neh. 4:19; Neh. 5:5; Neh. 5:7; Neh. 6:17; Neh. 7:5), of lives those God rescues "their blood will be precious." (Ps 72:14).

**Vincent** on **entimos** adds "Lit., held in honor, value, thus prized, precious, dear (Luke 14:8; 1 Pet. 2:4; Phil. 2:29). It does not necessarily imply an affectionate relation between the master and the servant, though such may well have existed. It may mean only that he was a valuable servant. See on 1 Pet. 2:4. In this case Luke omits the mention of the disease, which is given by Matthew.

**Entimos** - 5x in 5v - Usage: high regard(1), highly regarded(1), more distinguished(1), precious(2).

Luke 7:2 And a centurion's slave, who was **highly regarded** by him, was sick and about to die.

Luke 14:8 "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for someone more **distinguished** than you may have been invited by him,

Philippians 2:29 Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in **high regard**;

1 Peter 2:4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and **precious** in the sight of God,

1 Peter 2:6 For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A **PRECIOUS** CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

**Entimos** 19x in 19v in the Septuagint - Num. 22:15; Deut. 28:58; 1 Sam. 26:21; Neh. 2:16; Neh. 4:14; Neh. 4:19; Neh. 5:5; Neh. 5:7; Neh. 6:17; Neh. 7:5; Job 28:10; Job 34:19; Ps. 72:14; Isa. 3:5; Isa. 13:12; Isa. 16:14; Isa. 28:16 = of the "precious" foundation stone of Zion; Isa. 43:4 In the Septuagint, God is rarely called entimos, and even then it is done indirectly ("his name," Deuteronomy 28:58)

**Slave** (1401)(**doulos** from **deo** = to bind) (Additional note on **doulos**) was an individual bound to another in servitude and conveys the idea of the slave's close, binding ties with his master, belonging to him, obligated to and desiring to do his will and in a permanent relation of servitude. The will of the **doulos** was consumed in the will of the master and thus the **doulos** was wholly surrendered to the master's will and devoted to him even to the disregard of his own personal interest. Slaves in the ancient world, though they may be highly skilled craftsmen or even physicians existed to serve their masters alone. They had no rights as persons, and their lives had little value to society. Cicero once apologized for having a twinge of regret when a slave of his suffered a painful death.

Luke's uses of **doulos** - Lk. 1:38; Lk. 1:48; Lk. 2:29; Lk. 7:2; Lk. 7:3; Lk. 7:8; Lk. 7:10; Lk. 12:37; Lk. 12:43; Lk. 12:45; Lk. 12:46;



Lk. 12:47; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 14:21; Lk. 14:22; Lk. 14:23; Lk. 15:22; Lk. 17:7; Lk. 17:9; Lk. 17:10; Lk. 19:13; Lk. 19:15; Lk. 19:17; Lk. 19:22; Lk. 20:10; Lk. 20:11; Lk. 22:50; Acts 2:18; Acts 4:29; Acts 16:1

**Sick** (literally two words - echo = have + kakos = bad ~ "having it badly")<sup>2560</sup>(**kakos**) is an adjective that means badly and is used in the idiom (kakos echein) literally *badly have*, clearly meaning to be "bad off" (so to speak), to be ill or be sick. Uses of this idiom (echo + kakos) are found in Mt 4.24, Mt 8:16; Mk 2:17; Lk 5:31, etc.

**To die** (5053)(teleutao from **teleo** = bring to an end) means to complete, intransitively in the NT means come to an end; euphemistically to die

**Gilbrant** - This verb is related to the term telos (4904), "end," and can be found in classical Greek from the Eighth Century B.C. meaning "bring to pass, accomplish, fulfill, finish" (cf. Liddell-Scott). It was used in a wide variety of ways, especially in reference to "fulfilling" an oath or "finishing" life (i.e., "dying"; *ibid.*). In the Septuagint it almost always translates the Hebrew term *mûth*, meaning "die" or "end one's life," especially in reference to physical death. The word teleutaō occurs 11 times in the New Testament. It appears four times in Matthew; two times in Mark; once each in Luke, some texts of John, and Hebrews; and twice in Acts. Of these occurrences, three are quotations from the Old Testament (Matthew 15:4; Mark 7:10; 9:48). Of greatest note are the occurrences in Matthew 9:18 and John 11:39. Both of these usages refer to persons who are raised from the dead by Jesus. The word usage here carries with it the certainty of the death of the persons in question, i.e., Lazarus and Jairus' daughter.

The word is also used to describe the death of Herod in Matthew 2:19. It refers to the deaths of David, Jacob, and Joseph in Acts 2:29; 7:15; and Hebrews 11:22. It is also used in the story of brothers who died, recorded in Matthew 22:25. The usage in Mark 9:48 is somewhat different in that it refers to the powerful impact of self-destructive thought on a person's conscience. Some texts duplicate Mark 9:48 in Mk 9:44 and 46. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

Teleutao - 13x/13v- deceased(1), die(4), died(5), dying(1), put(2). Matt. 2:19; Matt. 9:18; Matt. 15:4; Matt. 22:25; Mk. 7:10; Mk. 9:44; Mk. 9:46; Mk. 9:48; Lk. 7:2; Jn. 11:39; Acts 2:29; Acts 7:15; Heb. 11:22

## Thy Word Suffices Me Sermon Notes Charles Haddon Spurgeon

- And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. Matthew 8:7
- Say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. —Luke 7:7

THE centurion who cared for the religious welfare of the people, and built them a synagogue, had also a heart of compassion for the sick.

It is well when public generosity is sustained by domestic kindness.

This servant was his boy, and perhaps his slave; but he was dear to him. A good master makes a good servant.

It is well when all ranks are united in sympathy: captain and page are here united in affection.

The master showed his affection by seeking help. Heart and hand should go together. Let us not love in word only.

It is well that the followers of Jesus should be ready to help all sick folk; and that healing should be still associated with prayer to Jesus.

Mark the growing manifest faith of the centurion, and the growing manifestation of Jesus.

Centurion sends elders with request to "come and heal. " Jesus will come and heal.

Centurion comes himself asking for "a word. " Jesus gives the word, and the deed is done.

We see in this passage a miracle in the physical world, and are thereby taught what our Lord Jesus can do in the spiritual world.

Let us imitate the centurion in seeking to Jesus about others. We learn from the narrative:

### I. THE PERFECT READINESS OF CHRIST.

1. He did not debate with the elders of the Jews, and show the weakness of their plea: "He was worthy" (Luke 7:4-5).
2. He cheerfully granted their request, although it was needless for him to come. "Then Jesus went with them"

(Luke 7:6).

3. He did not raise a question about the change which the centurion proposed, although he was already on the road (Luke 7:6).
4. He did not suspect the good man's motive, as some might have done. He read his heart, and saw his true humility.
5. He did not demur to the comparison of himself to a petty officer. Our Lord is never captious; but takes our meaning.
6. He promptly accepted the prayer and the faith of the centurion, save the boon, and gave it as desired.

Our Lord's love to sinners, his forgetfulness of self, his willingness to please us, and his eagerness to fulfill his own mission, should encourage us in prayer to him for ourselves and others.

## II. THE CONSCIOUS ABILITY OF CHRIST.

1. He is not puzzled with the case. It was singular for the servant to be at once paralyzed and tormented; but whatever the disease may be, the Lord says, "I will come and heal him. "
2. He is not put in doubt by the extreme danger of the servant. No, he will come to him, though he hears that he is stricken down. and is utterly prostrate.
3. He speaks of healing as a matter of course. His coming will ensure the cure: "come and heal."
4. He treats the method of procedure as of no consequence.  
He will come or he will not come, but will "say in a word"; yet the result will be the same.
5. He wonders more at the centurion's faith than at the cure.  
Omnipotent grace moves with majestic ease.  
We are worried and fretted, but the Lord is not.  
Let us thus be encouraged to hope.

## III. THE ABIDING METHOD OF CHRIST.

He is accustomed to heal by his Word through faith; Signs and wonders are temporary, and answer a purpose for an occasion; but both faith and the Word of the Lord are matters for all time.

Our Lord did not in the case before us put in a personal appearance, but spoke, and it was done; and this he does in our own day.

1. This is coming back to the original form of working in creation.  
It is apparently a greater miracle than working by visible presence; at any rate, the means are less seen.
2. This method suits true humility. We do not demand signs and wonders; the Word is enough for us (Luke 7:7).
3. This pleases great faith; for the Word is faith's chosen manifestation of God. It rejoices more in the Word than in all things visible (Ps. 119:162).
4. This is perfectly reasonable. Should not a word of command from God be enough? Mark the centurion's reasoning (Matt. 8:9).
5. This is sure to succeed. Who can resist the divine fiat? In our own case, all we need is a word from the Lord.
6. This must be confidently relied on for others. Let us use the Word, and pray the Lord to make it his own word.

Henceforth, let us go forward in his name, relying upon his Word!

Insertions

Had the centurion's roof been heaven itself, it could not have been worthy to be come under of him whose word was almighty, and who was the Almighty Word of his Father. Such is Christ confessed to be by him that says, "only say the word." None but a divine power is unlimited: neither has faith any other bounds than God himself. There needs no footing to remove mountains, or devils, but a word. Do but say the word, O Savior, my sin shall be remitted, my soul shall be healed, my body shall be raised from dust, and both soul and body shall be glorified. —Bishop Hall

"I have been informed," says Hervey, "that when the Elector of Hanover was declared by the Parliament of

Great Britain successor to the vacant throne, several persons of distinction waited upon his Highness, to make timely application for valuable preferments. Several requests of this nature were granted, and confirmed by a kind of promissory note. One gentleman solicited the Mastership of the Rolls. Being indulged in his desire, he was offered the same confirmation which had been vouchsafed to other successful petitioners; upon which he seemed to be overcome by grateful confusion and surprise, and begged that he might not put the royal donor to such unnecessary trouble, protesting that he looked upon His Highness's word as the best ratification of his suit. With this compliment the Elector was not a little pleased. 'This gentleman,' he said, 'treats me like a king; and, whoever is disappointed, he shall certainly be gratified.'

Our Lord can cure either by coming or by speaking. Let us not dictate to him the way in which he shall bless us. If we were permitted a choice, we ought not to select that method which makes most show, but that in which there is least to be seen and heard, yet most to be admired. Comparatively, signs and wonders show less of him than his bare Word, which he has magnified above all his name. Marvels dazzle, but the Word enlightens. That faith which sees least, sees most, and that which has no eyes at all for the visible has a thousand eyes for the invisible. Lord, come in thy glory, and bless me, if such be thy will; but if thou wilt stay where thou art, and bless me only through thy will and Word, I will be as well content, and even more so if this method the more honors thee! —C. H. S.

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### **POSB on The Centurion's Great Faith -**

1. Jesus returned to Capernaum (Lk 7:1).
2. Great faith cares deeply for people (Lk 7:2).
3. Great faith feels unworthy in approaching Jesus Christ (Lk 7:3).
4. Great faith seeks the power of God in Jesus Christ (Lk 7:4–5).
5. Great faith is centered in two sources (Lk 7:6–8).
6. Great faith stirs the matchless power of Jesus Christ (Lk 7:9–10).

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**Steven Cole** - If I were considering a man for a staff position at the church and he presented a letter of commendation from a respected Christian leader, it would be a strong point in his favor. But if the Lord Jesus Himself commended the man, I would do well to take note. He will be an effective servant of Christ and I can learn much from his faith.

Only twice in the gospels does Christ commend a person for great faith—the Syrophenician woman (Matt. 15:28), and this centurion we meet in our text. Both are Gentiles; one is a woman, the other a man. It is as if the Lord is saying, “The way of faith is open to people of all nationalities, male or female.” The faith that pleases God is not an exclusive thing reserved for the religious crowd. Any and all can lay hold of God by faith.

This centurion is a model of effective Christian service. Though he was a man in authority over 100 soldiers, he became a servant to his own servant by calling Jesus to heal him. As such, he is a picture of serving the Lord Jesus by reaching out to those in need, who may be lowly and despised by others. He was the channel through which Christ’s power flowed to this dying boy.

Although the centurion was in the military, which is not known as a seedbed for piety, he had great faith. It is interesting that every centurion mentioned in the New Testament is presented in a favorable light. This man shows us that we can serve Christ in any “secular” job. The centurion lived in Capernaum, which Jesus later castigated for its lack of faith (Luke 10:15), but he was not affected by their unbelief. This shows us that we can be godly people in the midst of an evil, unbelieving world. Wherever you are and whatever you do, this centurion shows you how to be an effective servant of Christ. He possesses three qualifications that every servant of Jesus Christ must seek to develop in his or her life: **An effective servant of Christ needs an exalted view of Jesus, a lowly view of himself, and a caring view of others.** ([Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#))

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### **Norman Geisler - [Is there a mistake in the accounts concerning Jesus and the centurion?](#)**

**PROBLEM:** Matthew seems to present the centurion as the one who seeks the help of Jesus (Matt. 8:5); but, Luke seems to say that the centurion sent elders to see Jesus (Luke 7:3). Also, Matthew appears to say that the centurion himself comes to talk with Jesus. However, in Luke, the Bible says only the centurion’s representatives saw Jesus.

**SOLUTION:** Both Matthew and Luke are correct. In the 1st century, it was understood that when a representative was sent to speak for his master, it was as if the master was speaking himself. Even in our day this is still the case. When the Secretary of State meets individuals from other countries, he goes out in the name of the president of the United States. In other words, what he says, the president says. Therefore, Matthew states that a centurion came entreating Jesus about his sick slave, when in fact the centurion sent others on his behalf. So, when Matthew declares that the centurion was speaking, this was true, even though he was (as Luke

indicated) speaking through his official representative. (When Critics Ask)

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**Rod Mattoon adds** - When you compare Matthew's account of the healing of the centurion's servant with Luke's account of the same miracle, an apparent discrepancy quickly arrests the reader's attention. Matthew's account says the centurion himself came to Christ on behalf of his sick servant, but Luke's account says the centurion sent some "elders of the Jews" to speak with Christ about the sick servant and then later, sent some of his "friends" to Christ to tell Christ that He did not need to come to the centurion's house, but only needed to speak the word for the healing. The best solution to this problem of whether the centurion went himself to Christ or sent others to Him, is to remember that sometimes we speak of a person doing something when he actually did it through someone else. Scripture says Solomon built the Temple in 1 Kings 6:14, but we know that he did not actually build the Temple himself but ordered the Temple built and provided for the material and financial needs. Qualified craftsmen and builders built the Temple. Pilate is said to have scourged Jesus in Matthew 27:26, but it was Roman soldiers who did the actual scourging. They simply did it at Pilate's orders. And in our text, the centurion is said to have built the Jews a synagogue, when we know he did not actually build the building himself, but simply provided the finances to make it possible. Matthew's account of the miracle is simply an abbreviation of Luke's account and so it says that the centurion himself communicated with Christ. It is acceptable language which is commonly used even in our day. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**James Smith - The Roman Officer and his Slave.** "Who was dear (precious) to Him" (Luke 7:2).

Introduction. This is a charming incident in the life of our Lord. And it conveys an important lesson, especially as a study in contrast. This was most unusual conduct on the part of a master. It is not often that a master will put himself to inconvenience these days for a sick servant, and was most unusual in those distant days. Then, they got all they could out of the servant, and when of no further use, cast them off as a piece of orange peel. Then remember that the master was a proud Roman officer.

Note the trouble he took for this poor sick slave. He first sent a deputation of Jewish Elders (verse 3); he then sent some friends of his own (verse 6); and, finally, he was so concerned that he came himself (study Matthew 8:5-13). This last step was most certainly a wise thing for him to do. It certainly is good to get other people to go to God for us, but that is not sufficient unless we go to Him for ourselves.

WHY DID HE DO THIS?

1. Not from a mere sense of duty. For no one felt it to be their duty in those days. There was no public conscience on matters of this sort.
2. It was not out of fear for a Coroner's Inquest, for there were none then, so cheap was human life.
3. It was love that moved him.

NO DOUBT ABOUT HIS LOVE. Why is there no doubt that the Roman officer loved his servant?

1. The way he acted emphatically proved this.
2. But the way he referred to his servant spoke volumes about his love. The beauty of the original is hidden in the A.V. The elders asked the Lord to heal the Centurion's slave; but the friends of the Roman officer took a direct message, which by and bye he himself supported, calling the sick slave, "My child." He does not use the rough word which implies a bondsman, but a term of endearment. This is brought out in the various renderings. "My young man," is the Weymouth rendering; "My boy," is the R.V.; and "My child," is Bullinger's rendering. This is delightful. Love betrays itself not only in conduct, but also in words, yea, in tone also.

A MORE REMARKABLE FACT. But there is a more remarkable fact still, and that is that God has, and does, put Himself about for us. More, He did not send a deputation, but came Himself. And He came to be a man and die. There is no doubt at all about His love — His works and His words all proclaim this. And God's treatment of us in such a gracious manner is more remarkable. And for the following reasons:

- I. This Servant was Deserving of such Attention. Whereas we are not. There is no doubt that the Centurion loved him because he was worthy of that love; yea, that he had merited that love. It is generally understood that he had, at the risk of his own life, saved the life of his master. No wonder then that he was loved, when his master owed life itself to his slave. But what about ourselves? Have we done anything notable for God? Why, the very opposite. We are, by nature, "enemies of God by wicked works," as the Bible declares. Yet, though utterly undeserving, we are dear to Him.
- II. He was his Master's own Slave, whereas we Belong to Another. For the Centurion to put himself about concerning this servant really was not so very wonderful when considered from our standpoint, for was he not caring for his own property. Things are different with us, for we are the slaves of another, the enemy of God. Yet, "though the slave of another, God loves us.

III. He was Dying, whereas we are Dead. That makes a tremendous difference. Whilst there's life, there's hope, we say; in our case we are lifeless, so far as spiritual life is concerned.

IV. He was Helpless, and so are We. And, as in his case, Another is, and has, interested Himself in us. See what He has already done on our behalf—sent His Son to die for us; bestowed the Holy Ghost to convict, woo, and win us; and given us a wonderful Book for our guidance and learning.

Is He Dear to You? You are dear to Him! It was the sickness of this servant that brought his master into contact with the Lord on His behalf. Surely you won't wait until sickness drives you to Him?

**Luke 7:3 When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave.**

**CSB** When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to Him, requesting Him to come and save the life of his slave.

**KJV** And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

- Lk 8:41; 9:38; Matthew 8:5; John 4:47; Philemon 1:10
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Parallel Passage -

Matthew 8:5+ - And when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, imploring Him,

**When he heard about Jesus** - Jesus' reputation was clearly spreading even without Twitter! **Carson** has an interesting comment that "Conceivably it was the earlier healing of an official's son (John 4:46-50+) that strengthened the centurion's faith in this instance." Undoubtedly he had heard about this Man Jesus Who was able to cast out demons with just a word, giving the demons a command to come out (Lk 4:35+) which they promptly obeyed (Lk 4:36+). This in fact could explain the centurion's words in Luke 7:7 just "say the word, and my servant will be healed."

**He sent (apostello) some Jewish elders (presbuteros) asking (erotao) Him to come and save the life (diasozo) of his slave (doulos)**-Sent means to send someone to carry out a task with the authority of the one sending. This is an amazing statement that Jews (even leaders) would be willing to aid a Roman, for the Jews normally hated the Romans for occupying their nation! Clearly this centurion was different than many of his fellow Romans. The verb Luke uses for **save** is a derivative of **sozo**, the verb he uses in Luke 7:50+[#7:50](#) where Jesus told the woman "Your faith has **saved (sozo)** you; go in peace."

**MacArthur** adds that "Matthew 8:5–13+ does not mention that the centurion appealed to Jesus through these intermediaries. It is a measure of the respect this man had in the community that Jewish elders would be willing to bring his cause to Jesus. He loved the Jewish nation and was somehow personally responsible for the building of the local synagogue (Mt 8:5+). He obviously was being drawn to Christ by God Himself (cf. Jn 6:44, 65). Like all men under conviction, he deeply sensed his own unworthiness (cf Peter's sense of being in the presence of Holiness - Lk 5:8+), and that is why he used intermediaries rather than speaking to Jesus personally (Lk 7:6, 7). (See [MacArthur Study Bible](#).)

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**He sent (649)(apostello** from apo = from, away from + stello = to withdraw from, avoid) means to send off, to send forth, to send out. To send out; to commission as a representative, an ambassador, an envoy. Note that the centurion requested help from others. He asked them to intercede for him. Note: he did not allow his sense of unworthiness and rejection to defeat him; neither was he too proud to ask for help, despite his superior position.

**Elders (4245)(presbuteros** the comparative form of présbus = an old man or an ambassador) referred to men who were older or more senior with no negative connotations but rather a sense of venerability. Presbuteros is transliterated into English as "presbyter" (a leader in one of the Jewish communities--especially a member of the [Sanhedrin](#)--or of the early Christian churches) and from which the word "priest" (from Late Latin presbyter) was derived. **NET Note on Jewish elders** - Why some Jewish elders are sent as emissaries is not entirely clear, but the centurion was probably respecting ethnic boundaries, which were important in ancient Greco-Roman and Jewish culture. The parallel account in Matt 8:5–13 does not mention the emissaries.



**Asking** (request) ([2065](#))(**erotao** from éromai = ask, inquire) means to ask for, usually with implication of an underlying question. It means “to plead,” “implore,” or even “to beg.” The verb does not carry the note of an authoritative command but rather that of making an urgent appeal. **A T Robertson** on **erotao** - common for asking a question as in the old Greek (Luke 22:68). But more frequently in the N. T. the verb has the idea of making a request as here. This is not a Hebraism or an Aramaism, but is a common meaning of the verb in the papyri (Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, p. 168). It is to be noted here that Luke represents the centurion himself as “asking” through the elders of the Jews (leading citizens). In Matt. 8:6 the verb is parakalōn (beseeching).

**Save** ([1295](#))(**diasozo** from **dia** = through + **sozo** = to save) means literally to save through. To bring to safety through danger or sickness. To heal, as in transporting someone through an ordeal to safety on the other side. It is used in the sense of “to recover” (from an illness) in the Gospels (Matthew 14:36; Luke 7:3). In Acts, Luke employed **diasōzō** of Paul’s “safe passage” from Jerusalem to Felix the governor (Acts 23:24). In Acts 27:43-45 **diasōzō** describes the “safe arrival” on land of Paul’s shipwrecked captors and companions who “escaped” the clutches of the sea (Acts 27:43,44; 28:1,4). Of the sick, to bring safely through, to heal (Mt. 14:36; Luke 7:3; Sept.: Jer. 8:20). Medical writers used **diasozo** with the meaning to escape from a severe illness or an epidemic, to get through the attack

**Diasozo** - 8x - bring...safely(1), bring...safely through(1), brought safely(2), brought safely through(1), cured(1), safely through(1), save the life(1), saved(1). Matt. 14:36; Lk. 7:3; Acts 23:24; 27:43-44; 28:1,4; 1 Pet. 3:20

**Diasozo** - 51x in 48v in the Septuagint - Ge 19:19; 35:3; Nu 10:9; 21:29; Deut. 20:4; Jos. 6:26; 9:15; 10:20,28,30,37,39; 11:8; Jdg. 3:26,29; 12:4-5; 21:17; 1 Sam. 19:10,17-18; 20:29; 22:1,20; 23:13; 2 Sam. 1:3; 2 Ki. 10:24; 19:30; Ezr. 9:14-15; Job 21:10,20; 22:30; 29:12; 36:12; Prov. 10:5; Eccl. 8:8; 9:15; Isa. 37:38; Jer. 8:20; Ezek. 17:15; Dan. 11:42; Hos. 13:10; Amos 2:15; 9:1; Jon. 1:6; Mic. 6:14; Zech. 8:13

Zech 8:13 (Prophecy of Israel's future salvation) ‘It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so **I will save** (Hebrew = [yasha](#); Lxx = diasozo) you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.’

**Gilbrant** on **diasozo** in Septuagint- Diasōzō occurs over 51 times in the Septuagint where it corresponds to six Hebrew words and six additional forms of those words. Most commonly mālaṭ, “to get to safety,” and forms of pālaṭ, “to escape, to be delivered, to be spared,” occur. Lot did not feel he could “escape” the disaster the Lord was about to bring upon Sodom and Gomorrah by fleeing to the mountains (see Ge 19:19). The Lord went with Israel to “deliver” her from her enemies (cf. Nu 10:9; Deut 20:4). Joshua, following the instructions of the Lord, allowed no “survivors” in his sweeping victory over the five kings (Joshua 10:20,28,30,37,39,40; 11:8). (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

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## Becoming a Go-To Person

When he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. —Luke 7:3

Would you pray for my sister?" the burly worker asked awkwardly. I eyed him suspiciously. Months earlier, muggy August heat intensified emotions in the pre-strike atmosphere of the assembly plant where I was working that summer. Managers drove production at a frenzied pace, and union members resisted. During breaks, we were coached by union officials on slowing down our output. My faith and idealism got me in the doghouse because I didn't think God would accept anything but my best effort. I naively tried to explain. My coworkers' response was harassment, and this burly worker asking for prayer had been the ringleader. An undesirable task? I got the assignment. Off-color jokes had me as the star. So now I greeted this prayer request with suspicion. "Why me?" His answer jarred me: "Because she's got cancer," he said gruffly, "and I need someone God will hear." The bitter rancor between us eased as I prayed for his sister.

Like the centurion in Luke 7, people in the storms of life don't waste time or mince words. They go directly to the people whose faith they've tagged as real. We need to be those people. Do our lives mark us as a go-to person in touch with God? ---RK ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We give to others what they need  
No greater help and care  
Than when we intercede for them  
And bear them up in prayer.  
—D. DeHaan

Even the hardest of souls might ask for help when someone they love is at risk.

**Luke 7:4 When they came to Jesus, they earnestly implored Him, saying, "He is worthy for You to grant this to him;**

**KJV** And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

- **worthy** Lk 7:6,7; 20:35; Matthew 10:11,13,37,38; Revelation 3:4
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

**When they came to Jesus, they earnestly implored Him** - The fact that these Jewish elders responded affirmatively to the Gentile soldier's request demonstrates the clear evidence of their appreciation and respect for him, for otherwise they would never have agreed to take a Gentile's request for help to a Jewish man! And not only did they go, but they plead earnestly, with zeal, with eagerness! The verb **Implored** is [imperfect tense](#) active voice signifying they began and kept on beseeching. This is the same verb used by Matthew in 8:5+. These Jewish elders were more than mere "transmitters" of the centurion's request, for they themselves were actually "interceding" (so to speak) for this Gentile man, so great was their respect!

**Saying, "He is worthy for You to grant this to him-** "**Worthy** is he to have you do this"; the term **worthy** comes first in the direct discourse and is emphatic." (NET) The Jewish elders explained to Jesus this was a good man who was worthy to be helped. This was the view of his **friends**, but not the view of the centurion himself (Lk 7:6+).

**POSB** explains that "The centurion felt **unworthy** to approach Jesus himself. Why? (1) He was a soldier, trained to take life and probably guilty of having taken life. What he had heard about Christ was the message of love and brotherhood. (2) He was a sinner, a terrible sinner, a Roman heathen, totally unworthy and rejected in the eyes of most. He felt that Jesus, too, would count him unworthy and reject him."

**D L Moody** - THE Jews could not understand grace, so they thought Christ would grant the request of this man, because he was worthy. "Why," they said, "he hath built us a synagogue!" It is the same old story that we hear to-day. Let a man give a few thousand dollars to build a church and he must have the best pew; "he is worthy." Perhaps he made his money by selling or making strong drink; but he has put the church under an obligation by this gift of money, and he is considered "worthy." This same spirit was at work in the days of Christ.

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**Came** (3854)([paraginomai](#) from **para** = beside + **ginomai** = to come to exist) means literally to become near and hence to come on the scene

**Jesus** (2424)([Iesous](#)) is [transliteration](#) of the Greek Iesous, which in turn is the transliteration of the Hebrew name [Jehoshua \(Yehoshua\)](#) or [Jeshua \(Yeshua\)](#) which mean *Jehovah is help* or *Jehovah is salvation*. Stated another way the Greek Iesous corresponds to the OT [Jehoshua \(Yehoshua\)](#) which is contracted as [Jeshua \(Yeshua\)](#).

**Earnestly** (at once)(4709)([spoudaios](#), cf [spoudazo](#)) means with hast, in a serious manner, with special urgency (Php 2:28), zealously (2 Ti 1:17, Titus 3:13), eagerly, promptly. With diligence. In the present context eagerly, earnestly, zealously, for time was short, as he was about to die. **Spoudaios** - 4x - Usage: all the more eagerly(1), diligently(1), eagerly(1), earnestly(1), more eagerly(1). No use in the Septuagint. Lk. 7:4; Phil. 2:28; 2 Tim. 1:17; Titus 3:13

**Implored** (3870)([parakaleo](#) from **para** = side of, alongside, beside + **kaleo** = call) means literally to call one alongside, to call someone to oneself, to call for, to summon. Parakaleo can include the idea of giving help or aid but the primary sense in the NT is to urge someone to take some action, especially some ethical course of action and always at the root there is the idea of enabling a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence.

**Worthy** (514) ([áxios](#) from **ágō** = to weigh) strictly speaking means bringing up the other beam of the scales. Having the weight of another thing of like value, worth as much. Counterbalancing - weighing as much (of like value, worth as much).

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**Luke 7:5 for he loves our nation and it was he who built us our synagogue."**

**KJV** For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

- **he loveth** 1 Kings 5:1; 2 Chronicles 2:11,12; Galatians 5:6; 1 John 3:14; 5:1-3
- **and** 1 Chronicles 29:3-9; Ezra 7:27,28; 1 John 3:18,19
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

**For (gar)** is a strategic [term of explanation](#) (always pause to ponder and query this explanatory conjunction). This gives the reason the Jewish elders considered him **worthy**. He was not a [proselyte](#) to Judaism, but was a Roman who had shown his love for the Jews. This Roman centurion reminds us of a well-known movie "An Officer and a Gentleman," for he was both!

**He loves (agapao) our nation (ethnos) and it was he who built (oikodomeo) us our synagogue (sunagoge)** - The centurion did not just allow the synagogue to be built - ESV - "he is the one who built us our synagogue." God's Word paraphrases it has "built our synagogue at his own expense." As **J C Ryle** says "The English version here can hardly be said to give the full sense of the Greek. The meaning is, "He hath himself built us a synagogue;" that is, at his own expense and charges." The [NET Note](#) adds "In the Greek text, the pronoun autos is included, making this emphatic. Naturally the force of this statement is causative, meaning the centurion either had the synagogue built or donated the cost of its construction."

**THOUGHT** - This centurion is a wonderful example to all us Gentile believers, that we too show sincere love to the nation of Israel (no, they are not a perfect nation), as it might just open a door for us to testify of our (their) Messiah! Do you love Israel? If you do not, then you need to ask God to give you a genuine love for His Chosen People, not because they are perfect (modern day Israel is far from perfect and is mainly secular), but they are still the "apple of His eye" and as Zechariah wrote "For thus says the LORD of hosts, "After glory He has sent me (MOST LIKELY THE MESSIAH) against the nations which plunder you (ISRAEL), for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye." (Zech 2:8, cf the blessing in Ge 12:3). Anti-Semitism has no place in the heart of one who is called a son or daughter of God!

In modern times "**Righteous Gentiles**" have been honored by trees planted along the road to Israel's [Yad VaShem Holocaust Memorial](#), because they risked their own death to save Jewish lives.

**IVP Background Commentary** - Non-Jews who feared God and donated substantial sums to the Jewish community were well respected. Centurions' salaries were much higher than those of their troops, but for this centurion to have built the local synagogue represented a great financial sacrifice. The main point lies in the contrasting views of worthiness (Lk 7:4, 6). (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary](#).)

As **Culyer** said "Marble and granite are perishable monuments, and their inscriptions may be seldom read. Carve your names on human hearts; they alone are immortal!"

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the cause of all the anti-Semitism in the world?](#)
- [Was Martin Luther anti-Semitic?](#)

**Loves (25)(agapao)** means to have affection for someone and speaks especially of love based on evaluation and choice and thus is a matter of will and action.

**Nation (1484)(ethnos)** in this context means nation or people (Mt 24:14; Lk 12:30; Ac 8:9; 10:22; 13:19.) [NET Note](#) - The use of ethnos ("nation") here instead of "God" probably meant the man was not a full proselyte, but that he had simply been supportive of the Jews and their culture. He could have been a God-fearer. The Romans saw a stable religious community as politically helpful and often supported it

**Built (3618)(oikodomeo)** from oikos = dwelling + doma = building from demo = to build) means literally to build, construct or erect a dwelling. (Mt 7:24, 26; 23:29; Mk 12:1; Lk 6:48; 12:18)

**Synagogue (4864)(sunagoge)** from sunágo = lead together, assemble or bring together) refers to a group of people "going with one another" (sunago) literally describes a bringing together or congregating in one place. Eventually, sunagoge came to mean the place where they congregated together. The word was used to designate the buildings other than the central Jewish temple where the Jews congregated for worship. Historically, the Synagogues originated in the Babylonian captivity after the 586 BC destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar and served as places of worship and instruction.

Related Resources:

- Torrey Topical Textbook [Synagogues](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Synagogue](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Synagogue](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Synagogue](#) [Synagogue \(2\)](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Synagogue](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Synagogue](#)

**Luke 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;**

**KJV** Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:

- **Jesus** Matthew 20:28; Mark 5:24; Acts 10:38
- **trouble** Lk 8:49
- **for** Lk 7:4; 5:8; 15:19-21; Genesis 32:10; Proverbs 29:23; Matthew 3:11; 5:26,27; James 4:6,10
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

### THE AMAZING HUMILITY OF THE CENTURION

**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 ([kurios](#)), do not trouble ([skullo](#)) Yourself further-** The purpose of the second delegation was to tell Jesus He did not need to come to his home. As **Lenski** explains "This would not do; Jesus must not come into this Levitically unclean house. It was improper for any Jew to go under the roof of a Gentile and most certainly for a great and holy Jew like Jesus." (ISLB) While some commentaries take the centurion's use of **Lord ([kurios](#))** as something like "**Sir**" or "**Rabbi**," in the context of Jesus' assessment of his great faith, it is very reasonable to interpret the centurion's designation of Jesus as **Lord** in the sense of being the "divine Lord" and not merely "Sir" or "Rabbi."

**For I am not worthy ([hikanos](#)) for You to come under my roof -** "This non-commissioned officer knows he needs help, he knows Jesus can give it, and he comes with nothing but a humble heart." ([Holwick](#)) Note that "Luke again represents the centurion himself as doing the speaking, which fully justifies Matthew's account which omits mention of the friends." (Lenski) The centurion's statement **I am not worthy** is an amazing expression of his humility especially in light of the Jewish elders assessment that **He is worthy ([axios](#)) for You to grant this to him.** NIV has "I do not deserve to have you come under my roof." BBE has "for I am not important enough for you to come into my house." More literally it could be read "**I am not fit** (which is the meaning of [hikanos](#))". This recalls the line below from Joseph Hart's "[Come Ye Sinners](#)" which speaks of our "**fitness**" for Jesus to come to our house -- truth be told ,NONE of us are "worthy" for Him to come! And so our words echo those of the centurion "Lord I am not worthy!" And yet just as Jesus healed the centurion's servant with a WORD, He has healed our "sin sick" souls with His Gospel WORD! This truth should cause us all to fall on on our faces before Jesus with hearts filled with overwhelming gratitude for healing us! **Thank YOU LORD JESUS!!!**

Let not conscience make you linger,  
Nor of **fitness** fondly dream;  
All the **fitness** he requireth  
Is to feel your need of him.  
This he gives you, this he gives you;  
'Tis the Spirit's glimmering beam.

[Lowell Johnson](#) - This man measured his worth against the absolute standard of Jesus and he said, "I am not worthy."

**Augustine** commented that "By saying that he was unworthy, he showed himself worthy of Christ's entering, not within his walls, but within his heart." It is clear that the centurion's heart was tender toward the Lord. He was unlike so many today who feel they deserve to go to Heaven. Beloved, we don't deserve Heaven, but we do deserve Hell, for the wages of our continual sin against God is eternal death (cf Ro 6:23+). No one is good enough or righteous enough to get to Heaven on their own merit, for as Paul writes "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE." (Ro 3:10+) Isaiah said "all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all

our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away." (Isa 64:6)

The centurion reminds us of Peter's humility "But when Simon Peter saw that (THE MIRACULOUS CATCH OF FISH - Lk 5:7), he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5:8+)

"God sends none away empty  
but those who are full of themselves!"

Compare Mt 8:8+ "But the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed."

**MacArthur on under my roof** - Jewish tradition held that a person who entered a Gentile's house was ceremonially defiled (cf. Jn 18:28). The centurion, undoubtedly familiar with this law, felt unworthy of having Jesus suffer such an inconvenience for his sake. He also had faith enough to know that Christ could heal by merely speaking a word (The centurion understood Jesus' absolute authority). (See [The MacArthur Bible Commentary](#))

**IVP Background Commentary** - The centurion was not a full convert to Judaism and thus retained some of his uncleanness as a Gentile, especially in regard to the food in his home. To invite a Jewish teacher into such a home would have been offensive under normal circumstances, but in this case the community's elders want to make an exception (Lk 7:3). (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary](#).)

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**Lord** (master, owner)(2962)(**kurios** from kuros = might or power, related to kuroo = to give authority) primarily means the possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is sovereign (used this way of Roman emperors - Act 25:26) and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership and uncontested power. Kurios is used of the one to whom a person or thing belonged, over which he has the power of deciding, the one who is the master or disposer of a thing (Mk 7:28)

**Trouble** (4660)(**skullo**) literally meant to skin, flay, lacerate, mangle. In the NT it is used metaphorically, meaning to harass, trouble, weary, means to cause oneself to be or become inconvenienced or discomforted. **Skullo** - 4x in 4v - distressed(1), trouble(3). Not used in the Septuagint.

Matthew 9:36 Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were **distressed** and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Mark 5:35 While He was still speaking, they came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; why **trouble** the Teacher anymore?"

Luke 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;

Luke 8:49 While He was still speaking, someone came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; do not **trouble** the Teacher anymore."

**Worthy** (same word in Mt 8:8)(2425) (**hikanos** from the root hik- = "to reach [with the hand]," "to attain", `reaching to', `attaining to'; hence, `adequate') refers to that which reaches or arrives at a certain standard and in context refers to men who meet the standard and are fit, qualified and able to "teach" (didasko). Hikanos means worthy or sufficient for an honor, a place or a position.

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**Steven Cole on the Centurion's humility** - On one occasion the well-known preacher, Harry Ironside, felt that he was not humble enough. So he asked an older friend what he could do about it. The friend replied, "Make a sandwich board with the plan of salvation in Scripture on it and wear it as you walk through downtown Chicago for a day." Ironside followed his friend's advice. It was a humiliating experience. As he returned home and took off the sandwich board, he caught himself thinking, "There's not another person in Chicago who would be willing to do a thing like that!"

How do we grow in humility? True humility stems from seeing my insufficiency and Christ's all-sufficiency. The centurion's servant was about to die (Lk 7:2). He was helpless to deal with this irreversible illness and imminent death. What a picture of the human race, impotent to deal with the ravages of sin and its ultimate result, spiritual death! The centurion saw his own insufficiency to deal with the problem, but he also saw Christ's all-sufficiency. So he said to Jesus, "Just say the word, and my servant will be healed" (Luke 7:7). False humility says, "I can do nothing" and stops there. True humility adds, "But I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13) and cries out to Him to work. It's a lesson we keep learning all our lives. I often experience it in preparing messages. I come to a point where I cannot get the flow of the passage. The message isn't gelling. And I'm under time constraints! I don't have time for it not to come together! Then I realize afresh that I can't put sermons together. I can't adequately



communicate God's truth. Only He can. And so I call to Him out of my weakness, and He answers.

One of my spiritual heroes is **George Muller**, who trusted God to support over 2,000 orphans in Bristol, England, in the last century. His biographer observes, "Nothing is more marked in George Muller, to the very day of his death, than this, that he so looked to God and leaned on God that he felt himself to be nothing, and God everything" ([A. T. Pierson, George Muller p. 112](#)). That's the proper focus of a servant of Christ....

**The Lord is looking for servants like this centurion:**

- \*Who have an exalted view of Christ-He is the sovereign Lord of authority, and thus they trust Him for the impossible.
- \*Who have a lowly view of themselves-they are unworthy and insufficient, but they know Christ as gracious and all-sufficient.
- \*Who have a caring view of others-they are helpless, and thus need compassion. Christ's authority and grace extend to those whom society may despise.

**Hudson Taylor**, the great pioneer missionary to China, used to say, "All God's giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on God being with them." May that same powerful God do great things through us as we trust Him in our weakness! ([Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#))

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The Apostle Paul was a perfect example of a man who grew in humility as he grew spiritually...He the more he became like Christ, the more humble he became!

<b>Paul's Progress in Humility: Christ Increasing - Self Decreasing</b>	
<b>Approximate date</b>	<b>Paul's Self Assessment</b>
55 AD	1Cor 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.
61 AD	Eph 3:8 To me, the very least of all saints (literally = "less than the least of all saints"), this grace was given (Why was it given? What was Paul to do?), to preach (= The purpose of God's gift of grace) to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,
63-66 AD	1Ti 1:15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save <b>sinners</b> , among whom I am (Note: not "was" but "am" foremost!) <b>foremost</b> of all.

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**William Barclay - THE central character is a Roman centurion; and he was no ordinary man.**

**(i) The mere fact that he was a centurion meant he was no ordinary man.**

A centurion was the equivalent of a regimental sergeant-major; and the centurions were the backbone of the Roman army. Wherever they are spoken of in the New Testament they are spoken of well (cp. Luke 23:47; Acts 10:22; 22:26; 23:17, 23, 24; 24:23; 27:43). Polybius, the historian, describes their qualifications. They must be not so much "seekers after danger as men who can command, steady in action, and reliable; they ought not to be over anxious to rush into the fight; but when hard pressed they must be ready to hold their ground and die at their posts." The centurion must have been a man amongst men or he would never have held the post which was his.

**(ii) He had a completely unusual attitude to his slave**

He loved this slave and would go to any trouble to save him. In Roman law a slave was defined as a living tool; he had no rights; a master could ill-treat him and even kill him if he chose. A Roman writer on estate

management recommends the farmer to examine his implements every year and to throw out those which are old and broken, and to do the same with his slaves. Normally when a slave was past his work he was thrown out to die. The attitude of this centurion to his slave was quite unusual.

**(iii) He was clearly a deeply religious man.**

man needs to be more than superficially interested before he will go the length of building a synagogue. It is true that the Romans encouraged religion from the cynical motive that it kept people in order. They regarded it as the opiate of the people. Augustus recommended the building of synagogues for that very reason. As Gibbon said in a famous sentence, "The various modes of religion which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful." But this centurion was no administrative cynic; he was a sincerely religious man.

**(iv) He had an extremely unusual attitude to the Jews.**

If the Jews despised the gentiles, the gentiles hated the Jews. Antisemitism is not a new thing. The Romans called the Jews a filthy race; they spoke of Judaism as a barbarous superstition; they spoke of the Jewish hatred of mankind; they accused the Jews of worshipping an ass's head and annually sacrificing a gentile stranger to their God. True, many of the gentiles, weary of the many gods and loose morals of paganism, had accepted the Jewish doctrine of the one God and the austere Jewish ethic. But the whole atmosphere of this story implies a close bond of friendship between this centurion and the Jews.

**(v) He was a humble man.**

He knew quite well that a strict Jew was forbidden by the law to enter the house of a gentile (Acts 10:28); just as he was forbidden to allow a gentile into his house or have any communication with him. He would not even come to Jesus himself. He persuaded his Jewish friends to approach him. This man who was accustomed to command had an amazing humility in the presence of true greatness.

**(vi) He was a man of faith.**

His faith is based on the soundest argument. He argued from the here and now to the there and then. He argued from his own experience to God. If his authority produced the results it did, how much more must that of Jesus? He came with that perfect confidence which looks up and says, "Lord, I know you can do this." If only we had a faith like that, for us too the miracle would happen and life become new. ([Luke 7](#))

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**I Am Not Worthy    Luke 7:6**

The centurion of Capernaum appears upon the page of the holy Gospel as an example of great faith. Although he did not belong to the people of the Lord, he obtained the Messiah's witness, which expressed surprise, yes, even admiration: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." What besides many other features in him appeals to us, is his heart touching humility, which is always the mark of grace. This humbleness appeared already when he sent the elders of the Jews to Jesus, to ask Him to come and cure his dying servant, just like amongst us only the humble of heart feel the need for the intercession of others, whom they esteem more excellent than themselves. Added to this was that he, once Jesus was not far from his house, sent for the second time some friends to say unto him: "Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof!" The elders of the Jews had declared with a remembrance of the love of the centurion for the people of the Lord: "That he was worthy for whom he should do this," but he declared himself to be unworthy to receive the Messiah under his roof: "Lord, trouble not thyself!"

A great faith reveals itself always in a great humility, in a sense of our own unworthiness, in a awareness of the infinite distance that exists between the Lord's majesty and the heart of a sinful man. This does not mean that the conviction of our own insignificance must keep us far removed from Christ; but even if we seek with our whole soul and with all our strength His blessing, it shall always take place in the notion that all grace has been forfeited and all mercy has been absolutely unmerited; it shall always take place with the unuttered or expressed thought: "Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof!"

Do we sense that distance between this I and this Thou?

I, a sinful son of man,—and Thou, the Holiness of God.

I, a frail mortal being,—and Thou, the Eternal One.

I without glory,—and Thou clothed with majesty and with honour!

It shall be well with us, if behind our back the elders of the Jews may confess in truth before God that we love His people and help to build His Kingdom, but if we whisper while begging the Lord's mercy: "Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou

shouldst enter under my roof!" To such small ones the Lord reaches His hand, into such humble ones He enters, and upon such meek ones He bestows His blessing. He enters under their roof, into their house, at their table, yes, even into their heart! (The Loins Girded)

**Luke 7:7 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.**

**KJV** Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

- **but** Lk 4:36; 5:13; Exodus 15:26; Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6; Ps 33:9; 107:20; Mark 1:27
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

## **THE CONCRETE CONFIDENCE OF THE CENTURION IN CHRIST'S POWER**

**For this reason** - What reason? What is he explaining? He is explaining why he sent friends to Jesus instead of personally going himself.

**I did not even consider myself worthy** ([axioo](#)) **to come to You, but just say the word, and my servant** ([pais](#)) **will be healed** ([iaomai](#)) - This centurion's faith is as they say "off the charts!" As **Cole** says "The centurion had an exalted view of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His authority over this hopeless disease: "... just say the word, and my servant will be healed" (Lk 7:7). The centurion understood the principle of authority. He knew what it meant to speak and to have his words obeyed. But he knew that his servant's desperate condition was beyond the realm of his authority. He needed to go to the One in authority over all creation. He recognizes Jesus to be that One. He even knew that Jesus did not need to come and physically lay hands on his servant. The Lord of Creation, who spoke the universe into existence, simply had to speak the word and his servant would be healed. That is an exalted view of Jesus Christ!" ([Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#)) It is interesting that Luke doesn't even give us the word Jesus spoke!

**THOUGHT** - Even as Jesus healed by His Word in this story, every one of us have been healed by that same Word! Here Jesus heals with a word. With the widow's dead son He heals with a touch and a word. Note the progression on Luke 7 - healing a slave, raising a dead son (Lk 7:14-15), saving a sinner (Lk 7:50).

**Rod Mattoon** - The officer had so much confidence or faith in Christ's power and ability that he told Jesus, "Just say the word and he will be healed. Just as I have authority to command others and they obey, you have authority to command and it will come to pass." This was the sentiment of the centurion. He had risen above the need of an outward sign, such as a touch or even the sound of a living voice. He needed no contact with the fringe of the Master's garment, asked for no handkerchief or an apron that had touched His person. The word the Master would speak would be enough. He totally delegated the problem and the need of his servant to the Lord Jesus and was confident that Christ would take care of the matter. Do you have that kind of confidence? ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**J C Ryle** - The Portuguese Commentator, Barradius, has some striking remarks on this expression of the Centurion's. He says, "This is a peculiar attribute of God's, to be able to do all things by a word and a command. 'He spake and they were made;' 'He commanded and they were created.' (Psalm 148:5.) Read the book of Genesis. You will see the world created by the word of God: 'God said, Let there be light, and there was light.' 'God said, Let there be a firmament,' and a firmament was made," &c. He then shows by a quotation from Augustine, how all the created beings in existence, whether kings, or angels, or seraphims, cannot create so much as an ant. But when God says, "Let the world be made," as once, it is made by a word. And he concludes, "Well therefore does the Centurion say, 'say in a word only, and my servant shall be healed.'" (Luke 7)

**IVP Background Commentary** - During their twenty or so years of service in the Roman army, soldiers were not permitted to marry. Many had illegal local concubines, an arrangement that the army overlooked and the concubines found profitable. But centurions, who could be moved around more frequently, would be less likely than ordinary soldiers to have such relationships; they often married only after retirement. By ancient definitions, however, a household could include servants, and household servants and masters sometimes grew very close—especially if they made up the entire family unit. (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

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**Consider worthy** (deserve, desire, insist) (515) **axioo** from **axios** = of weight) means basically to think meet or right and has several nuances - (1) make worthy (2 Th 1.11); (2) think of as worthy, consider worthy or deserving (and act accordingly) - BDAG - "to consider suitable for requital or for receipt of someth." (Lk. 7:7; 1 Ti 5:17; Heb. 3:3; 10:29); (3) think fitting to do something, prefer, regard as right to do (Acts 15.38); (4) want, request, desire (Acts 13.42; 28.22)

**Servant** (3816) (**pais**) means a child, boy, youth (see IVP note below). This is clearly an affectionate term for the **slave** (Lk 7:2) who was "dear" to him and who indeed may have been a child or teenager.

**Will be Healed** (cure) (2390) (**iaomai** means to cure, to heal, to restore. **iaomai** is used literally of deliverance from physical diseases and afflictions and so to make whole, restore to bodily health or heal. To cause someone to achieve health after having been sick. In the passive it means to be healed or cured. Figuratively, **iaomai** speaks of deliverance from sin and its evil consequences and thus to restore (to spiritual good health), make whole, renew (Mt 13.15). In the passive, **iaomai** figuratively means to be restored, to recover or to be healed as in 1Pe 2.24.

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### **Vance Havner - "As Thou Hast Believed" Luke 7:1-17**

OUR Lord, having healed elsewhere, returns to Capernaum and brings blessing at home as well as abroad (Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10). A Roman centurion comes to Him on behalf of a sick servant. How we ought always to come to our Lord on behalf of others—and not only of the high and mighty but even of servants, the despised and lowly! This centurion had lived up to the light he had; he had befriended the Jews and built them a synagogue. Such men always find more light.

His humility is shown in that he thought himself unworthy to have the Lord under his roof. That spirit also always gets a blessing. He recognizes that just as he has men under his authority, so the Lord has authority over disease. Alas, we today do not believe He can and will work wonders; we see no authority beyond the purely natural. There is little recognition of the sovereignty of our Christ over every problem.

In the simple faith of this centurion our Lord saw a prophetic type of Gentiles being saved while the unbelieving Jews would be cast out (Matt. 8:10-12). How true that is in this present church-age is evident to us all.

Jesus commanded the centurion, "Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." It reminds us of His statement to the blind men: "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matt. 9:29). Our faith is the measure of our blessing. As we believe, we receive. How naturally follows the conclusion here: "And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour." We blame many things for our meager, pale and tasteless lives today, but we simply do not believe His word enough to go our way. We must see before believing, whereas these believed and then went forth to see the wonder wrought.

Next day, our Lord entered Nain and met a widow's son being carried to burial. A procession of life met a procession of death. Many people, we read in the account (Luke 7:11-17), were in each procession. It is not recorded that the widow solicited aid, but the Lord saw her and had compassion. With the simple word "Arise" He raised the dead. Three raisings are recorded in the Gospels. One had just died, the daughter of Jairus; this young man was on the way to burial; and Lazarus had been dead four days. But the Lord raised all three, and, although the details differed, each could say, "Once I was dead, but now I live." Is it not so in conversion? Elijah and Elisha had raised the dead with great wrestlings, but here our Lord simply calls the dead to life.

Of course, after such an event the people would be in fear and glorify God, but most of the response, doubtless, was of that superficial sort that will not believe unless it sees signs and wonders. Often we think that if Jesus were among us today working such miracles, men would believe—but not so. Skeptics would offer their explanations, the magicians would produce their counterfeits, and sinful men would go on their way, loving darkness rather than light. More blessed are they who see not, yet believe and, believing, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory!

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**J C Ryle - We should notice in these verses the kindness of the centurion.** It is a part of his character which appears in three ways.

1. We see it in his treatment of his servant. He cares for him tenderly when sick, and takes pains to have him restored to health.
2. We see it again in his feeling towards the Jewish people. He did not despise them as other Gentiles commonly did. The elders of the Jews bear this strong testimony, "He loveth our nation."—
3. We see it lastly in his liberal support of the Jewish place of worship at Capernaum. He did not love Israel "in word and tongue only, but in deed." The messengers he sent to our Lord supported their petition by saying, "He hath built us a synagogue."

Now where did the centurion learn this kindness? How can we account for one who was a heathen by birth, and a soldier by profession, showing such a spirit as this? Habits of mind like these were not likely to be

gathered from heathen teaching, or promoted by the society of a Roman camp. Greek and Latin philosophy would not recommend them. Tribunes, consuls, prefects and emperors would not encourage them.—There is but one account of the matter. The centurion was what he was “by the grace of God.” The Spirit had opened the eyes of his understanding, and put a new heart within him. His knowledge of divine things no doubt was very dim. His religious views were probably built on a very imperfect acquaintance with the Old Testament Scriptures. But whatever light from above he had, it influenced his life, and one result of it was the kindness which is recorded in this passage.

Let us learn a lesson from the centurion’s example. Let us, like him, show kindness to everyone with whom we have to do. Let us strive to have an eye ready to see, and a hand ready to help, and a heart ready to feel, and a will ready to do good to all. Let us be ready to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice. This is one way to recommend our religion, and make it beautiful before men. Kindness is a grace that all can understand.—This is one way to be like our blessed Saviour. If there is one feature in His character more notable than another, it is His unwearied kindness and love.—This is one way to be happy in the world, and see good days. Kindness always brings its own reward. The kind person will seldom be without friends.

**We should notice, secondly, in this passage, the humility of the centurion.**

It appears in his remarkable message to our Lord when He was not far from his house: “I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof:—neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee.”—Such expressions are a striking contrast to the language used by the elders of the Jews. “He is worthy,” said they, “for whom thou shouldst do this.”—“I am not worthy,” says the good centurion, “that thou shouldst enter under my roof.”

Humility like this is one of the strongest evidences of the indwelling of the Spirit of God. We know nothing of it by nature, for we are all born proud. To convince us of sin, to show us our own vileness and corruption, to put us in our right place, to make us lowly and self-abased,—these are among the principal works which the Holy Ghost works in the soul of man. Few of our Lord’s sayings are so often repeated as the one which closes the parable of the Pharisee and Publican: “Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” (Luke 18:14.) To have great gifts, and do great works for God, is not given to all believers. But all believers ought to strive to be clothed with humility.

**We should notice, thirdly, in this passage, the centurion’s faith.**

We have a beautiful example of it in the request that he made to our Lord: “Say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.” He thinks it needless for our Lord to come to the place where his servant lay dying. He regards our Lord as one possessing authority over diseases, as complete as his own authority over his soldiers, or a Roman Emperor’s authority over himself. He believes that a word of command from Jesus is sufficient to send sickness away. He asks to see no sign or wonder. He declares his confidence that Jesus is an almighty Master and King, and that diseases, like obedient servants, will at once depart at His orders.

Faith like this was indeed rare when the Lord Jesus was upon earth. “Show us a sign from heaven,” was the demand of the sneering Pharisees. To see something wonderful was the great desire of the multitudes who crowded after our Lord. No wonder that we read the remarkable words, “Jesus marvelled at him,” and said unto the people, “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” None ought to have been so believing as the children of those who were led through the wilderness, and brought into the promised land. But the last was first and the first last. The faith of a Roman soldier proved stronger than that of the Jews.

Let us not forget to walk in the steps of this blessed spirit of faith which the centurion here exhibited. Our eyes do not yet behold the book of life. We see not our Saviour pleading for us at God’s right hand. But have we the word of Christ’s promises? Then let us rest on it and fear nothing. Let us not doubt that every word that Christ has spoken shall be made good. The word of Christ is a sure foundation. He that leans upon it shall never be confounded. Believers shall all be found pardoned, justified, and glorified at the last day. “Jesus says so,” and therefore it shall be done.

We should notice, finally, in these verses, the advantage of being connected with godly families. We need no clearer proof of this than the case of the centurion’s servant. We see him cared for in sickness. We see him restored to health through his master’s intercession. We see him brought under Christ’s notice through his master’s faith. Who can tell but the issue of the whole history, was the conversion and salvation of the man’s soul? It was a happy day for that servant, when he first took service in such a household?

Well would it be for the Church, if the benefits of connection with the “household of faith,” were more frequently remembered by professing Christians. Often, far too often, a Christian parent will hastily place his son in a



position where his soul can get no good, for the sake of mere worldly advantage. Often, far too often, a Christian servant will seek a new place where religion is not valued, for the sake of a little more wages. These things ought not so to be. In all our moves, our first thought should be the interest of our souls. In all our settlements, our chief desire should be to be connected with godly people. In all our scheming and planning, for ourselves or our children, one question should ever be uppermost in our minds: "What shall it profit to gain the whole world, and lose our own souls?" Good situations, as they are called, are often godless situations, and ruin to all eternity those who take them. (Luke 7)

**Luke 7:8 "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."**

**KJV** For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

- **under** Acts 22:25,26; 23:17,23,26; 24:23; 25:26
- **one** Gr. this man. and he goeth. Acts 10:7,8; Colossians 3:22; 1 Timothy 6:1,2
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus. Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

## **THE CENTURION UNDERSTOOD AUTHORITY**

**For** (gar) - Term of explanation - This indicates the reason the centurion knew that Jesus could heal by simply uttering a command. What he says is this "I know that you need only to give a command to heal my servant, because I know what the command of one in authority can do." Little wonder that Jesus was so amazed at his faith!

**I also am a man placed under** (hupo) **authority** (*exousia*), **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** - Notice the phrase **man under authority** which speaks of the centurion's humility and willingness to submit to greater authority, which makes him a perfect candidate in this scenario, for now he humbly submits to the One Who has the greatest authority in the Universe! The verbs in **red** are **commands**. His **commands** were immediately obeyed. The centurion's reasoning is in a sense from the lesser to the greater, so that if he as a lesser official could authoritatively give orders that were promptly obeyed, certainly Christ the possessor of greater authority could do the same. Perhaps the centurion had either personally heard or heard about Jesus giving commands to demons who obeyed without hesitation. In any event, he obviously recognized the greater authority of Jesus or he would never have ask Him to heal his servant. In a word, the centurion understood AUTHORITY and clearly recognized that Jesus was a Man with authority. Recall that the centurion was a commander of a hundred soldiers, and so understood what it was both give commands and to have those commands obeyed.

**Vincent on placed under authority** - It is not easy to render the exact force of these words. The sense of the present participle with the verb ε μι, I am, is very subtle. The words set under are commonly understood to mean placed in a subordinate position; but this would be more accurately expressed by the perfect participle, τετραγμένος. The present participle indicates something operating daily, and the centurion is describing not his appointed position so much as his daily course of life. The word set originally means arranged, drawn up in order; so that the words might be paraphrased thus: "I am a man whose daily course of life and duty is appointed and arranged by superior authority." The centurion speaks in a figure which is well explained by Alford: "I know how to obey, being myself under authority; and I know how others obey, having soldiers under me. If then I, in my subordinate station of command, am obeyed, how much more thou, who art over all, and whom diseases serve as their Master." Just what estimate of Jesus these words imply we cannot say. It seems evident, at least, that the centurion regarded him as more than man. If that be so, it is a question whether the word man (νθρωπος) may not imply more than is commonly assigned to it. Taking the Greek words in their order they may read, "For I also, a man (as compared with thee), am set under authority, having soldiers under myself. See on Mt. 8:9.

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**Authority** (1849)(*exousia* from éxesti = it is permitted, it is lawful) means the power to do something and was a technical term used in the law courts, of a legal right. "**Authority** or right is the dominant meaning (of *exousia*) in the New Testament." (Vincent) *Exousia* refers to delegated **authority** and combines the idea of the "right and the might", these attributes having been granted to someone. **Exousia** is an important term in the Gospels for many conflicts in Jesus' life and ministry turn on debates about

**authority** or the idea that Jesus taught with an unparalleled **authority** (Mt 7:29; 8:9; 9:6, 8; 21:23-27; 28:18; Mk 1:22, 27; 2:10; 3:15; 11:28-33; Lk 4:32, 36; 5:24; 7:8; 20:2-8).

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**Before the Face of God - (excerpt)** - Luke focuses on the faith of the centurion, not on the miracle of healing. Matthew tells us more about this story (Matt. 8:5–13), but Luke says only that “when Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, ‘I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel!’” (v. 9). The faith Jesus praised was characterized by humility. Many of the Jews recognized Jesus’ great abilities as healer and teacher, but the centurion recognized Jesus’ authority. As the centurion said, “I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I symbolize the might and power of Rome to the office I bear as centurion. I know what it is like to take orders and to give orders. In the same way, Jesus, I know that the authority of heaven and earth are at your disposal. If it is your will it certainly will come to pass” (v. 8). In the same manner, true faith humbly submits to the authority of the King.

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**Gene Brooks - APPLICATION:** Do you want **Spiritual Authority**? Then cultivate in your life the virtue of humility. Paul tells us in Romans 12:3, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.” But **humility** is not weakness. It is strength. There is a boldness in **humility**. Proverbs 28:1 says, “The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion.” Proverbs 22:4: “By **humility** and the fear of the LORD Are riches and honor and life.” Proverbs 15:33: “The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, And before honor is **humility**.” Pride is the source of most all other failures of sin in your life. By asking the Holy Spirit to replace personal pride with **humility**, you will gain spiritual authority and Christ-likeness. (Ed: Also James 4:6- But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “GOD IS **OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**”) ([Luke Sermon](#))

**Luke 7:9 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."**

**NET** When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him. He turned and said to the crowd that followed him, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith!"

**KJV** When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

- **he marveled** Matthew 8:10; 15:28
- **not in** Ps 147:19,20; Matthew 9:33; Romans 3:1-3; 9:4,5
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Hebrews 11:1+ - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

### A GENTILE'S FAITH CONTRASTS WITH JEWISH UNBELIEF

In this passage we see not only extraordinary praise for a Gentile, but also an indictment at the unbelief of Israel.

**Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled ([thaumazo](#)) at him, and turned and said to the crowd that was following ([akoloutheo](#)) Him, "I say to you, not even in Israel have I found ([heurisko](#)) such great faith ([pistis](#))** - Great faith made Jesus marvel! **Jesus...turned** is "a vivid touch not in Matthew's account (Mt 8:10). The phrase **I say to you** is added to make sure the Jewish audience heard His message (including the Jewish friends of the centurion - Lk 7:6)! He did not want the Jews to miss the full impact of His commendation of a centurion's faith. This recalls to mind the words of Paul in Romans 11 "But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow **I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them.**" (Ro 11:13-14+) Perhaps some the Jews would be moved to jealousy by the **great faith** of this Gentile! It is worth noting that Jesus was not marveling not at the man's building a synagogue for the Jews, but at his **great faith!**

It's a Faith that sees the invisible,

believes the incredible,  
and receives the impossible!

Who are those **who were following**? This **crowd** had to include His disciples, but also probably some of the "brood of vipers," who were now "hot on His trail" and would not give up their hunt until they killed Him! **Following** is [akoloutheo](#) the word often used to describe "followers" or disciples, in this case a mixed group and not just the 12 disciples (cf " large crowds followed Him." = Mt 8:1). However, there is no doubt that Jesus as the Master Teacher was using the Roman centurion as a teaching point to His disciples ("learners")! **Not even** (oude) speaks of an absolute, objective negation. Jesus' point is that in Israel, that is, among the ethnic Jews who even had access to the OT prophecies concerning the Messiah, Jesus could find no Jew with faith like this centurion. The special privileges of the Jews sadly did not result in a greater percent believing in Jesus. Hendriksen adds that "To be sure, also in Israel Jesus had found faith (Luke 5:5, 8–11; 6:20–23, 47, 48), but not a combination in one person of a love so affectionate, a considerateness so thoughtful, an insight so penetrating, a humility so outstanding, and a trust so unlimited. In many cases was not what Jesus had found "little faith"?"

**Lowell Johnson** on faith and Jesus - Several times Jesus said to those He had healed from some sickness, "Your faith has made you whole," but He never describes any other person as having "so great faith." Three times He rebuked His disciples and said, "O, ye of little faith." On one occasion the disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith, but several times Jesus had to say to them, "O, faithless and perverse generation." Only twice did Jesus say He was "amazed" in relation to faith. Once in His own hometown of Nazareth, Jesus was going to teach and heal there, but He could not do any mighty acts there and Mark 6:6 said that He marveled – was amazed – at their unbelief; their faithlessness; their LACK of faith. But He is amazed at the LARGENESS of this man's faith.

**NET Note** on **he was amazed at him** - Or "pleased with him and amazed." The expanded translation brings out both Jesus' sense of wonder at the deep insight of the soldier and the pleasure he had that he could present the man as an example of faith. There are two elements to the faith that Jesus commended: The man's humility and his sense of Jesus' authority which recognized that only Jesus' word, not his physical presence, were required.

As **Mattoon** says "The centurion acknowledged the authority and power of Christ by acknowledging that the Lord need not be present to heal his servant. This was amazing faith because this man did not grow up with the Old Testament scriptures, yet, he had learned the need to depend totally on Jesus' power. He knew, without a doubt, that Jesus could do what seemed impossible. Such faith both astonished and pleased the Lord Jesus. In marveling at his faith, Jesus intimated that we ought to admire great faith, too. He admired it for our benefit, that we might imitate the centurion's faith. Let me ask, "Does your faith and confidence in the Lord amaze Him? Is your faith great or small? How confident are you in the Lord's ability to meet your needs and solve the problems in your life?" Beloved, God wants us to learn to rely upon Him just as this Roman soldier. Realize that every crisis you face is an opportunity to trust in God. Storms may rage in your life like the temper tantrums of a tempestuous sea. Christ, however, has the power and ability to calm your storm, or to help you sail through it. (cf Heb 11:6, Heb 3:12)."[\(Treasures from the Scriptures\)](#)

**Ryle** on **amazed** - There are two occasions where it is recorded that our Lord Jesus Christ "marveled," once in this history, and once in Mark 6:6. It is remarkable that in one case He is described as marveling at "faith," and in the other as marveling at "unbelief." Bishop Hall, and Burkitt after him, both observe, "What can be more wonderful than to see Christ wonder?" The expression is one of those which show the reality of our Lord's human nature. He was made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted. As man He grew in wisdom and stature. As man He hungered, thirsted, was weary, ate drank, slept, wept, sorrowed, rejoiced, groaned, agonized, bled, suffered and died. And so also as man He wondered. Yet all this time He was very and eternal God, one with the Father, and the Saviour of the world. This is a great mystery, and one which we cannot fathom. The union of two natures in one Person, is a thing passing our weak comprehension. We must believe and admire, without attempting to define or explain. In the case in Mark the marveling is evidently a marveling of sorrow. In the case before us it is a marveling of admiration. Burkitt remarks, "Let it teach us to place our admiration where Christ placed His. Let us be more affected with the least measure of grace in a good man, than with all the gaieties and glories of a great man." Our Lord, be it remembered, did not marvel at the gorgeous and beautiful buildings of the Jewish temple. But he did marvel at faith. (Luke 7)

See [Luke 7 The Man Who Amazed Jesus](#) - John MacArthur Q & A

**Not even in Israel have I found** ([heurisko](#)) **such great faith** ([pistis](#)) - Notice the verb **found** implies that Jesus is looking for faith. "Faith caused the Lord to marvel. Only two times in the gospels is it said that Jesus marveled: Here, and in Mark 6:6, at the unbelief of the people of this same city, Capernaum. Nothing gladdens the Lord more than when a person has faith in Him and His authority. And nothing saddens the Lord more than unbelief." (Steven Cole [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#)) The centurion's faith is described in Hebrews 11:1+, for his faith was "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Unbelief says, "I'll believe it when I see it."

Amazing faith says, "I believe it whether I see it or not."

Only twice in the gospels does Christ commend a person for **great faith**-the Syrophenician woman (Mt. 15:28), and this Roman centurion. Both are Gentiles; one is a woman, the other a man. It is as if the Lord is saying, "The way of faith is open to people of all nationalities, whether Jew or Gentile, male or female." (cf Col 3:11+) The faith that pleases God is not an exclusive thing reserved for the religious crowd. Any and all can lay hold of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by grace through faith, " the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Eph 2:8-9+)

[Life Application Study Notes](#) - Just as this officer did not need to be present to have his orders carried out, so Jesus didn't need to be present to heal. The officer's faith was especially amazing because he was a Gentile who had not been brought up to know a loving God. Hence Jesus' comment.

**Steven Cole** asks "**Where did the centurion get this faith?** Scripture teaches that faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8, 9); but also, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word concerning Christ" (Ro 10:17). God imparts faith through the hearing of the Word about who Jesus is. We read (Luke 7:3), the centurion "**heard about Jesus.**" It is only a speculation, but I think that this centurion may have heard about Christ from the nobleman in Capernaum whose son Jesus healed (John 4:46-54). Both men were in government service. Jesus healed the nobleman's son at a distance, which would have encouraged the centurion to believe that Jesus could do the same with his servant. At any rate, he heard of Christ and he believed. If we want to be more effective servants of Christ, we need to ask God to show us through His Word a more exalted view of the Lord Jesus. And, we need to direct others into the Word and pray that God will open their eyes to the glory of the exalted Savior." ([Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#))

**R C H Lenski** explains why Jesus said he had **great faith** - **(1)** The greatness of the centurion's faith is evident in its humility. The man, although he is a high military officer and a great benefactor of the Jews, deems himself utterly unworthy. **(2)** In the second place this man's faith centers in the word of Jesus, the very experience Jesus had so much difficulty in attaining among the Jews. On his own accord, merely from what this man had heard about Jesus, without further experience and teaching he shows absolute trust in Jesus' word; compare the court officer mentioned in John 4:50 for an example of a man who slowly arrives at faith in Jesus' word. A word is sufficient, Jesus does not need to come in person. **(3)** Thirdly, and as the basis of this humble confidence in the mere word, the centurion has a proper conception of the exalted person of Jesus. His word, spoken at a distance, works with omnipotence to save from death. It is an ill comment on Jesus' estimate of the centurion's faith to suggest that he had some pagan conception as to how the power of Jesus would work the healing, yet that this did not affect the nature and the value of his faith. Any pagan conception would vastly reduce, if it did not make void, this Gentile's faith. The remarkable feature of the man's faith was that it accorded so fully with the truest Israelite teaching and was wholly free from pagan conceptions.

**Gene Brooks** points out that this "story parallels in Elisha's healing of the Syrian General Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-16) where Elisha is not present (2 Kings 5:10), and the healing results in the recognition of the power of the Lord and the prophet representing him (2 Kings 5:8, 15; Luke 7:16)."

**Spurgeon** wrote "Your faith will not murder your humility, your humility will not stab at your faith; but the two will go hand in hand to heaven like a brave brother and a fair sister, the one bold as a lion the other meek as a dove, the one rejoicing in Jesus the other blushing at self."

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**Marveled** ([2296](#)) **thaumazo** from *thauma* [from *thaomai* = to wonder] = wonder, admiration) means to wonder, marvel, be struck with admiration or astonishment. *Thaumazo* describes the human response when confronted by divine revelation in some form (Mt 9:33). Be surprised (Gal 1:6). It denotes incredulous surprise. It is notable that only twice does Scripture record Jesus as marvelling at people and both instances are in the context of faith, here in Capernaum at the centurion's **great faith** and in Nazareth at the **unbelief** of the Jewish people in His own hometown (Mark 6:6)! How could Jesus be amazed if He was God? One writer suggests it is because of "His amazement was due to his self-imposed limitations upon his omniscience in his state of humility."

**Thaumazo** - 43v - am amazed(1), amazed(15), amazement(1), astonished(3), being amazed(1), flattering(1), marvel(4), marveled(5), marveling(2), surprised(2), wonder(2), wondered(4), wondering(2). Matt. 8:10; Matt. 8:27; Matt. 9:33; Matt. 15:31; Matt. 21:20; Matt. 22:22; Matt. 27:14; Mk. 5:20; Mk. 6:6; Mk. 15:5; Mk. 15:44; Lk. 1:21; Lk. 1:63; Lk. 2:18; Lk. 2:33; Lk. 4:22; Lk. 7:9; Lk. 8:25; Lk. 9:43; Lk. 11:14; Lk. 11:38; Lk. 20:26; Lk. 24:12; Lk. 24:41; Jn. 3:7; Jn. 4:27; Jn. 5:20; Jn. 5:28; Jn. 7:15; Jn. 7:21; Acts 2:7; Acts 3:12; Acts 4:13; Acts 7:31; Acts 13:41; Gal. 1:6; 2 Thess. 1:10; 1 Jn. 3:13; Jude 1:16; Rev. 13:3; Rev. 17:6; Rev. 17:7; Rev. 17:8

**Following** ([190](#)) **akoloutheo** from *a* = expresses union with, likeness + *keleuthos* = a road, way) means to walk the same road (Ponder that simple definition dear believer - Am I willing to walk the same road as Jesus?) Literally to follow (like the crowds followed Jesus) and in a figurative sense to follow Jesus as a disciple. To follow (closely) and was used of soldiers, servants and pupils. To go after someone or something (not as a true disciple however as we see with the crowds who physically followed Jesus, following however without a willingness to commit wholly to Him! cf John 6:60-65, 66) Early in the history of the Greek language **akoloutheo** came to mean to imitate or follow someone's example. This dual meaning colored the New Testament use of

our word **akoloutheo**. Note that most of the uses of **akoloutheo** are in the Gospels and thus this verb is firmly linked with the life of Jesus, for He is the One to follow.

**Luke's uses of akoloutheo** - Lk. 5:11; Lk. 5:27; Lk. 5:28; Lk. 7:9; Lk. 9:11; Lk. 9:23; Lk. 9:49; Lk. 9:57; Lk. 9:59; Lk. 9:61; Lk. 18:22; Lk. 18:28; Lk. 18:43; Lk. 22:10; Lk. 22:39; Lk. 22:54; Lk. 23:27; Acts 12:8; Acts 12:9; Acts 13:43; Acts 21:36; 1 Co. 10:4; Rev. 6:8; Rev. 14:4; Rev. 14:8; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 14:13; Rev. 19:14

**Found (2147) (heurisko)** means to come upon, to happen to find, to find after seeking and searching and thus to discover something, in this case **great faith** in a most unlikely location, the heart of Roman centurion! The verb even pictures Jesus walking throughout the land of Israel for 3 years, seeking for those who had tender, open hearts that would believe in His Word and in His Person and upon finding such a one shouting something like "I say **Eureka**" for **heurisko** gives us this English word which is used to express triumph upon finding or discovering something. Indeed the primary purpose for the incarnation of Jesus is expressed in His own words "the Son of Man has come to **SEEK** and to **SAVE** that which was lost." (Lk 19:10+).

**Luke's uses of heurisko** - Lk. 1:30; Lk. 2:12; Lk. 2:45; Lk. 2:46; Lk. 4:17; Lk. 5:19; Lk. 6:7; Lk. 7:9; Lk. 7:10; Lk. 8:35; Lk. 9:12; Lk. 9:36; Lk. 11:9; Lk. 11:10; Lk. 11:24; Lk. 11:25; Lk. 12:37; Lk. 12:38; Lk. 12:43; Lk. 13:6; Lk. 13:7; Lk. 15:4; Lk. 15:5; Lk. 15:6; Lk. 15:8; Lk. 15:9; Lk. 15:24; Lk. 15:32; Lk. 17:18; Lk. 18:8; Lk. 19:30; Lk. 19:32; Lk. 19:48; Lk. 22:13; Lk. 22:45; Lk. 23:2; Lk. 23:4; Lk. 23:14; Lk. 23:22; Lk. 24:2; Lk. 24:3; Lk. 24:23; Lk. 24:24; Lk. 24:33; Acts 4:21; Acts 5:10; Acts 5:22; Acts 5:23; Acts 5:39; Acts 7:11; Acts 7:46; Acts 8:40; Acts 9:2; Acts 9:33; Acts 10:27; Acts 11:26; Acts 12:19; Acts 13:6; Acts 13:22; Acts 13:28; Acts 17:6; Acts 17:23; Acts 17:27; Acts 18:2; Acts 19:1; Acts 19:19; Acts 21:2; Acts 23:9; Acts 23:29; Acts 24:5; Acts 24:12; Acts 24:18; Acts 24:20; Acts 27:6; Acts 27:28; Acts 28:14;

**Faith (4102) (pistis)** is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it. Uses of **pistis** in Matthew (relatively few compared to uses in the Pauline epistles) - Matt. 8:10; Matt. 9:2; Matt. 9:22; Matt. 9:29; Matt. 15:28; Matt. 17:20; Matt. 21:21; Matt. 23:23

**Faith (4102) (pistis)** is the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things well as the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ. As faith relates to Christ it represents a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through Whom we obtain eternal salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Stated another way, eternal salvation comes only through belief in Jesus Christ and no other way.

On **faith** in Luke see

Luke 5:20-note Seeing their **faith**, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you."

Luke 7:9-note 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**."

Luke 8:25-note And He said to them, "Where is your **faith**?" They were fearful and amazed, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?"

Luke 8:48 And He said to her, "Daughter, your **faith** has made you well; go in peace."

Luke 12:28 "But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little **faith**!

Luke 17:5-6 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our **faith**!" And the Lord said, "If you had **faith** like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you.

Luke 17:19 And He said to him, "Stand up and go; your **faith** has made you well."

Luke 18:8 "I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find **faith** on the earth?"

Luke 18:42 And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your **faith** has made you well."

Luke 22:32 but I have prayed for you, that your **faith** may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

See also uses of **faith** by Luke in Acts -Acts 3:16; Acts 6:5; Acts 6:7; Acts 11:24; Acts 13:8; Acts 14:9; Acts 14:22; Acts 14:27; Acts 15:9; Acts 16:5; Acts 17:31; Acts 20:21; Acts 24:24; Acts 26:18

**Steve Zeisler** said "**Faith** is a willingness to bet your very life on the promises and character of God."



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**Concrete Confidence in Christ - Rod Mattoon** - In WW 2, Sergeant Mitchell Paige of the United States Marines won the Congressional Medal of Honor. He single-handedly drove off platoon after platoon of Japanese soldiers on the island of Guadalcanal. Using the machine gun of killed or wounded Marines, Paige held the critical air-base 8for hours until reinforcements could arrive. He stood his ground like an immovable mountain anchored into the foundation of the earth. When help did arrive, he then fearlessly led a bayonet charge into the teeth of the Japanese stronghold. When the battle was finally over, when the breath of the wind cleared the thick veil of smoke, when the thunder of guns and war cries went silent, Sergeant Paige, with hands that were burned and charred from cradling hot machine-guns, rummaged through his pack to find the one thing, the ONE thing his mother said would strengthen and sustain him throughout the war. It was his pocket Gideon Bible. Opening his Bible up after that dramatic, drastic, distressful, dangerous, deadly day, its pages fell open to the very same verses his mother had imprinted upon his memory when she said farewell to him and sent him off to serve in the Marine Corps six years earlier. What were the verses she branded into his mind? What was it that she did not want her son to forget?

Pr 3:5-6.... Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. [6] In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

She wanted him to have concrete faith in God. Do you?[\(Treasures from the Scriptures\)](#)

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## Faith Works

Read: Luke 7:1-10

According to your faith let it be to you. —Matthew 9:29

Not all Christians exercise the same degree of faith. Some people seem to think their problem is too big for God to solve. Others are sure that God is all-powerful, but they're not confident that He will do what is best for them. Still others affirm, "I know what God can do, and I'll trust Him to do what He has promised." These various attitudes range from a weak and tentative faith to a firm confidence that takes God at His word and believes He is good.

**As we study the ministry of Jesus, we see varying degrees of faith in those who came to Him** He cast out a mute spirit from a son whose father wavered between faith and doubt (Mk. 9:17-24). He healed a leper who knew He could but was not sure He would (Mk.1:40-45). And He healed the servant of a centurion who was so sure of the outcome that he asked Jesus merely to speak the word from afar (Lk. 7:1-10).

These examples don't teach that God always answers according to the strength of our faith. Rather, in His wisdom He responds to any degree of faith. His ultimate goal is to lead us to trust Him completely, so that we may know the fullness of His fellowship. Because of who Jesus is, He can turn the weakest faith into strong faith. By Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O for the peace of a perfect trust,  
My loving God, in You—  
Unwavering faith that never doubts  
The good You choose to do.  
—Anon.

Our faith in God grows greater as we recognize the greatness of our God.

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## WHAT MAKES JESUS MARVEL?

When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him ... and said . . . I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. Luke 7:9

One morning many eyes were moist with tears during our Radio Bible Class devotional time. Four little boys who are cared for and trained in a Christian institution for retarded children were demonstrating that their mental handicap did not hinder them spiritually. They recited the books of the Bible and answered many questions about the Scriptures and Christian doctrine. We were thrilled and deeply stirred to see what had been done for these children by their dedicated teachers, but what moved me the most was their simple faith. When they talked about Jesus' coming again and spoke of Heaven, their faces glowed. One of the little fellows sang, "It will be worth it all, when we see Jesus," and, though he stumbled a bit, I knew he really believed the words of this precious song. Truly, I marveled at the faith of these unusual lads.

Similarly, it was the centurion's faith — spoken of in Luke 7 — that caused Jesus to marvel. This soldier was an exceptional man for he had shown much kindness to the Jews. Moreover, it was quite unusual for Romans to have love for a slave as this man did. However, it was his faith that impressed Jesus most of all. This man who had been reared in paganism had heard about Jesus and

believed in Him. Knowing that our Lord according to Jewish law would defile Himself by entering a Gentile home, he felt himself unworthy of a visit. He therefore declared that Jesus needed only to speak a word, and his servant would be healed. He believed that Jesus Christ was not only the Master of disease, but also of distance. As Jesus considered the wondrous, majestic sweep of this man's faith, He marveled. God delights in nothing more than to see us trust in Him wholly. ([Used by permission from Our Daily Bread](#))

Fear not to call on Him,  
O soul distressed!  
Thy sorrow's whisper woos thee to His breast;  
He who is oftenest there is often blest;  
Have faith in God!  
—Anon.

When true faith goes to "market" it always takes a "basket,"  
for it never doubts of its reward!

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### Luke 7:10 When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

**KJV** And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

- Matthew 8:13; 15:28; Mark 9:23; John 4:50-53
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:2-9 The Man Who Amazed Jesus. Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

## THE SLAVE HEALED AS JESUS HAD PROMISED

Luke leaves out a section of Matthew's account, which immediately follows Jesus' affirmation of the Gentile man's great faith not found in anyone in Israel. In light of that fact Jesus gives a stern warning which would describe the fate of those Jews who failed to believe in the Messiah:

"I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; 12 but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."(Mt 8:11-12)

**When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health** ([hugiaino](#) - ESV = well, KJV = whole) - Matthew says "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." The picture Luke presents is of Jesus speaking to the friends the centurion had sent and by speaking to them, He was in effect speaking to the centurion.

**THOUGHT** - The slave's physical healing of course is an illustration of Jesus' present power to save souls from a far more deadly illness of "infection" with the "sin virus," for unless this "infection" is cured by the Great Physician, the soul will die not only temporally and also eternally! And just as with the healing in this story, Jesus is absent in the flesh, but His Word still has the power to bring about a miraculous cure from sin! Jesus Who spoke the world into existence (Heb 11:3) needs only to speak a word and we are made whole in Him. Hallelujah! Thank You Jesus. Amen.

**Steven Cole** applies the fact that the **slave** was in **good health** - "The miracles are pictures of spiritual truth. Christ's power in healing this dying servant is a picture of His power to save those who are perishing in their sin. The message is clear: the power of salvation lies with the Savior, not with the sinner. All too often, I fear, we think, "I wish the Lord would save this person, but, after all, it's up to the person's free will." But if salvation were up to the sinner's free will, no one would be saved, because the sinner is spiritually dead. But if, as the Bible teaches, salvation is of the Lord, then we can pray in faith, "Lord, speak the word and impart new life to this sinner," and know that He can do it. The effective servant believes in an exalted Lord who is mighty to save those who cannot do anything to save themselves. ([Luke 7:1-10 An Effective Servant](#))

**Lowell Johnson** observes this story reminds us of "the power of the Lord to heal at a distance. The Lord is in Heaven. We are on earth. Yet, He can save at a distance if we have faith in His authoritative, saving power.

**J C Ryle** - THESE verses (Lk 7:2-10) describe the miraculous cure of a sick man. A centurion, or officer in the Roman army, applies to our Lord on behalf of his servant, and obtains what he requests. A greater miracle of healing than this, is nowhere recorded in the Gospels. Without even seeing the sufferer, without touch of hand or look of eye, our Lord restores health to a dying man by a single word. He speaks, and the sick man is cured. He commands, and the disease departs. We read of no prophet or apostle, who wrought miracles in this manner. We see here the finger of God. (Luke 7)

**Barclay observes** - IN this passage, as in the one immediately preceding, once again Luke the doctor speaks. In Lk 7:10 the word we translated completely cured is the technical medical term for sound in wind and limb. In Lk 7:15 the word used for sitting up is the technical term for a patient sitting up in bed. ([Luke 7](#))

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**Good health** (5198) ([hugiaino](#) verb from noun [hugies](#) = whole, healthy; English = hygiene, hygienic = making sick folk whole; figuratively right or accurate) means to be in good health, to be healthy and wholesome, referring to literal, physical health as in (Luke 7:10)

**Gilbrant** - In classical Greek **hugiaino** means "to be physically or mentally healthy or sound." The idea of "soundness" extended into other realms as well. For example, in a figurative sense "soundness" could refer to being "sound" in political or religious matters (Liddell-Scott). Hugiainō frequently occurs in the opening and closing of personal letters. As a closure it virtually means "good-bye" (Moulton-Milligan). The numerous occurrences of hugiainō in the Septuagint provide an interesting picture. First, of the 12 canonical appearances, all except 1 are replacements for the Hebrew word shālôm (often "Peace!" or "Well-being!" as a greeting) Second, virtually all of the instances of hugiainō occur in a form of greeting or salutation in the canonical material (e.g., Jacob's inquiry of Laban's health [Genesis 29:6]; cf. 37:14; 43:27f.; cf. Jethro's wishing Moses "well" [Exodus 4:18]; 1 Samuel 25:6 [LXX 1 Kings 25:6]). The idea includes not only a wish for good physical health, it also includes a wish for general well-being (as conveyed by the Hebrew shālôm; e.g., Proverbs 13:13; Daniel 10:19). **The understanding of hugiainō in the New Testament** is a curious mixture of literal and figurative. When Jesus insisted that "those who are well (hoi hugianontes) have no need of a physician" (RSV), Luke was obviously using it in the literal sense within the metaphor but in the figurative sense overall (Luke 5:31). Its use is literal in Luke 7:10 and 15:27 (of the prodigal who returns "safe and sound"). In 3 John (verse 2) hugiainō occurs in the greeting of the letter (a typical prayer-wish for the recipient's good health). When we reach the Pastoral Epistles, however, hugiainō acquires a figurative sense which reflects the dire circumstances confronting the Pauline churches. Here Paul cautioned against those who falsely teach things contrary to "sound doctrine." This sound doctrine—the gospel of Jesus Christ—was under attack by the "sick" teachings of the false teachers (cf. 2 Timothy 2:17 which describes the doctrine of false teachers that spreads "like gangrene"; see also 1 Timothy 1:10; 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1, 2). Thus in the Pastoral Epistles hugiainō especially refers to the "soundness" of the gospel in contrast to the false doctrines taught by others. (On this word as well as other terminology see Malherbe, "Medical

**Hugiaino** - 12v in NT - good health(2), safe and sound(1), sound(8), well(1). Lk. 5:31; Lk. 7:10; Lk. 15:27; 1 Tim. 1:10; 1 Tim. 6:3; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 4:3; Tit. 1:9; Tit. 1:13; Tit. 2:1; Tit. 2:2; 3 Jn. 1:2

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### James Smith - A SOLDIER'S FAITH. Luke 7:1-10.

"Dim as the borrow'd beams of moon and stars  
To lonely, weary, wandering travellers  
Is reason to the soul.  
And as those nightly tapers disappear,  
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere,  
So pale grows reason at religion's sight,  
So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light."  
—Dryden.

"Faith is a courier swift and sure who will carry us to the absent." All things are possible to him that believeth. In this Roman centurion we see a thoroughly practical man in ethical and spiritual warfare. His matter-of-fact manner in dealing with the Lord Jesus Christ is like a refreshing breeze from the mountains of Lebanon. Is his servant sick? He does not talk about his pity; he sends at once for the physician (v. 3). Does he love the Jewish nation? Then it is not in word but in deed "he builds them a synagogue" (v. 5). He does not speak of his faith, but he shows it in a way that makes the Lord Himself marvel at its simplicity and greatness (vv. 8, 9). How beautifully simple is his holy logic! "Say the word, and my servant shall be healed, for I also am a man under authority, and I say, Go, and he goeth." Soldier-like he believes that the Great Commander has but to speak and it shall be done. Such a compliment from a Gentile army captain could not pass without special mention. He said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Lord, increase our faith. This incident is full of Gospel to us. Observe—

#### I. The Servant's Need. He was in a condition of—

1. **UTTER HELPLESSNESS.** "He was sick" (v. 2). Although a bondsman, he may have been surrounded with many mercies and favours, but he was unable to help himself. A picture of every one under the spirit-sickening power of sin. The helplessly sick have no thought of earning anything by their works. This hope has died away.
2. **GREAT MISERY.** "He was grievously tormented" (Matt. 8:6). One may be helpless and yet unconscious of it, but this servant was in sore distress. When a man is deeply convicted of his guilt and utter inability to help himself he will be grievously tormented. But such timely torment is infinitely better than the fatal insensibility that will inevitably result in the eternal scourge of remorse. Fools make a mock of sin.
3. **IMMEDIATE DANGER.** "He was ready to die" (v. 2). He was just at the point of dying. His disease had brought him to the very brink of eternity, and all the wisdom and power of man were vain and impotent to deliver. The danger of perishing at any moment should add to the torments of every unsaved one.

#### II. The Centurion's Petition. He made intercession for his devoted servant "when he heard of Jesus," clearly implying that he had believed what he did hear. Faith cometh by hearing. The manner of those elders who came to Jesus with his request shows the character of the centurion's prayer. It was—

1. **EARNEST.** "He sent unto Jesus, beseeching Him" (v. 3). Real anxiety and heart-felt sympathy are the parents of earnestness. When Peter's wife's mother was sick they kept continually telling Jesus of her (Mark 1:30). His servant was dear unto him, so love warmed up his prayer. All coldness and formality in prayer means heartlessness on the part of the petitioner. Where there is love for those "ready to die" there will be earnest beseeching on their behalf.
2. **HUMBLE.** "I am not worthy," said he, while the Lord was on the way to his house (v. 6). The elders said, "He is worthy, for he loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue." But this good man did not believe that his good works could merit such worthiness as having the Son of God beneath his roof. Nothing we can do will make us worthy of having Christ dwelling in us. This humility of spirit, like the self-unconsciousness of a little child, is the very breath of Heaven, and is refreshing to the soul of Jesus. In the sight of God unworthiness felt is worthiness shown. When Saul was little in his own sight the Lord exalted him (1 Sam. 15:17).
3. **BELIEVING.** "Say in a word, and my servant shall be healed" (v. 7). Faith has always to do with the Word of God, and is satisfied with that, knowing that He is faithful who promises. His Word cannot fail. How many are

-serving the Lord in sorrowful bondage, looking for signs and feelings instead of acting confidently on His Word. The Lord has already spoken many words that exactly suit our case, and they are as valid for us now as they were of old. "The words that I speak unto you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). Come believing.

### III. The Saviour's Response. It was—

1. **PROMPT.** "Then Jesus went with them" (v. 6). The grace and truth that comes with Jesus Christ never comes too late. The prayer made urgent through intense love will speedily find a response in the love of God. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly;" how will He not also in due time answer the cry of faith?

2. **ENCOURAGING.** "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (v. 9). These faith-honouring words were spoken to the people that followed Him. He marvels at his faith, but He does not rebuke him for expecting too much. He is marvellously pleased with great faith. Without faith it is impossible to please Him. "O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt?" Why have we not the faith of God in His own Son? (Mark 11:22, margin).

3. **EFFECTUAL.** "His servant was healed in the selfsame hour" (Matt. 8:13). He sent His Word, and healed him (Psa. 107:20). "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." This "so be it done" is the Amen of Christ to the prayer of faith. Christ Himself is God's Amen to the agonising, trustful cry of humanity (Rev. 3:14). Little faith belittles the Christ of God and narrows up the channel of blessing. Doubting hearts may call Him great, but they trust Him little; they are like the soldiers who cried, "Hail, King!" then put on Him the mock robe

**Luke 7:11** Soon afterwards He went to a city called Nain; and His disciples were going along with Him, accompanied by a large crowd.

**KJV** And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

- **he went** Acts 10:38
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:11-17 Christ's Hope and Power for a Hurting World](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:11-17 Jesus' Power over Death](#) - John MacArthur

### The raising of the widow's son (Luke 7:11-17)

1. The setting (Luke 7:11-12)
2. The miracle (Luke 7:13-15)
3. The response (Luke 7:16-17)

Nain - 25 Miles SW of Capernaum

## THE SETTING FOR THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST

Only Luke records this miracle.

**Soon afterwards He went to a city called Nain** - When is **soon afterwards**? An short time after He was in Capernaum and had healed the centurion's son. Now He had traveled about 25 miles southwest to **Nain**. **Nain** means "beautiful" but, there was no beauty in Nain that day. Death had invaded the little town of Nain. And yet when Jesus arrives something beautiful happened on this day in this small town. Nain was about six miles southeast of Nazareth.

**And His disciples (mathetes) were going along with Him, accompanied by a large crowd** - Remember that disciples consisted of the 12 apostles and the others who were "learners" and thus were distinguished from the large crowd. And note that **disciples** in this context was not a statement as to their spiritual condition, regenerate or not.

**Mattoon** entitles this section "A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Cemetery."....In this portion of Scripture, we read of a funeral procession that did not end at the grave. No, it was interrupted. In fact, it would have been a mortician's nightmare because what normally was settled, the death of the person, was not settled at all. The funeral was not completed. What was usually final, was not finalized, but started over again. It was a funny thing that happened on the way to the cemetery. What was dead, all of the

sudden was alive. This is what happens, however, when Jesus gets involved in impossible, hopeless situations. He resurrects and revives, bringing life to that which is dead or dying. When Jesus comes on the scene, funny things tend to happen. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

- Impossible things are made possible.
- Hopelessness is replaced with hope.
- Tears are dried by joy.
- Problems are replaced with solutions.
- Sorrow gives way to serenity.
- Emptiness is evicted to the tenant of satisfaction.
- The presence of God and His peace plummets the panic that tugs at our heart.
- Luke 1:37—For with God nothing shall be impossible.

**Robertson** on **were going along with Him** - Imperfect middle picturing the procession of disciples and the crowd with Jesus.

**Life Application Study Bible** - This story illustrates salvation. The whole world was dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1), just as the widow's son was dead. Being dead, we could do nothing to help ourselves—we couldn't even ask for help. But God had compassion on us, and he sent Jesus to raise us to life with him (Ephesians 2:4-7). The dead man did not earn his second chance at life, and we cannot earn our new life in Christ. But we can accept God's gift of life, praise God for it, and use our lives to do his will. (Scroll down to page 50 [Life Application Study Bible](#))

**NAIN [ISBE] NAIN - na'-in (Navi)**: This town is mentioned in Scripture only in connection with the visit of Jesus and the miracle of raising the widow's son from the dead (Lk 7:11). The name persists to this day, and in the form of Nein clings to a small village on the northwestern slope of Jebel ed-Duchy ("Hill of Moreh"), the mountain which, since the Middle Ages, has been known as Little Hermon. The modern name of the mountain is derived from Neby Duchy whose wely crowns the height above the village. There are many ancient remains, proving that the place was once of considerable size. It was never enclosed by a wall, as some have thought from the mention of "the gate." This was probably the opening between the houses by which the road entered the town. Tristram thought he had found traces of an ancient city wall, but this proved to be incorrect. The ancient town perhaps stood somewhat higher on the hill than the present village. In the rocks to the East are many tombs of antiquity. The site commands a beautiful and extensive view across the plain to Carmel, over the Nazareth hills, and away past Tabor to where the white peak of Hermon glistens in the sun. To the South are the heights of Gilboa and the uplands of Samaria. The village, once prosperous, has fallen on evil days. It is said that the villagers received such good prices for simsum that they cultivated it on a large scale. A sudden drop in the price brought them to ruin, from which, after many years, they have not yet fully recovered. W. Ewing

**Nain** - see [Wikipedia](#). "Nain was a day's journey from Capernaum and lay between Endor and Shunem, where Elisha, as the old story runs, raised another mother's son (2 Kings 4:18-37). To this day, ten minutes' walk from Nain on the road to Endor there is a cemetery of rock tombs in which the dead are laid." (Barclay [Luke 7](#)) Nain was on the northern slope of the [Hill of Moreh](#) which in turn was on the eastern end of the [Jezreel Valley](#). It was about 6 miles SE of Nazareth. On its south side Hill of Moreh was the town of [Shunem](#) where Elisha raised the son of the Shunammite woman (2Ki 4:18-37).

Vincent on Nain - Mentioned nowhere else in the Bible. "On the northern slope of the rugged and barren ridge of Little Hermon, immediately west of Endor, which lies in a further recess of the same range, is the ruined village of Nain. No convent, no tradition marks the spot. But, under these circumstances, the name alone is sufficient to guarantee its authenticity. One entrance alone it could have had—that which opens on the rough hillside in its downward slope to the plain. It must have been in this steep descent, as, according to Eastern custom, they 'carried out the dead man,' that, 'nigh to the gate' of the village, the bier was stopped, and the long procession of mourners stayed, and 'the young man delivered back to his mother' " (Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine"). "It is in striking accord with the one biblical incident in the history of Nain that renders it dear to the Christian heart, that about the only remains of antiquity are tombs. These are cut in the rock, and are situated on the hillside to the east of the village" (Thomson, "Land and Book").

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**Disciples** (3101) (**mathetes** from **manthano** = to learn which Vine says is "from a root *math*, indicating thought accompanied by endeavor". Gives us our English = "*mathematics*") describes a person who learns from another by instruction, whether formal or informal. Discipleship includes the idea of one who intentionally learns by inquiry and observation (cf [inductive Bible study](#)) and thus mathetes is more than a mere pupil. A mathetes describes an adherent of a teacher. As discussed below mathetes itself has no spiritual connotation, and it is used of superficial followers of Jesus as well as of genuine believers.

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**James Smith - THE WIDOW'S SON. Luke 7:11-16.**

"The valley of dry bones,



Insensate as the stones,  
Beneath Thy quickening breath  
Rose up a living host.  
O midst our sin and death  
Come stir, Thou Holy Ghost."  
—Grosart.

It is a hope-quickening thought that the Holy Spirit, that "other Comforter," Who is the gift of the risen Saviour, possesses the resurrecting power of Jesus Christ. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. The raising of a dead body demonstrates His power to raise a soul dead in sin into a new life.

Who has not seen a funeral? Who has not buried a friend? We can easily lift the hat off our head as the mournful cortege passes; but Jesus Christ alone can lift the load of grief from the aching heart of the bereaved. As D. L. Moody used to say, "Jesus spoiled every funeral that He went to." The darkest night of gloom He can turn into midday brightness. We have here—

#### **I. An Afflicted Woman.** Her circumstances reveal a—

**1. SORROWFUL PAST.** "She was a widow" (v. 12). The scene of her husband's death-bed, the heart-rending parting, the mournful funeral, and the dread loneliness that followed; these were bygone sorrows, but perhaps merciful time had somewhat rubbed off their keen edge. It may be that we have had deep convictions of sin in the past when the pleasures of the world partly lost their savour, and by and by that spirit-wound got healed.

**2. BITTER PRESENT.** "Now her dead son is being carried out." Another season of trial has come; again the thick dark pall of sorrow has been spread over her sky. Once more she is face to face with death. Learn that if the Spirit awakens a second time the past will greatly aggravate the misery of the present.

**3. HOPELESS FUTURE.** This was the funeral of "the only son of his mother" (v. 12). The alone source of her comfort and help has been cut off. She is now without hope, having no promise, utterly cast down, but to such Jesus draws nigh. It is only when we are "without strength" that the power of God is manifested on our behalf. They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. All her future prospects, like the centurion's servant, were "ready to die." But the Resurrection and the Life are at hand.

**II. An Almighty Friend.** "A friend in need is a friend indeed." The nearer she comes to the grave the nearer does she come to the life-giving Saviour. The darkest hour is the hour before daybreak. The sorrow that endures for a night shall be turned into joy in the morning when Jesus comes. Jesus meets the funeral, life and death come into contact, earthly weakness, sorrow, and disappointment in this woman are met by heavenly strength, consolation, and hope in Jesus Christ. Sin's ruin and God's remedy have come together. What are the results?

**1. AN EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY.** "When the Lord saw her He had compassion on her" (v. 12). As soon as the Lord saw her the love of His heart flowed out to her. Although as yet she is a stranger to His sympathy He is no stranger to her sorrow. Surely the sting of human suffering is the unconsciousness of divine compassion.

**2. AN UNUSUAL WORD OF COMFORT.** "He said unto her, Weep not" (v. 12). Weep not? Does she think these words spoken in mockery? Does He not know that this is the "only son of a widow?" He knew Himself what He would do. We may dry our tears at His bidding, no matter how bitter they may be. But perhaps it is not your tears so much as your cares that He bids you put away, saying, "Take no thought for your life," etc. (Matt. 6:25), as He Himself knows what He will do.

**3. A TIMELY ARREST.** "He touched the bier, and they that bare him stood still" (v. 14). This was the arresting touch of the mercy that saves. A little while longer and he would have been buried out of sight. Who shall arrest that soul which time, like a death-car, is carrying off to the grave of eternal doom if Jesus Christ is not met on the way?

**4. A STRANGE COMMAND.** "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise" (v. 14). Who is this that commands the dead to rise up? This is He who speaks as one having authority. As the coming of the light commands the darkness to vanish, so does the coming of His Word imply the power to overcome. Ignorance may cavil where faith is blessed. He is the mighty to save, who speaks and it is done.

**5. A WONDROUS CHANGE.** "He that was dead sat up, and began to speak" (v. 15). An example of one begotten again by the Word of God. What a change His life-giving Word brings! He who was a minute ago cold, helpless, silent, and corrupting is now aglow with the warmth of a new life, and able to testify by speech to His resurrection power. He is now a new creature, old things have passed away, all things have become

new.

**6. A HAPPY REUNION.** "He delivered him to his mother" (v. 15). Oh, praise Him for His tenderness, He not only saved the son from death, but delivered him (gave him back as His own) to the comforting of the broken-hearted widow! She could truly say, "This my son was dead, and is alive again." A foretaste of Heaven's reunited fellowship and joy was hers. Death has been conquered, and loved ones meet each other again in the presence of the living Son of God.

**7. A GOD-HONOURING RESULT.** "There came a fear on all, and they glorified God" (v. 16). Those who follow Jesus (v. 11) will always have good cause for glorifying God, for they shall see great and mighty things done by Him. Yes, Jesus will be glorified in every word that He speaks. All His words and works shall praise Him. It will be for ever to the praise of His grace that "He saved others," but because of the might of His love for us "He could not save Himself" (Matt. 27:42)

**Luke 7:12 Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her.**

**KJV** Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

**BGT** ς δ γγισην τ π λ τ ς π λεως, κα δ ο ξεκομ ζετο τεθνηκ ς μονογεν ς υ ς τ μητρ ατο κα ατ ν χ ρα, κα χλος τ ς π λεως καν ς ν σ ν α τ .

**NET** As he approached the town gate, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother (who was a widow), and a large crowd from the town was with her.

**CSB** Just as He neared the gate of the town, a dead man was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the city was also with her.

**ERV** Now when he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, there was carried out one that was dead, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

**ESV** As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her.

**NIV** As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out--the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her.

**NLT** A funeral procession was coming out as he approached the village gate. The young man who had died was a widow's only son, and a large crowd from the village was with her.

**NRS** Luke 7:12 As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town.

**YLT** and as he came nigh to the gate of the city, then, lo, one dead was being carried forth, an only son of his mother, and she a widow, and a great multitude of the city was with her.

- **the only** Lk 8:42; Genesis 22:2,12; 2 Samuel 14:7; 1 Kings 17:9,12,18,23; 2 Kings 4:16,20; Zechariah 12:10
- **a widow** Job 29:13; Acts 9:39,41; 1 Timothy 5:4,5; James 1:27
- **and much** Lk 8:52; John 11:19
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:11-17 Christ's Hope and Power for a Hurting World](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:11-17 Jesus' Power over Death](#) - John MacArthur

## **THE SADNESS CALLING FORTH THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST**

**Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow** - Observe the details. First **now**. When is **now**? **As He approached the gate of the city** - no accidental occurrences in the perfect providence filled life of our Lord. (**THOUGHT** - Lives of believers are filled with providential occurrences! God give us eyes to recognize and respond to them like Jesus! Amen) Death. Burial was normally outside of the city (See [Technical Note](#)). Only son. A

**widow** (Dt 10:18+, Ps 68:5, Ps 103:6, Ps 146:9, Isa 1:17, Jer 49:11). Watch the compassionate heart of our Lord Jesus, Who is the same yesterday, today and forever. (Heb 13:8+). Praise the Lord (Ps 150:6). Amen. And considering the fact that Jesus had just spoken to a large crowd in the sermon on the mount/plain, surely many of this crowd were still with Him. So now we have a providential convergence of two groups which were about to witness one of Jesus' greatest miracles.

**THOUGHT** - You never know what can come from God imparting life to a single sinner through your witness! This should be a great motivation for us to take advantage of those seemingly "chance" encounters which we have with the spiritually dead. Jesus just "happened" to walk into town at the moment this funeral procession was heading out. It was one of those divine appointments. Jesus was always ready, and so He raised this young man to life. Even so, God gives us providential, but seemingly "chance" encounters with those who are dead in their sins. So often, I confess, I am spiritually dull and miss the opportunity. Later I think, "I could have said such and such!" If we would raise the dead as Jesus did, we must realize that we are always to be about our Father's business, even as He was. The gospel is the life-giving word of Christ, a message of hope in a world of despair, a message of power in a world of weakness. Even through this sermon, the Lord may be saying to someone, "Arise from your spiritual death and sin and follow Me!" At age twelve, Robert Louis Stevenson was looking out into the dark from his upstairs window watching a man light the street lanterns. Stevenson's governess came into the room and asked what he was doing. He replied, "I am watching a man cut holes in the darkness." That describes our job as witnesses—to cut holes in the darkness of this hopeless, hurting world with the good news that Jesus came to raise dead sinners to new life through His Word. ([Steven Cole](#))

**Mattoon** - The fact that the widow now had no surviving husband or son meant that she was in desperate circumstances economically as well as emotionally. Yet, in her desperation, she has a divine appointment. God's timing is never late. He is always on time like the rising of the sun. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**NKJV Study Bible** - Funerals were normally held the day of death because keeping a body overnight rendered a house unclean. Before the funeral the body was anointed. In a town the size of Nain (Lk 7:11) many would have stopped to share in the mourning. (See [Luke](#))

**The only (monogenes) son of his mother** - Ask why would Luke give this detail? What is she? A widow. Widows found it very difficult to make ends meet in the ancient world. It was very likely her only son was her only means of support and her only hope for the future. This fact helps us appreciate why her loss created an especially desperate situation. Destitution was sadly the lot for many ancient widows without some means of support.

**And she was a widow** - Widows who were without support were hopeless, but the God of hope would soon change her future. God always has special concern for widows and orphans (Ex 22:22; Dt 10:18; Dt 27:19). James gave a word of warning to those of us who think we are spiritual writing "If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to **visit orphans and widows in their distress**, and to keep oneself unstained by the world." (Jas 1:26-27+)

**A sizeable crowd from the city was with her** - Who would have been in the **sizeable crowd**? Mourners wailing the loss. At times mourners were actually hired! The family's mourning generally would continue for 30 days.

**J C Ryle** commenting on **the sizeable crowd** - This expression should not be overlooked. It shows the publicity of the great miracle here recorded. It was wrought before many witnesses. (Luke 7)

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**TECHNICAL NOTE - New Manners and Customs - Funerals** - When preparations for burial were completed, the body of the deceased was usually placed in a coffin and borne to the burial site in a procession of relatives, friends, and servants (Amos 6:10). The procession carried out the mourning ritual, which could include baldness and cutting of the beard, rending garments and wearing sackcloth, loud and agonized weeping, and putting dust on the head and sitting in ashes (2 Samuel 1:11–12; 13:31; 14:2; Isaiah 3:24, 22:12; Jeremiah 7:29; Ezekiel 7:18; Joel 1:8). The Canaanite practices of laceration and mutilation are forbidden in the Torah (Leviticus 19:27–28; 21:5; Deuteronomy 14:1).

**Burial Follows Death Quickly** (From nice free online source "[Manners and Customs of Biblical Lands](#)")

The burial of the dead in the East takes place soon after death, usually the same day. The people of these regions have a primitive idea that the spirit of the one who dies, hovers near the body for three days after death. Mourners think of this spirit as being able to bear the wailing calls of grief. Martha, no doubt, thought it would be hopeless to think of reviving her brother's body, because he had been dead four days (John 11:39).

### **Burial in caves, tombs, or graves.**

Today there are thousands of rock-cut tombs scattered over the land of Palestine, to bring to mind past decades. Such tombs were made by the wealthy. Not being able to afford these, the poorer folks buried their dead in graves. Some of these tombs had many chambers in them. They were closed by a rolling-stone which ran down an inclined plane in front of the mouth of the sepulcher. In the vicinity of ancient Gadara ( Luke 8:27 ), there are many rock-hewn tombs today, bringing to mind the experience of Jesus when he met the demoniac who lived in the tombs.

**Often the dead were buried in graves dug in the earth**, as in the case of Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, who was buried under an oak at Bethel ( Gen. 35:8 ). Natural caves were sometimes utilized, as in the case of the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob were placed ( Gen. 49:31 ; Gen. 50:13 ). When they could afford to do so, families had a sepulcher. Gideon was buried in the sepulcher of Joash his father ( Judges 8:32 ). Only prophets and kings were buried within the limits of a city, as Samuel, who was buried in his house at Ramah ( ISam. 25:1 ), and David, who was buried in the city of David ( 1Kings 2:10 ). A graveyard for poorer people was located outside Jerusalem ( 2Kings 23:6 ). Many of the villages had graveyards outside their limits, as for example Nain, where Jesus raised the widow's son ( Luke 7:1 1-17 ). There is a graveyard located there today. Custom following burial. In Bible times it was quite customary for the sorrowing ones to fast up to the time of burial. Then, following the funeral, they would be offered bread and wine as a comforting refreshment. Such was called a mourning feast, which had as its real purpose the comforting of the mourners. The prophet Jeremiah refers to this custom: "Neither shall men break bread for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother" ( Jer. 16:7 , A. R. V.). This mourning feast brought to an end the period of deepest sorrow and strict fasting.

### **Biblical Expressions Of Oriental Mourning**

The Psalmists, Prophets, and Apostles often make use of expressions referring to Oriental mourning. Some of these cannot be appreciated by the Occidental, unless the highly emotional character of the Easterner is understood, and also his fondness for figurative language. The Psalmist says: "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law" ( Psa. 119:136 ). The prophet exclaims, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" ( Jer. 9:1 ). And it was to Orientals that Paul said, "Weep with them that weep" ( Rom. 12:15 ). It will pay the Bible student dividends if he will read the Word from the Oriental point of view.

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**Only** (only begotten) (3439)(**monogenes** from monos = alone + genos = birth, race, kind <> from ginomai = to come into being, to become) means that which is the only one of its kind of class or specific relationship and thus is unique or "one and only." Except for Lk. 7:12; Lk. 8:42 ; Lk. 9:38 all the other uses of monogenes refer to Jesus = Jn. 1:14; Jn. 1:18; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:18; Heb. 11:17; 1 Jn. 4:9.

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**J C Ryle** - THE wondrous event described in these verses, is only recorded in St. Luke's Gospel. It is one of the three great instances of our Lord restoring a dead person to life, and, like the raising of Lazarus and the ruler's daughter, is rightly regarded as one of the greatest miracles which He wrought on earth. In all three cases, we see an exercise of divine power. In each we see a comfortable proof that the Prince of Peace is stronger than the king of terrors, and that though death, the last enemy, is mighty, he is not so mighty as the sinner's Friend.

We learn from these verses, what sorrow sin has brought into the world. We are told of a funeral at Nain. All funerals are mournful things, but it is difficult to imagine a funeral more mournful than the one here described. It was the funeral of a young man, and that young man the only son of his mother, and that mother a **widow**. There is not an item in the whole story, which is not full of misery. And all this misery, be it remembered, was brought into the world by sin. God did not create it at the beginning, when He made all things "very good." Sin is the cause of it all. "Sin entered into the world" when Adam fell, "and death by sin." (Rom. 5:12.)

Let us never forget this great truth. The world around us is full of sorrow. Sickness, and pain, and infirmity, and poverty, and labor, and trouble, abound on every side. From one end of the world to the other, the history of families is full of lamentation, and weeping, and mourning, and woe. And whence does it all come? Sin is the fountain and root to which all must be traced. There would neither have been tears, nor cares, nor illness, nor deaths, nor funerals in the earth, if there had been no sin. We must bear this state of things patiently. We cannot alter it. We may thank God that there is a remedy in the Gospel, and that this life is not all. But in the meantime, let us lay the blame at the right door. Let us lay the blame on sin.

How much we ought to hate sin! Instead of loving it, cleaving to it, dallying with it, excusing it, playing with it, we ought to hate it with a deadly hatred. Sin is the great murderer, and thief, and pestilence, and nuisance of this world. Let us make no peace with it. Let us wage a ceaseless warfare against it (Ro 8:13+). It is "the abominable thing which God hateth." Happy is he who is of one mind with God, and can say, I "abhor that which is evil." (Rom. 12:9.) (Luke 7)

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**Rod Mattoon on an eastern funeral** - In Bible times, when someone died, the family members would let out a loud "death wail" that all the neighbors could hear. Such cries were terrifying and gut-wrenching, leaving your stomach in knots and sending cold chills through your veins. I'm sure this mother did this like all other mothers. This would inform friends and neighbors that a death had occurred. Mourners were even hired to weep for the deceased. These were mainly women who made a career out of doing this. They were professional weepers. Family and loved ones would show their grief by wearing itchy, scratchy black sackcloth made from the hair of goats. They would also tear their clothes like a toddler shredding paper. Those in mourning would also take off their shoes and cover their heads. Dirt was thrown over their heads or they would sit and roll around in ashes. Items like silver, gold, jewelry, daggers, or costly ornaments were not worn during mourning period which lasted as long as seven days.

In the East, men and women did not mourn together but sat apart because both women and men would uncover the breast and beat upon it. Sometimes this beating was so violent that they would develop tumors or diseases. Pagans in other countries would cut their bodies to inflict suffering upon themselves. This was forbidden in Jewish law.

The men would also shave their heads bald or cut their beards. Mustaches were also covered during times of mourning. The Babylonians, Arabs, and Persians, even today, will scratch their arms, faces, and hands and the women will cut their long, beautiful hair while mourning. Those who mourned would observe a fast, up to the time of burial, and then after the burial, a mourner's feast was held where food and drink were offered to comfort those in sorrow, and help them forget their grief.

Sometimes the grieving process would start before the death of the person. Tear bottles would be used to gather the tears of those who were weeping. A priest would go to the people at the height of their grief and use a piece of cotton to collect the tears. He then would squeeze them into a bottle. It was believed when all medicines had failed, a drop of a tear, put into the mouth of the dying person would revive them. Tears were also considered a charm to ward off evil.

Now due to the extreme warm climate of the region, the body was usually buried the day of death. The people of this region believed that the spirit hovered over the body for three days after death and could hear their cries of grief. These cries were a way of honoring the person who died. They demonstrated that the person was loved and greatly missed. The mourners would also wash the body and clip the hair and nails of the deceased.

Strips of linen were then wrapped around the body and were laced with hyssop, rose oils, rose water, myrrh, aloes, cinnamon or olive oil. The smell of these spices was pleasant and as fragrant as a garden of roses and wild flowers. The spices and paste that covered the body would harden the layers of linen, forming a shell or cocoon around the body of the deceased loved one.

A linen napkin was then placed over the face. In John 20:2, John did not enter the tomb of Jesus. He saw the linen shell in the tomb. Upon further examination, he realized Jesus was resurrected when he saw that his body was not in this cocoon, but had passed through it. The shell was miraculously empty and undisturbed. There was no face under the linen napkin.

After the body was wrapped, it was put on a pallet and carried in a funeral procession attended by loved ones and friends. They would march with the body to the place of burial. This is where we find our story today, during the funeral procession.

The body was placed in a grave for those who were poor, or a cave-type tomb for those who were wealthier. Cherished objects would be buried with the deceased person. It was then sealed with a huge stone weighing over a ton. They did not use coffins because of a lack of wood. In Israel, they did not cremate or burn the body either because this was considered an outrage inflicted only on notorious criminals or evil doers.

If the body was buried in the ground, it would be covered with many stones in order that the hyenas would not dig up the body. Guards were also placed by the grave for many days to protect the remains from animals. To warn the living that a body was buried in a cave, they would paint the outside of the tomb with white-wash. With this background, we continue the story. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Luke 7:13 When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, **Do not weep.**"**

**KJV** And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

**Barclay** - When the Lord saw her he was moved to the depths of his heart for her and said to her, "Don't go on weeping!"

- **He felt compassion** -- Judges 10:16; Ps 86:5,15; 103:13; Isaiah 63:9; Jeremiah 31:20; Lamentations 3:32,33; Mark 8:2; John 11:33-35; Hebrews 2:17; 4:15
- **Weep not** Lk 8:52; Jeremiah 31:15,16; John 20:13,15; 1 Corinthians 7:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:13

- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:11-17 Christ's Hope and Power for a Hurting World](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:11-17 Jesus' Power over Death](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Lamentations 3:22-23 The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For **His compassions never fail.**  
23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

Genesis 19:16 (FIRST USE OF COMPASSION IN BIBLE) But he (LOT) hesitated. So the men (ANGELS) seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for **the compassion of the LORD was upon him**; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city.

Exodus 33:19 And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and **will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.**"

Exodus 34:6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, **compassionate** and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;

Deuteronomy 4:31 "**For the LORD your God is a compassionate God**; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.

Psalm 72:13 He will have **compassion** on the poor and needy, And the lives of the needy he will save.

Psalm 116:5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; Yes, our God is **compassionate**.

Matthew 9:36 Seeing the people, He felt **compassion** for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Matthew 14:14 When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.

Matthew 20:34 **Moved with compassion**, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him.

Mark 1:41 **Moved with compassion**, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and \*said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed."

Mark 8:2 "I feel **compassion** for the people because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat.

## THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE SUPERNATURAL COMPASSION OF CHRIST

**Compassion** (English) - a deep sympathy for the sorrows of others, with an urge to alleviate their pain // a deep awareness of the suffering of another accompanied by the wish to relieve it // feeling of distress and pity for the suffering or misfortune of another, often including the desire to alleviate it // a feeling of sorrow or deep tenderness for one who is suffering or experiencing misfortune, literally "a suffering with another," // from **com** "with, together" + **pati** "to suffer"

Latin *compassio* is an ecclesiastical loan-translation of Greek *sympatheia* (see sympathy). Sometimes in Middle English it meant a literal sharing of affliction or suffering with another.

**When the Lord (kurios) saw her, He felt compassion (splanchnizomai) for her** - Observe the sequence - saw...felt...spoke. One may see affliction and pain in others but not feel compassion for them. Fallen flesh is selfish and self-focused. Jesus is focused on others giving us His example to imitate. In addition the word for **compassion (splanchnizomai)** derives from "bowels" and thus describes feeling deep within a person. We all know that feeling in the pit of our stomach when we are on emotional alert. The point is that Jesus Who is fully man did not just intellectually process the widow's loss and pain, but He felt it deep within His inner being.

**THOUGHT** - That's good news for all of us beloved, for when we are hurting and going through a sorrowful time, He knows what we are experiencing because He has felt it personally and perfectly (being sinless). The writer of Hebrews says "we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." (Heb 4:15+) Jesus is not an other worldly, stoic



Savior, but One Who is in us and Who understands and cares what we are going through. We are not alone!

Jesus has great compassion on your pain,  
and he has the power to bring hope out of any tragedy.

-- [Life Application Study Bible](#)

**Robertson** wrote ""The Lord of Life confronts death (Plummer) and Luke may use Kurios here purposely."

**Compassion** is the sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it.

**Rod Mattoon on the Lord saw her** - The Bible says that the Lord "**saw**" this woman. There is more to this word than just seeing. It is derived from the Greek word [eido](#) {i-do} which not only means to see or notice, it indicates involvement. It also means "to see about something; to determine what must be done about a matter; to have regard for someone; to interview or examine." Jesus found out what was going on here and what this situation was all about. When He did, He had compassion on her. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

Compassion is your pain in my heart.

**Smith** - "A friend in need is a friend indeed." The nearer she comes to the grave the nearer does she come to the life-giving Saviour. The darkest hour is the hour before daybreak. The sorrow that endures for a night shall be turned into joy in the morning when Jesus comes. Jesus meets the funeral, life and death come into contact, earthly weakness, sorrow, and disappointment in this woman are met by heavenly strength, consolation, and hope in Jesus Christ. Sin's ruin and God's remedy have come together.

**J C Ryle on saw her...felt compassion** - Poole's remarks on this expression are worth reading: "*None moved our Lord on behalf of the widow, neither do we read that she herself spake to Him. But our Saviour's bowels were moved at the sight of her sorrows, and consideration of her loss. It is observable that our Saviour wrought His healing miracles; 1, sometimes at the motion and desire of the parties to be healed; 2, sometimes at the desire of others on their behalf; 3, sometimes of His own free motion, neither themselves nor others soliciting Him for any such mercies toward them.*"—"The leper was healed (Luke 5:12) in reply to his own personal application; the centurion's servant (Luke 7:8) in reply to the prayer of his master; and the widow's son was raised without any one interceding on his behalf." (Luke 7)

A person with compassion is stirred to the very depths  
and feels pain because others are suffering.

-- Warren Wiersbe

**Warren Wiersbe on Compassion.** - Our English word comes from two Latin words that together mean "to suffer with another, to endure pain with another." The Greek word in our text ([splanchnizomai](#)) is more dramatic because it refers to the inner viscera of the human body being greatly moved. A person with compassion is stirred to the very depths and feels pain because others are suffering. Three times Matthew tells us that Jesus had compassion on the multitudes (Mt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32), and his heart also went out to needy individuals—two blind men (Mt. 20:34), a leper (Mark 1:41), a demoniac (Mk 5:19), a sorrowing widow (Luke 7:13), and a demonized boy (Mark 9:22). In three of his parables, Jesus spoke of compassion (Matt. 18:27; Lk 10:33; Lk 15:20). In our text (Mt 9:36–37), he saw the multitudes as helpless, wandering sheep being abused by their shepherds. He also saw the crowds as fields of grain, ready for the harvest. The sheep would wander away and be killed by predators, and the harvest would go to waste, **all for the lack of people with compassion. Does that fact move us?** (See [New Testament Words for Today: 100 Devotional Reflections](#))

**NET Note on He felt compassion** - It is unusual for Luke to note such emotion by Jesus, though the other Synoptics tend to mention it (Mt 14:14; Mk 6:34; Mt 15:32; Mk 8:2).

**Robertson** - Often love and pity are mentioned as the motives for Christ's miracles (Mt. 14:14; 15:32, etc.).

**IVP Background Commentary** - According to custom, the bereaved mother would walk in front of the bier, so Jesus would meet her first. Philosophers often tried to console the bereaved by saying, "Do not grieve, for it will do no good." Jesus' approach is entirely different: he removes the cause of bereavement (1 Kings 17:17–24). (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

**And said to her, "Do not weep"** ([present imperative with a negative](#) - stop weeping) - At first glance, this sounds like Jesus is being a bit callous and uncaring by giving her a command to stop weeping. Grief is part of the process we all go through when we lose someone. So why does Jesus tell her to stop weeping which is tantamount to stop grieving or mourning for your lost son? The answer becomes quickly obvious in the following context.

People don't care how much you know

until they know how much you care.

As [Steven Cole](#) writes "Jesus' words, "**Do not weep**," would have been insensitive if He had not been able to do something about her problem. Christ never calls upon people to stop their tears when those tears are wholesome. But in this instance, He is lovingly calling upon this woman for a spark of trust in Himself. He is tenderly saying, "Look to Me! I can do something about the cause of your grief." If we want to be effective witnesses for Christ, then we must ask Him to deepen our compassion for the lost. It has truly been said that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. When we show people the compassion of Christ, it often opens their hearts to hear the truth of the gospel.

**THOUGHT** - Looking at this scene from another vantage point, Jesus' command to stop weeping would not have been an easy command for a grieving mother. Indeed, Jesus does give us commands which at times seem very difficult (like forgive a person who has wronged you, etc), and yet we need to remember that His commandments always His enablement. What we must do on our part is to trust His Word. None of us have scored 100% on the "Trust Test" but each difficult command is an opportunity to practice our trust in His sufficiency and His trustworthiness! He is able!

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**He felt compassion** (4697)([splanchnizomai](#) from [splanchnon](#) = bowel, viscera - see [splanchnon](#) note below) means to experience a deep visceral feeling for someone, to feel compassion for, to feel [sympathy](#), to take [pity](#) on someone. [Compassion](#) is the sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it. This verb expresses an outward flow of one's life in contrast to our natural tendency toward self centeredness.

It is related to the noun [splanchna](#), "inner parts of the body," which were considered the seat of the emotions, used 10x (Luke 1:78; 2 Cor. 6:12; 7:15; Phil. 1:8; 2:1; Col. 3:12; Phile. 7, 12, 20; 1 John 3:17).

It is notable that 8/12 NT uses describe this deep seated emotion in Jesus. It follows that if we desire to imitate Jesus, we need to be men and women of deep compassion!

Matt. 9:36; Matt. 14:14; Matt. 15:32; Matt. 18:27; Matt. 20:34; Mk. 1:41; Mk. 6:34; Mk. 8:2; Mk. 9:22; Lk. 7:13; Lk. 10:33; Lk. 15:20

**Do not weep** ([present imperative with a negative](#) = Cease weeping)(2799)([klaio](#)) means to mourn, to weep, to lament or to wail with emphasis upon noise accompanying weeping. It expresses one's immediate and outward reaction to suffering and denotes the loud wailing or lamenting typical of 1st century Jewish mourning. The picture is of one lamenting with sobs or wailing aloud and was used to describe the wailing that took place when someone died. Weeping thus was a sign of the pain and grief for the entity or person being wept over (See all verses and note who wept and over what/who?) [Klaio](#) implies not only the shedding of tears, but also external expression of grief. It was a term frequently used to describe the actions of professional mourners.

**Klaio - 39x in 33v** - Matt. 26:75; Mk. 5:38; Mk. 5:39; Mk. 14:72; Mk. 16:10; Lk. 6:21; Lk. 6:25; Lk. 7:13; Lk. 7:32; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 8:52; Lk. 19:41; Lk. 22:62; Lk. 23:28; Jn. 11:31; Jn. 11:33; Jn. 16:20; Jn. 20:11; Jn. 20:13; Jn. 20:15; Acts 9:39; Acts 21:13; Rom. 12:15; 1 Co. 7:30; Phil. 3:18; Jas. 4:9; Jas. 5:1; Rev. 5:4; Rev. 5:5; Rev. 18:9; Rev. 18:11; Rev. 18:15; Rev. 18:19

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#### QUESTION - [What does the Bible say about compassion?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Hebrew and Greek words translated "compassion" in the Bible mean "to have mercy, to feel sympathy and to have pity." We know that, according to the Bible, God is "a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness" (Psalm 86:15). Like all of God's attributes, His compassion is infinite and eternal. His compassions never fail; they are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23).

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, exemplified all of the Father's attributes, including His compassion. When Jesus saw His friends weeping at the grave of Lazarus, He felt compassion for them and wept alongside them (John 11:33-35). Moved with compassion for the suffering of others, Jesus healed the large crowds who came to Him (Matthew 14:14), as well as individuals who sought His healing (Mark 1:40-41). When He saw the large crowds as sheep without a shepherd, His compassion led Him to teach them the things the false shepherds of Israel had abandoned. The priests and scribes were proud and corrupt; they despised the common people and neglected them, but Jesus had compassion on them, and He taught and loved them.

When asked what was the greatest commandment, Jesus responded that it is to love God with all our heart, mind and strength. But He added that the second commandment "is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22:34-40). The Pharisee had asked Him which single command of God is the greatest, but Jesus provided two, stating not only what we are to do, but also how to do it. To love our neighbor as ourselves is the natural result of our loving devotion toward God.

1 John 3:17 asks, "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need, but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" Originally made in His image, man is to exemplify God's traits, including compassion. From this it follows that "If anyone says, 'I love God' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen" (1 John 4:20). The Bible is clear that compassion is an attribute of God and of God's people as well. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

#### Related Resources:

- [What are some Bible verses about compassion? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [What are some Bible verses about compassion? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [Does God have emotions? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [Jesus wept - why did Jesus weep? | GotQuestions.org?](http://GotQuestions.org)

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**J C Ryle** - We learn, secondly, from these verses, how deep is the compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ's heart. We see this beautifully brought out in His behavior at this funeral in Nain. He meets the mournful procession, accompanying the young man to his grave, and is moved with compassion at the sight. He waits not to be applied to for help. His help appears to have been neither asked for nor expected. He saw the weeping mother, and knew well what her feelings must have been, for He had been born of a woman Himself. At once He addressed her with words alike startling and touching: He "said unto her, Weep not."—A few more seconds, and the meaning of His words became plain. The widow's son was restored to her alive. Her darkness was turned into light, and her sorrow into joy.

**THOUGHT**- Our Lord Jesus Christ never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). His heart is still as compassionate as when He was upon earth. His sympathy with sufferers is still as strong. Let us bear this in mind, and take comfort in it. There is no friend or comforter who can be compared to Christ. In all our days of darkness, which must needs be many, let us first turn for consolation to Jesus the Son of God. He will never fail us, never disappoint us, never refuse to take interest in our sorrows. He lives, who made the widow's heart sing for joy in the gate of Nain. He lives, to receive all laboring and heavy-laden ones, if they will only come to Him by faith (Mt 11:28-30). He lives, to heal the broken-hearted (Ps 34:18, Ps 147:18, Isa 61:1, Lk 4:18KJV), and be a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Pr 18:24). And He lives to do greater things than these one day. He lives to come again to His people, that they may weep no more at all, and that all tears may be wiped from their eyes (Rev 7:17+, Rev 21:4+). (Luke 7)

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**Jon Courson** - **Compassion** is your pain in my heart. It's a quality sadly lacking in our society, but one Jesus exemplified constantly. He is called the **Man of Sorrows** because He took the pain of people into His own heart. And yet the irony is that Hebrews 1:9 tells us He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. How could He be the Man of Sorrows and yet anointed with the oil of gladness above any other human being who has ever lived—radiating such joy that multitudes would be drawn to Him? These are two qualities that seem contradictory—until we remember the words He taught us when He said, "Blessed, or happy, are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (see Matthew 5:4). One of the keys of happiness is to allow sorrow to penetrate your heart. Eastern mysticism totally rejects this viewpoint. A foundational principle of Buddha's teaching was to avoid pain and sorrow, for if mankind would enter into the state of detached feeling, of nirvana, there would be no more jealousy or envy, no more wars and fighting. This thinking has affected us more than we know. Having permeated the '60s culture, it was Eastern thought that caused us to say, "I am a rock. I am an island," as we sang along with Simon and Garfunkel. Jesus, however, came on the scene and annihilated that mentality by saying, "Happy is the man not who detaches himself, but who mourns, who is heartbroken, for he is the one who will be comforted." "**Comfort**" is an old English word containing the same root as that of the word "fortify." In other words, Jesus said that the one who is mourning will also be the one who is fortified. In the Garden of Gethsemane, so deeply was Jesus mourning that blood burst from His forehead (ED: MORE ACCURATELY "like drops of blood"). And yet Luke tells us that even as He was agonizing in prayer, an angel came and comforted, sustained, and fortified Him (Luke 22:43, 44+). When is the last time I have been at the place of being pained in prayer for someone else's problem, someone else's sin? Could it be that I am not comforted by the Comforter or the angelic presence because I am not doing what Jesus did? Blessed are they who mourn, who plunge into life and feel the pain of life. They shall be comforted. Are you unhappy? Do you feel comfortless? Take seriously what Jesus said. It's an irony. It's a mystery. It runs crosscurrent to the thinking of our society. And yet the key to happiness is to mourn for others, to carry someone else's pain in your heart. (See [Jon Courson's Application Commentary](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION** - According to Henry Jacobsen, six Scottish miners were forced to make a heart-rending decision. While they were working some 1,500 feet below the surface, a shaft collapsed. Debris trapped one of their companions. Then mud and water began to rush in. The miners realized that soon all avenues of escape would be closed to them, and they all would perish unless they fled

without delay. With great agony the six men decided to let their coworker die rather than be entombed in that shaft while attempting to save him. They were compelled to abandon him.

In contrast, God is never forced to forsake one of His children (Hebrews 13:5). No matter how desperate the situation may be or how great the problems we face, the heavenly Father stays by our side to meet our deepest needs with His infinite wisdom and power. Under no circumstance and at no time will He give up on those He has purchased with the blood of His Son.

We may at times, feel abandoned, but we will never be abandoned. The Lord is concerned about our needs. Don't underestimate His involvement in your life when you are going through a difficult trial. He has a knack at turning our lives around when we need His help and care. (Rod Mattoon - [Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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God hath not promised sun w/o rain,  
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain;  
But God hath promised strength for the day,  
Rest for the labor, light for the way.  
-- Annie Johnson Flint

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**ILLUSTRATION - Father's on deck** - A seagoing captain commanded a passenger ship that was sailing from Liverpool, England, to New York. His family was on board with him. One night when everyone was asleep, a squall unexpectedly swept over the waters and tossed the ship violently, awakening the passengers. They were all terribly afraid because of the storm. The captain's little 8-year-old girl was also awakened. "What's the matter?" cried the frightened child. Her mother told her that a sudden storm had struck the ship. "Is Father on deck?" she asked. "**Yes, Father's on deck,**" came the encouraging answer. Hearing this, the little girl snuggled back into her bed and in a few moments was sound asleep. The winds still blew and the waves still rolled, but her fears were calmed because her father was at the helm.

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#### **William Miller - "When the Lord saw her, His heart went out to her and He said, Don't cry!" Luke 7:13**

A sorrow in a home sends out a wave of tender feeling which impresses a wide community. While the death-crape hangs on a door, almost everyone of the great throng of passers-by is made at least for the moment, a little more thoughtful. Even strangers going by feel the influence, and their hearts are warmed by it. Whatever thus touches men with a gentler mood, though but transiently, becomes a blessing in the world. There is a humanizing influence in sympathy. It makes men more tolerant of each other, more patient with each other's faults, more loving and thoughtful. That which is changing the world these days from cruelty and savageness, into lovingness and brotherliness, is a sorrow—the sorrow of Calvary.

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#### **Luke 7:11-18**

At times, the world seems to be an uncaring, unsympathetic place. People are often cruel and indifferent, not giving a second thought to the plight of their suffering neighbors. Wrapped up in their own interests, they don't seem to notice the anguish and despair that is at their doorstep.

This could not be said of the Lord Jesus. Time after time He met the needs of suffering people. Luke 7 tells about Christ's compassion when He saw the widow stricken with grief over the death of her son. Jesus had compassion on her and healed the boy. Earlier, when He saw a man with leprosy—who was despised, ostracized, and no doubt terribly disfigured—He made him well (Luke 5:12-15). Still today, Jesus looks upon human need with compassion.

A little girl whose mother had been taken to the hospital was spending the night alone with her father for the first time. Soon after her father turned out the lights, the girl asked quietly, "Daddy, are you there?" "Yes," he assured her. A moment later she asked, "Daddy, are you looking at me?" When he said yes, she fell asleep.

Likewise, every child of God can depend on the Savior's look of love. No matter how painful the problem or how deep the sorrow, we know He has His eyes fixed on us. And knowing that our Savior's compassionate gaze always watches over us should make us loving, caring people. Although the world may turn its eyes from suffering, the Christian, following the example of our Savior, should be alert to sorrow and quick to respond. —D. C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God loves every one of us as if there were but one of us to love.

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**F B Meyer** - Luke 7:13 When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

No widow stands by the bier of her only son, no mother by the empty cot of her babe, no lover beside the fading beauty of his beloved — but the Son of Man, unseen but glorious, is at hand, seeing, understanding, touched with compassion, and saying, in his tenderest tones, Weep not!

Weep not: Love is eternal. — Hast thou forgotten that there are three things which abide for evermore, the greatest of which is love? Is it likely that those blessed ties which have woven us to others can be snapped by death, which can only touch the body, but is not able to reach the soul? Is not love of God — and can God's love change, and pass away? No; though severed from your sight, the dear ones that are gone are thine today, and have not forgotten, but love thee still. Without us they cannot be made perfect.

Weep not: recognition of the beloved dead is certain. — Did not Mary and the women, Peter and five hundred more, recognize Jesus after his resurrection? Is He not the same Man? Are we not to be like Him? Recognition went so far, in his case, that the Magdalene recognized the very tones of his voice, when He said Mary, and she answered Rabboni. Yes, though refined and purified, the face thou hast loved shall smile, and the tones that have made thy heart-music shall speak again. Weep not!

Weep not: they shall rise again, nevermore to be separated. — The Lord raised this youth to life; but there had to be another parting, when his mother or he died. But when thy dear ones are re-united to thee, there will be no more partings. There shall be no more sea. Thy heart shall find its mate. Thou and he shall go no-more out.

**Luke 7:14 And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!"**

**KJV** And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

- **coffin.** Lk 8:54,55; 1 Kings 17:21; Job 14:12,14; Ps 33:9; Isaiah 26:19; Ezekiel 37:3-10; John 5:21,25,28,29; 11:25,43,44; Acts 9:40,41; Romans 4:17; Ephesians 5:12
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:11-17 Christ's Hope and Power for a Hurting World](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:11-17 Jesus' Power over Death](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Numbers 19:11; 16+ 'The one who touches the corpse of any person shall be unclean for seven days. 16 'Also, anyone who in the open field touches one who has been slain with a sword or who has died naturally, or a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean for seven days.

Resurrection of the Widow's son from Nain  
Altar panel by [Lucas Cranach the Younger](#), c. 1569

## JESUS SPEAKS TO A DEAD MAN!

Luke has just recorded Jesus' power over disease and now records His power over death.

Now don't let this escape your notice! It would be like being at the funeral visitation and a person walks up to the casket and says "Arise!" Imagine the bystanders' initial reaction when they heard His "Arise!" Their shock at His words would soon be fear at the dead man's coming to life in front of their eyes! Just place yourself in "beautiful" Nain on that day. How would you have reacted? Would you have like they did call Jesus a great prophet, but miss that He is the Great God?

**And** - Don't miss this little word which connects what is before and after and can yield precious insights when you pause and ponder.

**He came up and touched ([hupto](#)) the coffin** - What motivated this action which was radical to say the least (see **TECHNICAL NOTE** below)? What filled His heart came out of His mouth and motivated His action! (Lk 7:13). Compassion should not just be passive but active. Does this describe your compassion? Are you imitating Jesus (cf 1Co 11:1+) abiding in Him (1Jn 2:6+), following in His steps (1Peter 2:21+)? If you are filled with His Spirit continually (Eph 5:18+), your answer is a God glorifying "Yes!" By custom Jewish funerals included an open **coffin**. How do we know it was open? Observe! Observe! Observe! We know it was open because he sat up! It is considered to be ceremonially defiling to the one who touches the coffin (Nu 19:11, 16+). Jesus is not fazed,



for He is *not* tainted by defilement but in fact as MacArthur says "His power immediately dispelled the presence of all death and defilement."

**TECHNICAL NOTE - IVP Background Commentary** - Interrupting a funeral was a blatant breach of Jewish law and custom; touching the [bier](#) exposed Jesus to a day's uncleanness (Nu 19:21–22); touching the corpse exposed him to a week's uncleanness (cf. Nu 5:2–3; 19:11–20). But in Jesus' case, the influence goes in the other direction. People customarily dropped whatever they were doing and joined in a funeral procession when it passed by. For a widow's only son to die before she did was considered extremely tragic; it also left her dependent on public charity for support unless she had other relatives of means.

Jesus always desires [compassion](#) over [ceremonialism](#)!

**NET Note** on **coffin** (soros - used only here = funeral couch, an open frame used to carry a dead person to burial) - Although sometimes translated "**coffin**," the [bier](#) ([picture](#)) was actually a stretcher or wooden plank on which the corpse was transported to the place of burial.

**Ryle** on **coffin** - The practice of burying in coffins was apparently unknown among the Jews. In the case before us, the young man's body probably laid on a sort of couch. In Bonar's travels in Palestine, he describes a funeral which he saw, and says that the bier was like "a large cradle." (Luke 7)

**IVP Background Commentary** on **touched the coffin** - By touching even the bier, a stretcher on which the body was borne (Jewish custom did not use a closed coffin), Jesus would contract corpse-uncleanness, the severest form of ritual impurity in Judaism. Only those closest to the deceased were expected to expose themselves to this impurity. The young man had not been dead long, because it was necessary to wash, anoint, wrap, mourn over and then bury the body as quickly as possible to avoid the stench of decomposition.

**Lawrence Richards** - Christ's compassion for the widow who had lost her only son moved Him to help her. In doing so He touched the bier. This act would make the ordinary Jew "unclean," and unable to approach God at the temple. It did not affect Jesus, for immediately He called on God, and the dead returned to life! The dynamic power of life that infused Jesus could not be dampened by mere ritual rules....You and I now recognize Jesus as even more than a prophet. His touch is still able to make the dead live, and cleanse the unclean. We experience His life-giving power as we trust Him each day.

**Steven Cole** observes that "Unlike the centurion in the miracle just preceding (7:4), no one said to Jesus, "This woman is worthy for you to grant this to her." She did not even ask the Lord to do it. There is no trace of faith or expectation on her part. And there was nothing in the dead young man to merit this miracle. Jesus didn't say, "What a good looking corpse! I've never seen such a fine corpse! I'm going to raise him from the dead." I don't care how nicely you dress them up, corpses do not have any merit. This miracle came totally from Christ's great compassion and love. It was all of grace....Christ performed His miracles in a variety of ways. It is significant, therefore, that each time He raised the dead, He did it the same way: by speaking to the dead person and calling him or her back to life. It was His bare word that quickened the dead. There is great power in God's word. He spoke the universe into existence through His word. The centurion said to Jesus, "Just say the word, and my servant will be healed" (Heb 7:7). We have in the Scriptures that same powerful Word, "living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). Isaiah 55:10-11 promises, "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth, and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it."

**And the bearers ([bastazo](#)) came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, **arise** ([egeiro](#))!"**

**MacArthur** on **arise** - This was the first of 3 times Jesus raised people from the dead (cf. Lk 8:49–56; Jn 11:20–44). Verse 22 implies that Christ also raised others who are not specifically mentioned.

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**Touch** ([681](#))([hapto](#)) means to grasp, to lay hold of with the basic meaning of touching for the purpose of manipulating. Hapto conveys the sense handling of an object as to exert a modifying influence upon it or upon oneself. The majority of the 39 uses are in the Gospels and are associated with Jesus touching someone (or someone touching Him) usually with a beneficial effect. In contrast the use in 1Jn 5:18 speaks of touching with the intent of a negative or harmful effect (cp harmful sense in Lxx of Ge 26:11, Ex 19:12). Four uses refer to lighting a lamp (Lk 8:17, 11:33, 15:8) or kindling a fire (Acts 28:2). Paul uses it of touching a woman, apparently a euphemism for sexual contact (2Cor 7:1, cp Abimelech "had not come near" [Lxx = haptomai] Sarah - Ge 20:4,6; see hapto in Pr 6:29). In Ge 32:25 (cp Ge 32:32) Hapto/haptomai is used over 100 times in the Septuagint (Lxx). The first use of hapto in Ge 3:3 is by the woman who misquoted God's command saying "You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest



you die.” God touched the socket of Jacob's thigh resulting in dislocation while they wrestled! Hapto/haptomai is used in Leviticus numerous times of touching something with a negative impact (the majority of uses are negative and refer to touching something unclean e.g., Lev 5:2) or positive impact (consecrated - Lev 6:27). In Jdg 6:21 the Angel of the LORD touched Gideon's offering of meat and it was consumed (cp 1Ki 19:7). In Ru 2:9 Boaz instructed the servants not to touch Ruth apparently referring to touching her roughly. (cp Ru 2:9NLT). 1Sa 10:26 refers to God touching hearts of the valiant men. Of the wings of the cherubim touching each other (1Ki 6:27, 2Chr 3:11). Of an angel touching Elijah (1Ki 19:5). In 1Chr 16:22 hapto/haptomai is used in a negative sense - "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm." In Isa 6:7 (hapto used twice) the angel touched Isaiah's mouth and his iniquity was taken away. Jehovah touched (Lxx - hapto) Jeremiah's mouth, placing His words in his mouth. (Jer 1:9)

**All Luke's uses of hapto** - Lk. 5:13; Lk. 6:19; Lk. 7:14; Lk. 7:39; Lk. 8:16; Lk. 8:44; Lk. 8:45; Lk. 8:46; Lk. 8:47; Lk. 11:33; Lk. 15:8; Lk. 18:15; Lk. 22:51; Acts 28:2

**Bearers** (carriers)(941) **bastazo bastazo** from **basis** = foot) generally means to take up and hold (Jn 10:31, 20:15, Acts 21:35) or to bear (Mt 3:11, Mk 14:13, Lk 22:10). The meaning common in classic Greek of "to pick up" (Jn 10:31), carry (Jn 19:17), endure (borne - Mt 20:12), remove (Mt 3:11), and the common Koine sense of "to steal" (Jn 12:6). Luke 14:27; John 19:17 refer to carrying the cross. In Acts 9:15 "to bear My Name" means to announce it to "Gentiles and kings and sons." Notice that Jn 19:17 describes Jesus as "bearing His own cross" which is clearly a unique event which applies only to Jesus. In other words, in none of the passages that Jesus calls for disciples to bear their own cross (Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34; 10:21; Lk 9:23; 14:27), is it suggested that we can bear His cross.

Metaphorically **bastazo** means to bear, support, endure, i.e., labors, sufferings (Mt. 20:12, burden or weight, implied in Rev. 2:3). The punishment incurred by being foolish (Gal. 5:10). To bear patiently (Ro 15:1; Gal. 6:2; Rev. 2:2). Metaphorically in the sense of to receive, understand (Jn 16:12).

**Friberg** - (1) take up, lift up, pick up (Jn 10.31); (2) carry, bear (Mk 14.13); figuratively, of anything burdensome or difficult bear, endure, put up with ( Mt 20.12); (3) bear away, remove (Jn 20.15); figuratively, of healing disease (Mt 8.17 - "took [bore] our infirmities") = not in sense of promising to remove all sickness, but in bearing the curse of sin He healed our "sin sickness" so to speak, far more eternally deadly than any physical sickness! see [1 Pe 2:24-note](#)); (4) steal, pilfer, carry off ([Jn 12.6](#)); (5) figuratively, of serving as a source of supply support, provide for ([Ro 11.18](#)).

**Arise** ([aorist imperative](#) - Command to do so now!)(1453) ([egeiro](#)) means to rise (stand up) from a sitting or lying position (Mt 8:26, 9:5), to awaken from sleep (Mt 8:25), figuratively to "awaken" from death (rise up). Egeiro was used literally also to raise up or lift up a person either sitting or lying down. Figuratively egeiro was used to "raise up" a person from illness, thus restoring them to health. Figuratively as used in Romans 4:24, egeiro describes the bringing back of Jesus from the dead and thus raising Him or causing Him to rise. The idea of wake up from death is conveyed by egeiro because sleep was used as metaphor of death for believers (there is however no "soul sleep"). To raise up to a position as was David in Acts 13:22 (referring to his "promotion" to king).

#### Related Article:

- [How many people were raised from the dead in the Bible?](#)

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Just a Word from Jesus raised the young man and the following story illustrates the incredible power of God's Word! Gaylord Kambarami was the General Secretary of the Bible Society of Zimbabwe. Once when he offered a man a New Testament, the man responded, "If you give me that Bible, I will roll the pages and use them to make cigarettes!" Gaylord replied, "At least promise me that you will read the page before you smoke it." The man agreed, so he gave him the New Testament and went his way. Fifteen years later, Gaylord was attending a convention when the speaker on the platform suddenly spotted him, pointed him out to the audience, and said, "*This man doesn't remember me, but 15 years ago he tried to sell me a New Testament. When I refused to buy it he gave it to me, even though I told him I would use the pages to roll cigarettes. He made me promise to read the pages before I smoked them. Well, I **smoked Matthew** and I **smoked Mark** and I **smoked Luke**. But when I got to **John 3:16**, I **couldn't smoke any more**. My life was changed from that moment*" He had become a full-time evangelist, pointing others to the powerful message of God's Word.

A similar illustration of the power of God's Word was seen in the conversion of Charles Haddon Spurgeon - read the testimony. And not only did Spurgeon experience the power of God's Word in his own life, he went on to become one of the greatest preachers of God's powerful Word. The following Spurgeon anecdote beautifully illustrates the supernatural power of God's Word...

The renowned preacher C H Spurgeon once tested an auditorium in which he was to speak that evening. Stepping into the pulpit, he loudly proclaimed, "**Behold the lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.**" (John 1:29+) Satisfied with the acoustics, he left and went his way. Unknown to him, there were two

men working in the rafters of that large auditorium, neither one a Christian. One of the men was pricked in his conscience by the verse Spurgeon quoted and became a believer later that day! Such is the penetrating power of God's eternal word! Little wonder that Paul is so insistent on our "preaching of the Word" (2 Timothy 4:2+)

**J C Ryle** on **arise** - We learn, lastly, from these verses, the almighty power of our Lord Jesus Christ. We can ask no proof of this more striking than the miracle which we are now considering. He gives back life to a dead man with a few words. He speaks to a cold corpse, and at once it becomes a living person. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the heart, the lungs, the brain, the senses, again resume their work and discharge their duty. "Young man," He cried, "I say unto thee arise." That voice was a voice mighty in operation. At once "he that was dead sat up and began to speak."

Let us see in this mighty miracle a pledge of that solemn event, the general resurrection. That same Jesus who here raised one dead person, shall raise all mankind at the last day. "The hour cometh in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28, 29.) When the trumpet sounds and Christ commands, there can be no refusal or escape. All must appear before His bar in their bodies. All shall be judged according to their works.

Let us see, furthermore, in this mighty miracle, a lively emblem of Christ's power to quicken the dead in sins. In Him is life. He quickeneth whom He will. (John 5:21.) He can raise to a new life souls that now seem dead in worldliness and sin. He can say to hearts that now appear corrupt and lifeless, "Arise to repentance, and live in the service of God." Let us never despair of any soul. Let us pray for our children, and faint not. Our young men and our young women may long seem travelling on the way to ruin. But let us pray on. Who can tell but He that met the funeral at the gates of Nain may yet meet our unconverted children, and say with almighty power, "Young man, arise." With Christ nothing is impossible.

Let us leave the passage with a solemn recollection of those things which are yet to happen at the last day. We read that "there came a fear on all," at Nain when the young man was raised. What then shall be the feelings of mankind when all the dead are raised at once? The unconverted man may well fear that day. He is not prepared to meet God. But the true Christian has nothing to fear. He may lay him down and sleep peacefully in his grave. In Christ He is complete and safe, and when he rises again he shall see God's face in peace. (Luke 7)

**Luke 7:15 The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.**

**KJV** And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

- 1 Kings 17:23,24; 2 Kings 4:32-37; 13:21
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:11-17 Christ's Hope and Power for a Hurting World](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:11-17 Jesus' Power over Death](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 15:54-55+ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. 55 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?"

### **A DEAD MAN SPEAKS AND TEARS OF GRIEF TRANSFORMED TO TEARS OF JOY**

**The dead man sat up ([anakathizo](#)) and began to speak ([laleo](#))** - Can you imagine the coffin bearer's reaction not to mention the reaction of the huge crowd! Luke does not tell us what the man said ([but see below](#)). Nevertheless observe the paradoxical statement that a **dead man** sets up and **began to speak!** **Dead** men don't speak, but Jesus had raised him from the **dead**. He who was truly dead was immediately truly alive at the powerful Word of Jesus. This is nothing short of a miracle of creation (of life). This miracle reminds us of Jesus the Creator for "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared **by the word of God**, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible." (Heb 11:3)

Other resurrections by Jesus - (Lk 8:40-56; Jn 11:38-44). This resurrection is recorded only by Luke.

Jesus spoiled every funeral that He went to.

-- D. L. Moody

The resurrection of the dead was a sign that Jesus was the Messiah, the "Expected One" as Jesus explained in Lk 7:22 ("the dead are raised up"). Note that this resurrection is not like the resurrection of Christ, for the man was reunited with his mortal body but he would die again. Christ alone is "the first fruits of those who are asleep." (1 Cor. 15:20+) and "each (will be raised) in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming." (1 Co 15:23+).

**Ryle on began to speak** - This fact is mentioned, in order to place it beyond doubt, that the young man was really restored to life. Where there is speech, there must be life. Let it be observed, that we have no record given to us of anything that was ever said or thought by those who were miraculously raised from the dead. Their experience and knowledge are wisely withheld from us. (**Ed**: See related subject - [What does the Bible say about near death experiences?](#)) (Luke 7)

The raising of a dead body demonstrates His power to raise a soul dead in sin into a new life.

**Robertson** - It is objected that the symmetry of these cases (daughter of Jairus raised from the death-bed, this widow's son raised from the bier, Lazarus raised from the tomb) is suspicious, but no one Gospel gives all three (Plummer).

**Jesus gave him back** (KJV - delivered) **to his mother** - (cf. 1Ki 17:23; 2Ki 4:36-37) - Notice the tenderness of Jesus! Jesus' power to heal is now demonstrated by a greater miracle: raising the dead (cf. Lk 8:40-56; John 11:1-44; Acts 9:36-43). What do we learn about the mothers faith? Nothing is said pro or con! She had not even implored Jesus to do this miracle. This miracle was initiated and carried out by Jesus.

See parallels with the resurrection miracles of [Elijah](#) and [Elisha](#)...

1 Kings 17:23 Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house and gave him to his mother; and Elijah said, "See, your son is alive."

2 Kings 4:36-37 He called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "Take up your son." 37 Then she went in and fell at his feet and bowed herself to the ground, and she took up her son and went out.

**IVP Background Commentary** - God had used several earlier prophets (Elijah and Elisha) to resuscitate the dead, but it was a rare miracle. The few pagan stories of resuscitations, especially from the third century A.D. (from Philostratus and Apuleius), are later and not validated by eyewitnesses as the Gospel accounts are; they also often exhibit features missing here, such as reports from the underworld. (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#))

#### **Related Resource:**

- [What does the Bible say about near death experiences? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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We don't know what the resurrected young man said, but if he had known the classic Gaither song, he might have sung

#### **[He Touched Me!](#)**

Shackled by a heavy burden,  
'Neath a load of guilt and shame  
Then the hand of Jesus touched me,  
And now I am no longer the same

He touched me, oh He touched me,  
And oh the joy that floods my soul!  
Something happened and now I know,  
He touched me and made me whole

Since I met this blessed Savior,  
Since He cleansed and made me whole,  
I will never cease to praise Him,  
I'll shout it while eternity rolls

He touched me, oh He touched me,  
And oh the joy that floods my soul!  
Something happened and now I know

He touched me and made me whole

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**Sat up** (339) (**anakathizo** from **ana** = up, again + **kathizo** = to sit down) literally means to sit up. **Anakathizo** was used by medical writers to describe the sick sitting up in bed. Only one other NT use "But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she (DORCAS) opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she **sat up**. (Acts 9:40) There are no uses in the Septuagint.

**Speak** (2980) (**laleo**) is the Greek verb meaning to make a sound and then to utter words. Vincent says that **laleo** is "used of speaking, in contrast with or as a breaking of silence, voluntary or imposed. Thus the dumb man, after he was healed, spake (Mt 9:33 "And after the demon was cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the multitudes marveled, saying (lego), "Nothing like this was ever seen in Israel.") and Zacharias, when his tongue was loosed, began to speak (Lk 1:64 "And at once his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he began to speak in praise of God") The use of the word **laleo** ... contemplates the fact rather than the substance of speech. Hence it is used of God (Heb 1:1), the point being, not what God said, but the fact that he spake to men. On the contrary, **lego** refers to the matter of speech. The verb originally means to pick out, and hence to use words selected as appropriate expressions of thought, and to put such words together in orderly discourse." (Vincent, M. R. Word studies in the New Testament).

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#### **QUESTION - [How many people were raised from the dead in the Bible?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The Bible records several accounts of people being raised from the dead. Every time a person is raised from the dead, it is a stupendous miracle, showing that the God who is Himself the Source of Life has the ability to give life to whom He will—even after death. The following people were raised from the dead in the Bible:

##### **The widow of Zarephath's son (1 Kings 17:17–24).**

Elijah the prophet raised the [widow of Zarephath's](#) son from the dead. Elijah was staying in an upper room of the widow's house during a severe drought in the land. While he was there, the widow's son became ill and died. In her grief, the woman brought the body of her son to Elijah with the assumption that his presence in her household had brought about the death of her boy as a judgment on her past sin. Elijah took the dead boy from her arms, went to the upper room, and prayed, "Lord my God, let this boy's life return to him!" (verse 21). Elijah stretched himself out on the boy three times as he prayed, and "the Lord heard Elijah's cry, and the boy's life returned to him, and he lived" (verse 22). The prophet brought the boy to his mother, who was filled with faith in the power of God through Elijah: "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord from your mouth is the truth" (verse 24).

##### **The Shunammite woman's son (2 Kings 4:18–37).**

The prophet Elisha raised the [Shunammite woman's](#) son from the dead. Elisha regularly stayed in Shunem in an upper room prepared for him by this woman and her husband. One day, while Elisha was at Mount Carmel, the couple's young son died. The woman carried the body of her son to Elisha's room and laid it on the bed (verse 21). Then, without even telling her husband the news, she departed for Carmel to find Elisha (verses 22–25). When she found Elisha, she pleaded with him to come to Shunem. Elisha sent his servant, Gehazi, ahead of them with instructions to lay Elisha's staff on the boy's face (verse 31). As soon as Elisha and the Shunammite woman arrived back home, Elisha went to the upper room, shut the door, and prayed. Then he stretched out on top of the boy's body, and the body began to warm (verse 34). Elisha arose, walked about the room, and stretched himself out on the body again. The boy then sneezed seven times and awoke from death (verse 35). Elisha then delivered the boy, alive again, to his grateful mother (verses 36–37).

##### **The man raised out of Elisha's grave (2 Kings 13:20–21).**

Elisha is connected with another miracle that occurred after his death. Sometime after Elisha had died and was buried, some men were burying another body in the same area. The grave diggers saw a band of Moabite raiders approaching, and, rather than risk an encounter with the Moabites, they threw the man's body into Elisha's grave. Scripture records that, "when the body touched Elisha's bones, the man came to life and stood up on his feet" (verse 21).

##### **The widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11–17).**

This is the first person Jesus raised from the dead. As the Lord approached the town of [Nain](#), He met a funeral procession leaving the city. In the coffin was a young man, the only son of a widow. When Jesus saw the procession, "his heart went out to [the woman] and he said, 'Don't cry'" (verse 13). Jesus came close and touched the coffin and spoke to the dead man: "Young man, I say to you, get up!" (verse 14). Obeying the divine order, "the dead man sat up and began to talk" (verse 15). The mourning was turned to awe

and praise: “God has come to help his people,” the people said (verse 16).

### **Jairus’ daughter (Luke 8:40–56).**

Jesus also showed His power over death by raising the young daughter of [Jairus](#), a synagogue leader. The Lord was surrounded by crowds when Jairus came to Him, begging Him to visit his house and heal his dying twelve-year-old daughter (verses 41–42). Jesus began to follow Jarius home, but on the way a member of Jarius’ household approached them with the sad news that Jairus’ daughter had died. Jesus turned to Jarius with words of hope: “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed” (verse 50). Upon arriving at Jarius’ house, Jesus took the girl’s parents, Peter, James, and John and entered the room where the body lay. There, “he took her by the hand and said, ‘My child, get up!’ Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up” (verses 54–55). Jesus and His disciples then left the girl, alive and well, with her astonished parents.

### **Lazarus of Bethany (John 11).**

The third person that Jesus raised from the dead was His friend [Lazarus](#). Word had come to Jesus that Lazarus was ill, but Jesus did not go to Bethany to heal him. Instead, He told His disciples, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it” (verse 4). A couple days later, Jesus told His disciples that Lazarus had died, but He promised a miracle: “I am going there to wake him up” (verse 11). When Jesus reached Bethany, four days after Lazarus’ death, Lazarus’ grieving sisters both greeted Jesus with the same words: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died” (verses 21 and 32). Jesus, speaking to Martha, promised to raise Lazarus from the dead (verse 23) and proclaimed Himself to be [“the resurrection and the life”](#) (verse 25). Jesus asked to see the grave. When He got to the place, He commanded the stone to be rolled away from the tomb (verse 39), and He prayed (verses 41–42) and “called in a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’” (verse 43). Just as Jesus had promised, “the dead man came out” (verse 44). The result of this miracle was that God was glorified and “many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him” (verse 45). Others, however, refused to believe in Jesus and plotted to destroy both Jesus and Lazarus (John 11:53; 12:10).

### **Various saints in Jerusalem (Matthew 27:50–53).**

The Bible mentions some people who were [raised from the dead en masse](#) at the time of the death of Christ. When Jesus died, “the earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open” (verses 51–52). Those open tombs remained open until the third day. At that time, “the bodies of many holy people . . . were raised to life. They came out of the tombs after Jesus’ resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people” (verses 52–53). On the day that Jesus was raised to life, these saints were also raised and became witnesses in Jerusalem of the life that only Jesus can give.

### **Tabitha (Acts 9:36–43).**

Tabitha, whose Greek name was [Dorcas](#), was a believer who lived in the coastal city of Joppa. Her return to life was performed by the apostle Peter. Dorcas was known for “always doing good and helping the poor” (verse 36). When she died, the believers in Joppa were filled with sadness. They laid the body in an upper room and sent for Peter, who was in the nearby town of Lydda (verses 37–38). Peter came at once and met with the disciples in Joppa, who showed him the clothing that Dorcas had made for the widows there (verse 39). Peter sent them all out of the room and prayed. Then “turning toward the dead woman, he said, ‘Tabitha, get up.’ She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet” (verses 40–41). The overjoyed believers received their friend, and the news spread quickly throughout the city. “Many people believed in the Lord” as a result (verse 42).

### **Eutychus (Acts 20:7–12).**

Eutychus was a young man who lived (and died and lived again) in Troas. He was raised from the dead by the apostle Paul. The believers in Troas were gathered in an upper room to hear the apostle speak. Since Paul was leaving town the next day, he spoke late into the night. One of his audience members was [Eutychus](#), who sat in a window and, unfortunately, fell asleep. Eutychus slipped out of the window and fell three stories to his death (verse 9). Paul went down and “threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him” (verse 10). Eutychus came back to life, went upstairs, and ate a meal with the others. When the meeting finally broke up at daylight, “the people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted” (verse 12).

### **Jesus (Mark 16:1–8).**

Of course, any list of people raised from the dead must include Jesus Christ. His death and resurrection are the focal point of Scripture and the most important events in the history of the world. The [resurrection of Jesus](#) is notably different from other events in which people rose from the dead: Jesus’ resurrection is the first permanent return to life; everyone else who had been raised to life



died again. Lazarus died twice; Jesus rose, nevermore to die. In this way, Jesus is “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Corinthians 15:20). Jesus’ resurrection justifies us (Romans 4:25) and ensures our eternal life: “Because I live, you also will live” (John 14:19). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### **QUESTION - [What is the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath?](#)**

**ANSWER** - First Kings 17 introduces the [prophet Elijah](#) and gives the account of his dealings with a widow from Zarephath. The chapter notes that the Lord was withholding rain from Israel (verse 1). The drought was in judgment of the nation’s rampant idolatry, led by the royal couple [Ahab and Jezebel](#). In verse 8, the Lord commanded Elijah to go to Zarephath, a town outside of Israel, where a widow would provide food for him. He obeyed, finding a woman gathering sticks. He said to her, “Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink,” and, “Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand” (verses 11–12).

The widow, however, was in great need herself. She responded, “As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die” (verse 13). She expected the meal she was about to fix to be the last for her family. She had no other prospect than to die of starvation.

Elijah’s answer was surely a [test of her faith](#). He told her that she was to make some food for him, anyway, using the last of her ingredients for him. He added a promise: “For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth’” (1 Kings 17:14). **The widow’s faith was evident in her obedience.** And God was faithful to His promise: “She and he and her household ate for many days. The jar of flour was not spent, neither did the jug of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah” (1Ki 17:15–16). The widow’s food supply was supernaturally extended, as promised.

**Elijah stayed there for some time, living in an upper room of the widow’s house. The woman’s son later died of an illness and, in her anger and grief, she blamed Elijah for his death—she assumed God was judging her for her sin (1Ki 17:17–18). But Elijah cried out to God: “Lord my God, let this boy’s life return to him!” (1Ki 17:21), and the child was restored to life. When the woman saw this, she said, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord from your mouth is the truth” (1Ki 17:24).**

This account is also mentioned in the New Testament. Early in His ministry, Jesus was speaking in the synagogue of His hometown, Nazareth. He said, **“In truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow”** (Luke 4:25–26+). Jesus’ point was that no prophet is accepted in his hometown. Just as Elijah found more faith outside of Israel than within it, Jesus found little faith in His boyhood home. As if to prove His point, the people of Nazareth grew enraged and attempted to throw Jesus off a cliff (Luke 4:29).

The account of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath offers many insights. First, God often uses unlikely people and sources to accomplish His purposes. Second, God’s mercy extends to all people, both Jews and Gentiles, and the Sidonian widow was blessed for her faith (see Acts 10:34–35+). Third, God requires faith (Hebrews 11:6+). The widow’s miracle only came *after* she prepared a meal for Elijah—an [act of sincere faith](#) on her part. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### **Rod Mattoon - A man fell into a pit and couldn’t get himself out.**

- A Christian Scientist came along and said: "You only think that you are in a pit."
- A Pharisee said: "Only bad people fall into a pit."
- A Fundamentalist said: "You deserve your pit."
- An IRS man asked if he was paying taxes on the pit.
- A Charismatic said: "Just confess that you're not in a pit."
- An Optimist said: "Things could be worse."
- A Pessimist said: "Things will get worse!"
- Jesus, seeing the man, took him by the hand and lifted him out of the pit.

A funny thing happened on the way to the cemetery. The Lord lifted this man out of the pit of death. Not only did Jesus talk to the dead son of this mother, the son came back to life! Death surrendered its prey, like a lion giving up his kill to hyenas, because the Creator of the Universe ushered His command. Jesus put the brakes on the funeral procession! This was the first time Jesus restored to life someone who had died, according to the Gospel records. Imagine all the emotions flooding the hearts of these people: shock, fear, confusion, wonder, awe, reverence, and joy.

Common phrases, that most likely rippled through this crowd from one person to another were, "I can't believe it! I just can't believe



it! Did you see that?" Imagine the mother's words, "My son! My son! Oh, praise God!" If you were at a funeral and the person in the coffin sat up, what would you do? This is what happened here. I wonder if anyone ran? I wonder if anyone screamed or fainted? Not only did this boy sit up, he started talking. What do you think he said?

- Where am I?
- What is going on?
- Why are all these people here?
- Mother, what is wrong? 16
- I'm hungry. When are we going to eat?

This boy is in good shape. Jesus delivers him back to his mom. All in a day's work for the Lord. Never underestimate His ability when you have no ability. Never underestimate His power when you are powerless.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones, the famous missionary, wrote a charming and delightful autobiography called *A Song of Ascents*. He tells about a layman, a newspaperman, a mutual friend, who was called upon to conduct a funeral service. Being an exact man, he wanted to do it properly and in the best Christian tradition. So he turned to the New Testament as the original source and example of how Jesus conducted a funeral. He found that Jesus didn't conduct funerals at all. All He dealt with were resurrections. Thank God, Jesus took the sting out of death. Our hope is in Him. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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### Life-Giving Words Read: Luke 7:11-17

You He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins. —Ephesians 2:1

In Luke 7 we read the dramatic story of what happened when Jesus encountered a large funeral procession. A widow was on her way to the cemetery to bury her only son. With a heart full of compassion, Jesus spoke to the woman, touched the coffin, and with a command brought her son back to life.

What happened to that young man is an illustration of what happens to a person who is converted to Christ. Until you and I come in contact with the Savior, we are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1) and on our way to the cemetery of what the Bible calls the second death (Rev. 20:6). We will be eternally separated from God's love unless we are spiritually reborn.

But when Jesus speaks to the needy sinner through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, and the person puts his faith in Jesus, instantly he receives new life. Peace, joy, and blessing will follow.

Friend, have you heard the life-giving words of Jesus? He alone can take away the deadness of your soul and give you a thrilling awakening that brings forgiveness and joy right now, and the prospect of heaven forever.

If Jesus has rescued you from eternal death, ask Him to use you to tell others of the One who gives new life. - Henry G. Bosch [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Once far from God and dead in sin,  
No light my heart could see,  
But in God's Word the light I found—  
Now Christ liveth in me. —Whittle

When you trust God's Son, darkness gives way to the light.

[Used by permission from Our Daily Bread](#)

**Luke 7:16 Fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and, "God has visited His people!"**

**KJV** And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

**BGT** λαβεν δ φ βος π ντας κα δ ξαζον τ ν θε ν λ γοντες τι προφ της μ γας γ ρθη ν μ ν κα τι ππεσκ ψατο θε ς τ ν λα ν α το .

**NET** Fear seized them all, and they began to glorify God, saying, "A great prophet has appeared among us!" and "God has come to help his people!"

CSB Then fear came over everyone, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us," and "God has visited His people."

ERV And fear took hold on all: and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is arisen among us: and, God hath visited his people.

ESV Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!"

NIV They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people."

NLT Great fear swept the crowd, and they praised God, saying, "A mighty prophet has risen among us," and "God has visited his people today."

NRS Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!" and "God has looked favorably on his people!"

YLT and fear took hold of all, and they were glorifying God, saying -- 'A great prophet hath risen among us,' and -- 'God did look upon His people.'

- **fear** Lk 1:65; 5:8,26; 8:37; Jer 33:9; Mt 28:8; Acts 5:5,11-13
- **they** Lk 2:20; Matthew 9:8; 15:31; Galatians 1:24
- **a great** Lk 7:39; 9:19; 24:19; John 1:21,25; 4:19; 6:14; 7:40,41; 9:17; Acts 3:22,23; Acts 7:37
- **God** Lk 1:68; 19:44; Exodus 4:31; Ps 65:9; 106:4,5
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:11-17 Christ's Hope and Power for a Hurting World](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:11-17 Jesus' Power over Death](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passage:

Deuteronomy 18:15+ "The LORD your God will raise up for you a **prophet** like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.....18 'I will raise up a **prophet** from among their countrymen like you, and **I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.**

Luke 1:68+ "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For **He has visited** ([episkeptomai](#)) **us** and accomplished redemption for His people,

Luke 1:78+ (PROPHECY) Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the **Sunrise from on high will visit** ([episkeptomai](#)) **us**, (IN A SENSE LUKE 7:17 IS A FULFILLMENT OF THAT PROPHECY).

## JESUS CALLED A GREAT PROPHET

**Fear** ([phobos](#)) **gripped** ([lambano](#) - seized) **them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen** ([egeiro](#)) **among us!"** - What were their two reactions? **Fear** in a reverential sense, a sense that they had seen the powerful hand of God at work that day. It is good that had fear for Proverbs 1:7 says "fear is the beginning of knowledge." and Pr 9:10 says "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." The Jewish crowd was **so close and yet so far!** The crowd recognized there was something special about Jesus but sadly they fall short of recognizing Him as God. They failed to see that it was God Himself at work in their midst. Their second reaction of glorifying God was appropriate. The verb **arisen** is ironic wordplay in a sense because it is the same word used repeatedly to describe Jesus being raised from the dead (Acts 5:30; Acts 10:40; Acts 13:37; 1Cor 6:14; 2Cor 4:14)

**THOUGHT** - I wonder how often He is at work in my day, in circumstances bad and good, and yet I too like the Jewish crowd fail to recognize His hand in the circumstances? Lord, give us eyes to see you working in our midst. Amen

**NET Note** on **fear** - Or "Awe." Greek "fear," but the context and the following remark show that it is mixed with wonder; This is a reaction to God's work; see Luke 5:9.

Praising and **glorifying** God is a common theme in Luke (Lk 2:13,20,28; 5:25-26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15,18; 18:43; 19:37; 23:47; 24:53).

**A great prophet...and God** - Sadly they did not make the direct connection of Jesus both Prophet AND God! They were likely

comparing Him to the ministries of the great OT prophets Elijah (who brought the widow's son back to life - 1 Ki 17:21-24) and Elisha (who brought back the Shunammite's son from the dead - 2 Ki 4:32-36).

Later we read that Peter "[connected the dots](#)" (so to speak)

They (disciples see Lk 9:18) answered and said, "John the Baptist, and others say Elijah; but others, that one of the prophets of old has risen again." And He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered and said, "**The Christ of God.**" (Lk 9:19-20).

**NET Note** on **great prophet** - That Jesus was a great prophet was a natural conclusion for the crowd to make, given the healing; but Jesus is more than this. See Luke 9:8, 19–20.

**God has visited** ([episkeptomai](#)) **His people** - Phillips paraphrase - "God has turned His face towards His people." Is this not ironic? God was there in their midst but sadly they were not saying Jesus was God in the flesh as John recorded in John 1:14+, but that the miraculous resurrection power of God through this Prophet had shown compassion on the widow. **Visited** conveys the sense that God has come to help his people, in this case help a poor widow!

**Ryle on visited** ([episkeptomai](#)) **His people** - This expression should be compared with Luke 1:68, and Luke 1:78, and with many places in the Old Testament—such as Ruth 1:6, 1Sa 2:21, Job 35:15, Jer. 6:6. It appears to signify any remarkable divine interposition, either in the way of mercy or of judgment, and does not necessarily signify, in this place, a personal visitation. That "God was manifest in the flesh," when Christ became man for us, is an undeniable truth of Scripture. But it cannot be proved that it is taught in this text. (Luke 7)

**Steven Cole** applies this section - Whenever Christ imparts new life to dead sinners, there will be powerful effects upon the observers. This is especially the case when the dead sinner really looked dead (when he wasn't all dressed up in good works before). The genuine conversion of a drunkard or drug addict or immoral person or criminal can have a great impact for Jesus Christ. People cannot deny the transformation. They must acknowledge the reality of God. I would add in this connection that it is important for those who have been raised from the dead to live like it so that the name of Christ is not scoffed at through your poor testimony. It is a mistake to parade new believers in front of crowds before they have learned to walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord.

**Charles Gabriel** expressed his amazement for the Lord Jesus Christ in a song he wrote.

#### **I stand amazed in the presence**

Of Jesus the Nazarene  
And I wonder how He could love me,  
A sinner condemned, unclean.

How marvelous, how wonderful  
And my song shall ever be.  
How marvelous, how wonderful  
Is my Savior's love for me.

**Rod Mattoon** - When we take a good look at our Lord Jesus Christ, He is truly amazing. There is no getting around it. What a wonderful Man and Lord! I'm amazed at His Love, that He, who is the Altogether Lovely One, would love even those who pierced His gentle hands and feet with corroded iron spikes like a seamstress that punctures a pin cushion. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Gripped** ([2983](#))([lambano](#)) means to take or grasp, so figuratively they were taken by fear.

**Fear** ([5401](#))([phobos](#)) in this context seems to be a mixture of dread/alarm and reverence/awe (cf "began glorifying God").

*Began glorifying* ([1392](#))([doxazo](#)) means to to praise, honor or magnify (Mt 5:16; 6:2; Lk 5:25f; Ac 11:18; Ro 11:13; 1 Cor 12:26; 1 Pt 4:16) Doxazo is Imperfect active, inchoative, began and increased.

**Doxazo** in Luke and Acts - Lk. 2:20; Lk. 4:15; Lk. 5:25; Lk. 5:26; Lk. 7:16; Lk. 13:13; Lk. 17:15; Lk. 18:43; Lk. 23:47; Jn. 7:39; Acts 3:13; Acts 4:21; Acts 11:18; Acts 13:48; Acts 21:20;

**Arisen** ([1453](#)) [egeiro](#) means to rise (stand up) from a sitting or lying position (Mt 8:26, 9:5), to awaken from sleep (Mt 8:25), figuratively to "awaken" from death (rise up). Egeiro was used literally also to raise up or lift up a person either sitting or lying down. Figuratively egeiro was used to "raise up" a person from illness, thus restoring them to health. Figuratively as used in Romans 4:24, egeiro describes the bringing back of Jesus from the dead and thus raising Him or causing Him to rise. The idea of wake up from death is conveyed by egeiro because sleep was used as metaphor of death for believers (there is however no "soul sleep"). To

raise up to a position as was David in Acts 13:22 (referring to his "promotion" to king).

**Egeiro in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 1:69 = "has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant"; Lk. 3:8; Lk. 5:23; Lk. 5:24; Lk. 6:8; Lk. 7:14; Lk. 7:16; Lk. 7:22; Lk. 8:54; Lk. 9:7; Lk. 9:22; Lk. 11:8; Lk. 11:31; Lk. 13:25; Lk. 20:37; Lk. 21:10; Lk. 24:6; Lk. 24:34; Acts 3:7; Acts 3:15; Acts 4:10; Acts 5:30; Acts 9:8; Acts 10:26; Acts 10:40; Acts 12:7; Acts 13:22; Acts 13:30; Acts 13:37; Acts 26:8

**Visited** (concerned about) (1980) (**episkeptomai** see study of **episkopeo** from **epí** = upon or intensifying already existing idea in verb + **skopeo** = regard, give attention to, look at, contemplate) literally means to look upon, to go to see, to examine closely, to inspect, to examine the state of affairs of something, to look after or to oversee. The idea of visiting is more than just making a social call. As Hiebert writes "In classical Greek, it was commonly used of visiting the sick, whether by a doctor or a friend.' In Jewish usage, it commonly denoted to visit with the aim of caring for and supplying the needs of those visited (Job 2:11; Jer. 23:2; Ezek. 34:11; Zech. 11:16; Mt. 25:36, 43). The term implies concern and personal contact with the needy; it involves more than a matter of charity by proxy."

**Uses of episkeptomai in Luke and Acts** (7/11 uses by Luke) - Lk. 1:68; Lk. 1:78; Lk. 7:16; Acts 6:3; Acts 7:23; Acts 15:14; Acts 15:36 -- The other 4 uses - Mt. 25:36; Mt. 25:43; Heb. 2:6; Jas. 1:27

Luke 1:68 ) "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has**visited** us and accomplished redemption for His people,

Luke 1:78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise from on high**will visit** us, (IN A SENSE THIS VERSE IS A FULFILLMENT OF THAT PROPHECY).

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**J H Jowett - THE COMMONPLACE OF DEATH** Luke 7:11-18 - DEATH is never a commonplace. We never become so accustomed to funerals as not to see them. Everybody sees the mournful procession go along the street. A momentary awe steals over the flippant thought, and for one brief season the superficial opens into the infinite abyss.

And yet, while a thousand are arrested, only a few are compassionate. There can be awe without pity; there can be interest without service. When this humble funeral train trudged out of the city of Nain our Lord halted, and His heart melted! There was an "aching void," and He longed to fill it. There was a bleeding, broken heart, and He yearned to stand and heal it. He found His own joy in removing another's tears, His own satisfaction in another's peace.

"The Lord hath visited His people!" That is what the people said, and I do not wonder at the saying! And let me, too, be a humble visitor in the troubled ways of men! Let my heart be a well of sweet compassion to all the sons and daughters of grief! Like Barnabas, let me be "a son of consolation."

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**They "glorified God."** This was the acme of Christ's desire. Christ said in the upper room just before He went to the Cross,

"Father, I have glorified Thy name upon the earth."

When a real work of grace is done through evangelist, missionary or pastor, the Lord is glorified.

The Holy Spirit speaking of the healing of the paralytic says: "They glorified God." Let us note a few other such statements:

When Christ healed the multitudes by the Sea of Galilee, "they glorified the God of Israel" (Matt. 15:31).

When the son of the widow of Nain was raised from the dead, "there came a fear on all, and they glorified God" (Luke 7:16).

When the women who had been bowed together for eighteen years was made straight, they "glorified God" (Luke 13:13).

When the lame man at the beautiful gate, was healed "all men glorified God for that which was done" (Acts 4:21).

Let us, too, give glory unto the Lord. - Robert Neighbour

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**Luke 7:17 This report concerning Him went out all over Judea and in all the surrounding district.**

**KJV** And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

- Lk 7:14; Matthew 4:24; 9:31; Mark 1:28; 6:14

- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:11-17 Christ's Hope and Power for a Hurting World](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:11-17 Jesus' Power over Death](#) - John MacArthur

## THE FAME OF JESUS SPREADS FAR AND WIDE

**This report concerning Him went out all over** - Why? They had no emails, no texting, no cell phones, no 24 hour news. It was word of mouth. They even though most failed to believe in the Messiah had witnessed something amazing, resurrection of a man from the dead, and they spoke openly about it.

**THOUGHT** - How sad that we who are believers have "witnessed" (with eyes of faith) the greatest resurrection from the dead in all eternity (Jesus rising from the dead as first fruits) and yet often we are mute for the most part! When was the last time you spread the report that a great resurrection has taken place? God forgive us for being timid, reminding us you have not given us a spirit of fear of power and love and sound mind (2Ti 1:7) and in so doing please embolden us by Thy Spirit to speak the truth in love and for the sake of His Name. Amen.

**Robertson** on **report** - That God had raised up a great prophet who had shown his call by raising the dead.

**HCSB** - The fact that the report about this miracle reached Judea looks ahead to Jesus' journey to Jerusalem (Lk 9:51-19:44).

**Vincent** on **report** "of a great prophet who had vindicated his claims by raising the dead."

We see for a similar report in Luke 4:14 "And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and **news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.**"

**Poole** remarks, 'The people here saw His divine power manifestly exerted; for the keys of the clouds, the womb, and the grave, are those keys which their teachers had taught them were kept in God's hand alone.'

**Report** is **logos** which means something said and describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words.

**Surrounding district** (or region)(4066)(**perichoros** from **perí** = around + **choros** = region, place) literally means around a place, i.e., surrounding, neighboring, or around the region. The neighborhood with its inhabitants. **Perichoros** is used often with the preceding definite article (tes) which gives it the sense of describing the surrounding region, the region around, the country roundabout (Mt. 14:35; Mk 1:28; 6:55; Luke 3:3; 4:14, 37; 7:17; 8:37; Acts 14:6). **Perichoros** is used figuratively to describe the inhabitants of a certain region (Mt. 3:5; Lxx - Ge 13:10, 11; Dt. 3:13, 14) All the uses of **perichoros** are in the Gospels (except one use in Acts) and speak primarily of Jesus' renown spreading through the various districts of the land. One use refers to the renown of John the Baptist (Lk 3:3).

**ILLUSTRATION** - George Sweeting, in his book *The No-Guilt Guide for Witnessing*, tells of a man by the name of John Currier, who in 1949, was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life in prison. Later, he was transferred and paroled to work on a farm near Nashville, Tennessee. In 1968, Currier's sentence was terminated, and a letter bearing the good news was sent to him, but John never saw the letter, nor was he told anything about it. Life on that farm was hard and without promise for the future. Yet, John kept doing what he was told even after the farmer for whom he worked had died. Ten years went by. Then a state parole officer learned about Currier's plight, found him, and told him that his sentence had been terminated a decade ago. He was a free man. Sweeting concluded that story by asking, "Would it matter to you if someone sent you an important message—the most important in your life -- and year after year the urgent message was never delivered?" We who have heard the good news and experienced freedom through Christ are responsible to proclaim it to others still enslaved by sin. Are we doing all we can to make sure that people get the message?

**ILLUSTRATION** - **The ripple effect of one saved soul** - Who can ever tell of the powerful effects of the conversion of one soul? The results may not be known for years and years, but they can be mighty. In the fall of 1934, a fiery Southern evangelist named Mordecai Ham, preached for eleven weeks in Charlotte, North Carolina. There a 16 year-old, outwardly religious but inwardly spiritually dead, boy came under the conviction of the Holy Spirit and received new life in Christ. Who can tell of the impact that that boy, **Billy Graham**, has had for the cause of Christ?

In 1929 in Germantown, Pennsylvania, the 17 year-old son of a steel worker became a Christian on his own through reading the Bible. For him, it was a transforming reality that changed his whole outlook, but he thought that he was alone in his experience. He

knew no others who believed as he did. A year later, as he walked down the street, he came to a large tent. Wondering what was happening, he entered and heard an Italian-American man tell of his conversion out of crime and drugs and of how Christ not only freed him from prison, but from sin. When the invitation was given, the young man went forward. He entered in his diary that night, August 19, 1930, "have decided to give my whole life to Christ unconditionally." That young man was **Francis Schaeffer**, whose writing, speaking, and films have had an untold world-wide impact for Christ.

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**William Barclay - In many ways this is the loveliest story in all the gospels. Lk 7:11-17**

**(i) It tells of the pathos and the poignancy of human life.**

The funeral procession would be headed by the band of professional mourners with their flutes and their cymbals, uttering in a kind of frenzy their shrill cries of grief. There is all the ageless sorrow of the world in the austere and simple sentence, "He was his mother's only son and she was a widow."

"Never morning wore to evening  
But some heart did break."

In Shelley's Adonais, his lament for Keats, he writes,

"As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,  
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,  
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow."

Virgil, the Roman poet, in an immortal phrase spoke about "The tears of things"—sunt lacrimae rerum. In the nature of things we live in a world of broken hearts.

**(ii) To the pathos of human life, Luke adds the compassion of Christ.**

Jesus was moved to the depths of his heart. There is no stronger word in the Greek language for sympathy and again and again in the gospel story it is used of Jesus (Matthew 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 8:2).

To the ancient world this must have been a staggering thing. The noblest faith in antiquity was Stoicism. The Stoics believed that the primary characteristic of God was apathy, incapability of feeling. This was their argument. If someone can make another sad or sorry, glad or joyful, it means that, at least for the moment, he can influence that other person. If he can influence him that means that, at least for the moment, he is greater than he. Now, no one can be greater than God; therefore, no one can influence God; therefore, in the nature of things, God must be incapable of feeling.

Here men were presented with the amazing conception of one who was the Son of God being moved to the depths of his being.

"In ev'ry pang that rends the heart.  
The Man of sorrows has a part."

For many that is the most precious thing about the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**(iii) To the compassion of Jesus, Luke adds the power of Jesus.**

He went up and touched the bier. It was not a coffin, for coffins were not used in the east. Very often long wicker-work baskets were used for carrying the body to the grave. It was a dramatic moment. As one great commentator says, "Jesus claimed as his own what death had seized as his prey."

It may well be that here we have a miracle of diagnosis; that Jesus with those keen eyes of his saw that the lad was in a cataleptic trance and saved him from being buried alive, as so many were in Palestine. It does not matter; the fact remains that Jesus claimed for life a lad who had been marked for death. Jesus is not only the Lord of life; he is the Lord of death who himself triumphed over the grave and who has promised that, because he lives, we shall live also (John 14:19). ([Luke 7](#))

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**Luke 7:18 The disciples of John reported to him about all these things.**

**KJV** And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

**BGT** Κα πγγειλαν ω νν ο μαθητα ατο περ π των το των. κα προσκαλεσ μενος δ ο τιν ς τ ν μαθητ ν ατο ω ννης

**NET** John's disciples informed him about all these things.

**CSB** Then John's disciples told him about all these things.



ESV The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John,

NIV John's disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them,

NLT 8 The disciples of John the Baptist told John about everything Jesus was doing. So John called for two of his disciples,

NRS The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples

- Matthew 11:2-6; John 3:26
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:18-20 Why the Believer Doubts, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passage:

Matthew 11:2-6+ Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples 3 and said to Him, “**Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?**” 4 Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: 5the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM. 6 “And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.”

**The disciples of John reported to him about all these things** - All what things? Miraculous works even including raising the dead! One would have thought that raising the dead would have been proof enough that Jesus was God, but that would not prove to be the case.

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#### The explanation of John the Baptist (Luke 7:18-35)

1. John's inquiry (Luke 7:18-20)
2. Jesus' reply (Luke 7:21-23)
3. Jesus' message of John (Luke 7:24-28)
4. The varied response (Luke 7:29-30)
5. Jesus' characterization of Israel (Luke 7:31-35)

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**The disciples ([mathetes](#)) of John reported to him about all these things** - Where was John? Luke does not tell us here but he alluded to John's imprisonment in Lk 3:20. And Matthew 11:2 tells us John was imprisoned, and in fact Luke 7:18–35 is parallel to Mt 11:2–19. The phrase **reported to him** indicates that John's disciples must have kept him updated on Jesus ministry and the response of the Jews to His ministry.

Where was John imprisoned? While the NT does not specifically tell us the extra-biblical evidence is that he was in a dungeon at [Machaerus](#)

[Machaerus in Wikipedia](#) - The fortress Machaerus was originally built by the [Hasmonean](#) king, [Alexander Jannaeus](#) (104 BC-78 BC) in about the year 90 BC,<sup>[6]</sup> serving an important strategic position. Its high, rocky vantage point was difficult to access, and invasions from the east could be easily spotted from there. It was also in line of sight of other Hasmonean (and later Herodian) citadels, so other fortresses could be signaled if trouble appeared on the horizon.<sup>[7]</sup> Nevertheless, it was destroyed by [Pompey's](#) general [Gabinus](#) in 57 BC,<sup>[8]</sup> but later rebuilt by [Herod the Great](#) in 30 BC to be used as a military base to safeguard his territories east of the Jordan.

Upon the death of Herod the Great, the fortress was passed to his son, [Herod Antipas](#), who ruled from 4 BC until 39 AD. It was during this time, at the beginning of the first century AD, that John the Baptist was imprisoned and [beheaded](#) at Machaerus.<sup>[9]</sup>

**Josephus - [The Antiquities of the Jews](#) 18.5.2** “Now, when [many] others came in crowds about him [Antipas], for they were greatly moved [or pleased] by hearing his [John's] words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion (for they seemed ready to do anything he should advise), thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late. Accordingly he was sent a prisoner, out of Herod's

suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death.”

**Luke 7:19 Summoning two of his disciples, John sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?"**

BGT Κα π γγειλαν ω νν ο μαθητα α το περ π ντων το των. κα προσκαλεσ μενος δ ο τιν ς τ ν μαθητ ν α το ω ννης **19** πεμψεν πρ ς τ ν κ ριον λ γων· σ ε ρχ μενος λλον προσδοκ μεν;

KJV And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things. **19** And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, **Art thou he that should come?** or look we for another?

NET John's disciples informed him about all these things. So John called two of his disciples **19** and sent them to Jesus to ask, **"Are you the one who is to come,** or should we look for another?"

CSB Then John's disciples told him about all these things. So John summoned two of his disciples **19** and sent them to the Lord, asking, **"Are You the One who is to come,** or should we look for someone else?"

ESV The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, **19** calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, **"Are you the one who is to come,** or shall we look for another?"

NIV John's disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, **19** he sent them to the Lord to ask, **"Are you the one who was to come,** or should we expect someone else?"

NLT The disciples of John the Baptist told John about everything Jesus was doing. So John called for two of his disciples, **19** and he sent them to the Lord to ask him, **"Are you the Messiah we've been expecting,** or should we keep looking for someone else?"

NRS The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples **19** and sent them to the Lord to ask, **"Are you the one who is to come,** or are we to wait for another?"

- **two of his disciples** Lk 10:1; Josh 2:1; Mk 6:7; Acts 10:7,8; Rev 11:3
- **Are You the Expected One** Ge 3:15; 22:18; 49:10; Deut 18:15-18; Ps 110:1-4; Isa 7:14; 9:6,7; 11:1; Isa 40:10,11; 59:20,21; Jer 23:5,6; Da 9:24-26; Mic 5:2; Hag 2:7; Zech 9:9; Mal 3:1-3; 4:2; Jn 4:25
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:19-20 Are You the Coming One?](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:18-20 Why the Believer Doubts, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 11:2-3+ (**PARALLEL PASSAGE**) Now when John (THE BAPTIST), while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to Him, "Are You the **Expected One**, or shall we look for someone else?"

Mark 9:24+ Immediately the boy's father cried out and began saying, "I do believe; help my unbelief."

Luke 24:11 (APOSTLES DOUBTED BEFORE THE RESURRECTION) But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.

1 Peter 1:10-11 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.

## **ARE YOU THE COMING ONE THE MESSIAH**

**Summoning two of his disciples** ([mathetes](#)), **John sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are You the Expected One** ("the one who is to come"), **or do we look for someone else?"** - The parallel passage in Mt 11:2-3+ is virtually identical, Matthew recording "Now when John (THE BAPTIST), while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to Him, "Are You the **Expected One**, or shall we look for someone else?" The Expected One was a messianic term that referred to the numerous Old Testament prophecies of the Coming Messiah ([See below](#)).

We need to be careful not to be too hard on the doubt expressed by John the Baptist! If one considers how Jesus' own apostles so frequently expressed doubt and/or little faith (Mt 8:26, Mt 14:31, Mt 16:8) concerning Jesus, it is not a shock that John the Baptist might also express doubt, for he was not even with Jesus when He performed His miracles. What is amazing is that some of the apostles even expressed doubt **after** the resurrection for "When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but **some** (THIS MEANS MORE THAN ONE!) **were doubtful.**" (Mt 28:17) So if the apostles would have doubt after His crucifixion and resurrection, it is not surprising that John might express doubt, which in simple terms is a mental struggle to believe something is true ([note](#)). And it is notable that the ones who doubted in the 4 Gospels were always believers (Jn 10:24 was not honest doubt, but true disbelief - doubt is not necessarily synonymous with disbelief)! There is no question that John was a genuine believer in Jesus, for even Jesus following "eulogy" (so to speak) testifies to John's greatness.

**Expected One** ("the one who is to come") was a technical phrase referring to the Messiah and the idea was repeated - Mt 3:11, Mk 1:7, Mk 11:9, Lk 3:16, Lk 13:35; Lk 19:38; Jn 1:27.

**Doubt** - The state of being uncertain about the truth or reliability of something. The etymology of **doubt** is interesting for it derives from Latin *dubitare* "to doubt, question, hesitate, waver in opinion" from **duo** "two" with a sense of "of two minds, undecided between two things."

We can be certain that John knew Jesus was Messiah for the apostle John writes "I (JOHN THE BAPTIST) did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, '**He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.**'" (Jn 1:33+) And then in Mt 3:16-17+ John the Baptist did in fact see and hear the attestation of the other two members of the Trinity -- "After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the **Spirit of God** descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is **My** beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased." So it is clear John knew Jesus was the Messiah, and yet in this section we see he is experiencing some doubts!

[GotQuestions](#) says that "In John 1:29, [John the Baptist](#) declared of Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." John the Baptist also said of Jesus, "The strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie" (John 1:27), and, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" (Matthew 3:14). It is clear that John the Baptist recognized Jesus to be the Messiah and had faith in Him.

[GotQuestions](#) has the following suggestion on why John might have begun to experience doubts that Jesus was the Messiah -- "John was likely expecting the Messiah to bring judgment, wrath, and destruction (Luke 3:7–9+). Jesus didn't seem to fit the bill." Everything John had done in ministry to the point he was arrested was to prepare Israel and the world for the Coming One. John and his followers assumed their Messiah and Savior would come as a mighty ruling King (see John 6:14–15; Luke 19:38) and not a humble servant." Other writers suggest John did not fully comprehend the Messianic plan foretold in the Old Testament, a plan that prophesied there would be two comings of the Messiah, the first for salvation, the second for judgment.

**Spurgeon** on the question of whether John had doubts - It is possible, however, that he did himself have doubts. It is no unusual thing for the bravest hearts to be subject to fits of doubt. Elijah, you remember sat under a juniper tree in the wilderness, "and he requested for himself that he might die," (1Ki 19:4) though he was the man who never was to die (2Ki 2:11-12)! And John, — [the Elijah of the Christian dispensation](#), though a man of iron, was but a man, so he sent two of his disciples to Jesus, saying, "Art Thou He that should come, or look we for Another?"

Recall John's description of Jesus in Luke 3:15–17 - "Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ, 16 John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 "His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." So clearly John the Baptist saw Jesus' ministry as one which included judgment ("baptize...with...fire...burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.") While we cannot be absolutely certain, as several commentators suggest (e.g., [John Martin Bible Knowledge Commentary](#)), it is possible that John was expecting Jesus to be a conquering Messiah Who would set up His Kingdom. And yet here John is languishing in prison! If this was John's messianic expectation (as conquering King), one could understand why he might be having some doubt. Notice that regardless of the cause for John's question (presumably arising from doubt) Jesus did not rebuke John for his question, but responded with an answer that He felt John would clearly understand.

[MacArthur](#) makes the point that "One of the reasons the centurion's faith was so pure and not mingled with **doubt** was because he did not have the same expectations the Jews had. It was the Jews' expectations that tended to create their **doubt**. They had a certain expectation for what Jesus should do, would do, and when He did not do it they were fraught with **doubt**. A Gentile would not have those kinds of expectations, not knowing the Old Testament the same way and not being a part of the Jewish tradition and culture.....And here then we find **doubt** on the part of John the Baptist, the greatest man who ever lived. **Doubt** is very real for

people who believe. It is reality but it is not an acceptable reality and it needs to be addressed. Moses doubted God. Gideon doubted God. Elijah doubted God. Jeremiah even expressed doubt. The apostles doubted and here John the Baptist doubts. We understand that. Coming face-to-face with doubt is coming face-to-face with ourselves. And that's why this is an important passage because it's going to help us to be able to deal with **doubt**. (See also MacArthur's answer to the question [Are you the Coming One?](#))

[The Believer's Study Bible](#) offers 3 considerations for John's doubt - "The Coming One" is a reference to the anticipated Messiah. Some, e.g., Luther, Calvin, and Beza, suggest that John asks this question because his disciples need strengthening; others believe that John's faith is being tested because Jesus does not correspond to his expectation of the Messiah. It is even possible that John is asking if more than one figure is anticipated to fulfill the total messianic expectation, one to be lowly and to suffer and the other to rule and to reign.

**MacArthur** - John was not the sort of man who vacillated (Lk 7:24). We are not to think that his faith was failing or that he had lost confidence in Christ. But with so many unexpected turns of events—John in prison, Christ encountering unbelief and hostility—John wanted reassurance from Christ Himself. That is precisely what Jesus gave him (Lk 7:22, 23)....John the Baptist had introduced Christ as One who would bring a fierce judgment and “burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Mt 3:12). He was understandably confused by the turn of events: he was imprisoned, and Christ was carrying on a ministry of healing, not judgment, in Galilee, far from Jerusalem, the city of the King—and not finding a completely warm reception there (cf. Mt 8:34). John wondered if he had misunderstood Jesus' agenda. It would be wrong to interpret this as a wavering of his faith (Mt 11:7). (See [The MacArthur Bible Commentary](#))

**Henry Morris on Are You the Expected One** - It is generally believed that John, unjustly imprisoned by Herod, was so discouraged because Jesus had not helped him get out of prison that he was about to lose his faith. However, in view of John's strength of faith and character, as confirmed by Christ (Luke 7:28), this seems unlikely. Furthermore, he was filled with the Spirit (Luke 1:15) and had received God's direct revelation that Jesus was, indeed, “He that should come” (John 1:32-34). Consequently, an alternative explanation for John's question should be considered. John had urged his own disciples to follow Jesus (John 1:35-37), knowing that “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30), but some still persisted in loyalty to him instead. While this was admirable in a way, John earnestly desired all his own converts to follow Christ. When he heard of Jesus' miracles, especially His restoring the life of the widow's son (Luke 7:14), he decided the way to accomplish this was to send his disciples to Jesus with this specific question, so they could see and hear for themselves. Jesus answered them merely by referring to the prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-3 (the same Scripture He had used in the Nazareth synagogue which demonstrated His fulfillment of the prophecy by letting them see His works (Luke 7:20-22)). ([Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Ryle** - THE message which John the Baptist sent to our Lord, in these verses, is peculiarly instructing, when we consider the circumstances under which it was sent. John the Baptist was now a prisoner in the hands of Herod. “He heard in the prison the works of Christ.” (Matt. 11:2.) His life was drawing to a close. His opportunities of active usefulness were ended. A long imprisonment, or a violent death, were the only prospects before him. Yet even in these dark days, we see this holy man maintaining his old ground, as a witness to Christ. He is the same man that he was when he cried, “Behold the Lamb of God.” To testify of Christ, was his continual work as a preacher at liberty. To send men to Christ, was one of his last works as a prisoner in chains. We should mark, in these verses, the wise fore-thought which John exhibited about his disciples, before he left the world. He sent some of them to Jesus, with a message of inquiry,—“Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?” He doubtless calculated that they would receive such an answer as would make an indelible impression on their minds. And he was right. They got an answer in deeds, as well as words,—an answer which probably produced a deeper effect than any arguments which they could have heard from their master's lips. We can easily imagine that John the Baptist must have felt much anxiety about the future course of his disciples. He knew their ignorance and weakness in the faith. He knew how natural it was for them to regard the disciples of Jesus with feelings of jealousy and envy. He knew how likely it was that petty party-spirit would creep in among them, and make them keep aloof from Christ when their own master was dead and gone. Against this unhappy state of things he makes provision, as far as possible, while he is yet alive. He sends some of them to Jesus, that they may see for themselves what kind of teacher He is, and not reject Him unseen and unheard. He takes care to supply them with the strongest evidence that our Lord was indeed the Messiah. Like his divine Master, having loved his disciples, he loved them to the end. And now, perceiving that he must soon leave them, he strives to leave them in the best of hands. He does his best to make them acquainted with Christ. **What an instructive lesson we have here for ministers, and parents, and heads of families,**—for all, in short, who have anything to do with the souls of others! We should endeavor, like John the Baptist, to provide for the future spiritual welfare of those we leave behind, when we die. We should often remind them that we cannot always be with them. We should often urge them to beware of the broad way, when we are taken from them, and they are left alone in the world. We should spare no pains to make all, who in any way look up to us, acquainted with Christ. Happy are those ministers and parents, whose consciences can testify on their death-beds, that they have told their hearers and children to go to Jesus and follow Him! (Luke 7)

**Rod Mattoon** entitles Luke 7:19-35 "Double-Checking in the Dungeon" Trials can become so intense that you feel surrounded by

problems. You face them wherever you turn. It is almost like being locked in a dungeon and you can't get out. Do you understand what I am describing? Have you ever been in this predicament? If so, then you can understand what John the Baptist was facing in his life. John the Baptist has been literally imprisoned by King Herod because he took a stand against the king's sin of infidelity with his brother's wife. The [great Machaerus palace complex](#) was the location of this prison. It was built by Herod the Great and was the home of Herod Antipas. Machaerus was located near the end of the southern border of Perea in a [rough, desolate, mountainous area east of the Dead Sea](#). (Ed: According to [Flavius Josephus](#), it is the location of the imprisonment and execution of [John the Baptist](#)) The prison was a small, dank, and dark dungeon below the lavish palace living quarters. It would be a severe trial for anyone, but especially for a man like John the Baptist, who was an outdoor person and was accustomed to much freedom of movement, the fresh air, the sun, and the enjoyment of the view of rippled hills, lush, emerald valleys, and brilliant, azure skies. John's incarceration would stop his public ministry. Unless he was delivered from this dungeon, it would appear that "his opportunities of active usefulness were terminated. All that he could see before him was a long imprisonment, or a violent death." It is in this situation, that doubt, confusion, and concern begin to tug at John's mind. He does some double-checking in the dungeon about the identity of the Lord Jesus Christ and whether He was the Messiah. Great men are not exempt from seasons of doubt. It is hard to find a greater man than John the Baptist, but he still had a time when doubt momentarily clouded out certainties. One reason we know the Bible is God's Word is because it does not camouflage the failures of its greatest men and women. We know about the triumphs of Abraham and Isaac as well as the lies of Abraham and Isaac. We know about the loss of temper by Moses which cost him the privilege of entering the promised land, the adultery and murder by David, the juniper tree experience of Elijah, the pride of Hezekiah, the denials by Peter, and the doubt of John the Baptist. All these events are reported in the Scriptures for our benefit. Romans 15:4—For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. One benefit of the Bible comes from learning from the mistakes of others and realizing great men and women of God were human just like us. They had great strengths and also weaknesses, teaching us that we too, can achieve great things for God, but we also need to be on guard for sin or doubt that can weaken us. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Rod Mattoon on summoning two of his disciples** - I want to note the faithfulness of John's friends. These two men were summoned to go on a mission for John the Baptist. They were helping John double-check with Jesus about His true identity. Was the Lord the Messiah or not? These men were men of integrity. They did not forsake John when the swollen tides of popular opinion went against him, and when he was disgraced by his arrest and imprisonment. They had courageously stuck with the prophet through thick and thin. It appears that John was permitted visitors, but even then, it would take a good deal of courage to venture into the palace of wicked Herod to visit John. By going to his cell, they identified themselves with John the Baptist, yet they did not hesitate to answer his summons. Seeing John could have put themselves in peril. They could have been arrested too, for being his followers or friends. It would depend on the whim of Herod. If John was not permitted visitors, then these disciples were even more brave in that they still got through to John in spite of the dangers. The example of these two men is a challenge to us to be steadfast and faithful to Christ, no matter what the cost. They remind us to not be ashamed of the Lord, even though He is scoffed and ridiculed by a pagan world today. We are to be faithful to Christ. This was Paul's challenge to us. 1 Corinthians 15:58 ([note](#))—Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. The personal pressure John faced must have had something to do with the doubt and confusion he was facing in prison. The rancid stench of the prison, the sounds and scratching of gnawing rats, and the searing heat were taking their toll. This man had baptized Jesus, had seen the heavens open, and had heard the voice of God, yet something caused him to doubt. This was the same man who said, "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#).)

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**Do we look for** ([4328](#)) ([prosdokao](#) from *prós* = towards - adds the idea of "mental direction" to the already existing meaning of the verb + *dokáo* = look for denoting direction of one's mind toward something) means literally to look forward toward, to wait for, to look for, to anticipate. It means to give thought to something that is in the future and the context indicates whether one does this looking/waiting in a hopeful sense, with a longing, with fear (wait with anxiety, live in suspense), or in a neutral state of mind. It describes the attitude saints should have as anticipating, waiting with watchfulness, being in expectation. **Prosdokao** is used frequently by Luke in the Gospel and in Acts - Matt. 11:3; Matt. 24:50; Lk. 1:21; Lk. 3:15; Lk. 7:19; Lk. 7:20; Lk. 8:40; Lk. 12:46; Acts 3:5; Acts 27:33; Acts 28:6; 2 Pet. 3:12; 2 Pet. 3:13; 2 Pet. 3:14.

It is interesting that **prosdokao** was actually used of John himself "Now while the people were in a **state of expectation** and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ" (Lk. 3:15+)

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**QUESTION - [Why did John the Baptist's followers ask Jesus if He was the Coming One in Luke 7:19?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Various names and titles belong to Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the second Person of the triune Godhead. His personal name is [Jesus](#), meaning "savior." [Christ](#) is the Lord's title and means "anointed one." For thousands of years, Israel looked



forward to the arrival of an anointed Savior promised by God and foretold by Israel's prophets (Daniel 9:25–26; Isaiah 9:1–7; 11:1–10; Jeremiah 23:5–6). When John the Baptist arrived on the biblical scene, the time had come. John's mission in preaching repentance (Mark 1:4) was to prepare the people of Israel and the world to receive their long-awaited Savior—the **Coming One, Israel's Messiah**.

Many of John's followers were confused, "waiting expectantly" and "wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. John answered them all, 'I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire'" (Luke 3:15–17). John then pointed his followers to Jesus (John 1:29).

When John was locked up in prison, he sent two disciples to ask Jesus, "**Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?**" (Luke 7:19NKJV). John sought confirmation that Jesus was Israel's Messiah. Was Jesus indeed Israel's deliverer, the Coming One they had been expecting, or should they look for someone else? John was likely expecting the Messiah to bring judgment, wrath, and destruction (Luke 3:7–9). Jesus didn't seem to fit the bill.

Everything John had done in ministry to the point he was arrested was to prepare Israel and the world for the Coming One. John and his followers assumed their Messiah and Savior would come as a mighty ruling King (see John 6:14–15; Luke 19:38) and not a humble servant. Jesus answered the question John had asked from prison: "Go back to John and tell him what you have seen and heard—the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor" (Luke 7:22, NLT).

For now, the Messiah had come to bring the good news of salvation. He had been anointed "to bring Good News to the poor, . . . to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come" (Luke 4:18–19NLT; see also Isaiah 61:1–2). The Messiah would come again to bring judgment in the future, but for the present He was bringing good news.

The apostle Paul explained that the historical Adam served as "a symbol, a representation of Christ, who was yet to come" (Romans 5:14NLT). Citing Habakkuk 2:3, the writer of Hebrews referred to God's promise of a Coming One who would rescue those who trust in Him and live by faith: "For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And my righteous ones will live by faith. But I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away" (Hebrews 10:37–38NLT). In Revelation 1:8, Jesus is "the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end, . . . the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One" (NLT).

Even now, Jesus is the Coming One. His closing words to us in Scripture are "Behold, I am coming soon" (Revelation 22:7, 12, 20, ESV). As believers, we are to live every day with the eager expectation and anticipation of Christ's return (Revelation 16:15; 2 Peter 3:11–14). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### **QUESTION - [Did John the Baptist lose his faith in Jesus as the Messiah \(Matthew 11:3; Luke 7:19\)?](#)**

**ANSWER** - In John 1:29, [John the Baptist](#) declared of Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." John the Baptist also said of Jesus, "The strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie" (John 1:27), and, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" (Matthew 3:14). It is clear that John the Baptist recognized Jesus to be the Messiah and had faith in Him.

However, later, as recorded in Matthew 11:3 and Luke 7:19, John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus to ask Him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" What happened? Why was John the Baptist doubting whether Jesus was the [Messiah](#)?

There are two key points to remember.

First, John the Baptist had been thrown in prison by Herod (Matthew 11:2; Luke 3:20). John had perhaps been in prison for over a year when he asked his question. He likely knew that he would eventually be executed, which he was shortly after he sent the message to Jesus (Matthew 14:1–12).

Second, Jesus was not being received as the Messiah by the majority of Israelites. Jesus was being strongly rejected by the leaders of Israel: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Sanhedrin. Amid these circumstances, it is understandable that John the Baptist would have some doubts.

Jesus' response is telling. He tells John's messengers to inform John of the miracles being performed (Matthew 11:4–5). He then proceeds to praise John the Baptist: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger before



your face, who will prepare your way before you.' Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:7–11; Luke 7:21–27).

There was no rebuke of John the Baptist from Jesus. Jesus knew John, loved John, and understood the trial John was enduring. Jesus' response to John the Baptist's doubt is a perfect example of Matthew 12:20, "[A bruised reed he will not break](#), and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out."[GotQuestions.org](#)

#### Related Resource:

- [Why was Elijah afraid of Jezebel? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [What does the Bible say about doubt?](#)

**ANSWER** - Doubt is an experience common to all people. Even those with faith in God struggle with doubt on occasion and say with the man in Mark 9, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (verse 24). Some people are hindered greatly by doubt; some see it as a springboard to life; and others see it as an obstacle to be overcome. The Bible has something to say about the cause of doubt and provides examples of people who struggled with it.

Classical humanism says that doubt, while uncomfortable, is absolutely essential for life. [René Descartes](#) said, "If you would be a real seeker after truth, it is necessary that at least once in your life you doubt, as far as possible, all things." This is similar to what the founder of Buddhism said: "Doubt everything. Find your own light." If we take their advice, we would have to doubt what they said, which seems rather contradictory. Instead of taking the advice of skeptics and false teachers, we will see what the Bible has to say.

A working definition of doubt is "to lack confidence, to consider unlikely." The very first expression of doubt in the Bible is in Genesis 3, when Satan tempted Eve. God had given a clear command regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and had specified the consequence of disobedience. Satan introduced doubt into Eve's mind when he asked, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" He wanted her to lack confidence in God's command. When she affirmed God's command, including the consequences, Satan replied with a denial, which is a stronger statement of doubt: "You will not surely die." Doubt is a tool of Satan to make us lack confidence in God's Word and consider His judgment unlikely.

Lest we think that we can lay all of the blame on Satan, the Bible clearly holds us accountable for our own doubts. When Zechariah was visited by the angel of the Lord and told that he would have a son (Luke 1:11-17), he doubted the word given to him. He logically assumed that he and his wife were too old to have children, and in response to his doubt, the angel said he would be mute until the day God's promise was fulfilled (Luke 1:18-20). Zechariah doubted God's ability to overcome natural obstacles – many people today share the same doubt. Any time we allow human reason to overshadow faith in God, sinful doubt is the result. No matter how logical our reasons may seem, God has made foolish the wisdom of the world (1 Corinthians 1:20), and His seemingly foolish plans are far wiser than man's. Faith is trusting God even when His plan goes against human reason or experience.

Contrary to the humanistic view that doubt is essential to life, the Bible says that doubt is a destroyer of life. James 1:5-8 tells us that when we ask God for wisdom, we are to ask in faith, without doubt. If we doubt God's ability to respond to our request, what would be the point of asking in the first place? God says that if we doubt while we ask, we will not receive anything from Him, because we are unstable. "He who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind" (James 1:6).

The remedy for doubt is faith, and faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). God gave us the Bible as a testimony of His works in the past, so we will have a reason to trust Him in the present. "I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago" (Psalm 77:11). In order for us to have faith in God, we must study to know what He has said. Once we have an understanding of what God has done in the past, what He has promised us for the present, and what we can expect from Him in the future, we are able to act in faith instead of doubt.

The most famous doubter in the Bible was Thomas, who declared that he would not believe that the Lord was resurrected unless he could see and touch Jesus himself (John 20:25-29). When he later saw Jesus and believed, he received the gentle rebuke, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Hebrews 11:1 says, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." We can have confidence even in the things we cannot see, because God has proven Himself faithful, true, and able. [GotQuestions.org](#)

#### Related Resources from Gotquestions.org

- [How can I avoid being a doubting Thomas?](#)
- [If you doubt your salvation, does that mean you are not truly saved?](#)

- [How can I stop doubting Jesus?](#)

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## Restoring Order Read: Luke 7:11-23

The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings. —Malachi 4:2

As I looked at family members gathered around the Thanksgiving table, I smiled at the range of talents represented. At one end were doctors; at the other end were musicians. Thanks to doctors, human bodies operate more efficiently. Thanks to musicians, beautiful sounds uplift our spirits and soothe troubled minds.

Although their abilities are very different, doctors and musicians rely on the same thing: an orderly universe. Without order, there would be no predictability; without predictability, there would be no music or medicine.

Within our orderly world, disease is a sign that something is “out of order.” Healing is a sign that God will some day restore all things to their original condition (Acts 3:21). When John the Baptist wanted to know whether Jesus was the “Coming One,” Jesus said, “Go and tell John . . . the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Luke 7:20-22). Healing was evidence that Jesus was Israel’s Messiah (Mal. 4:2).

I am thankful for music that soothes my troubled mind and soul, and for medicine that heals my body, because they remind me of the ultimate healing and restoration that Christ is accomplishing. Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What are the prospects for this earth?  
What hope is there for man?  
A world restored through Jesus Christ  
in whom we see God’s plan. —D. De Haan

### Jesus specializes in restoration.

**Luke 7:20 When the men came to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, to ask, 'Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?'"**

**NET** When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?'"

- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:19-20 Are You the Coming One?](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:18-20 Why the Believer Doubts, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

## WILL THE REAL MESSIAH PLEASE STAND UP!

**When the men came to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent (apostello) us to You, to ask** - These were loyal disciples of John who were still willing to identify with him even though he was in a dungeon. We should emulate their example and be Faithful followers of our Lord Jesus unafraid to identify with Him!

**Rod Mattoon** feels like "John's unfulfilled expectations of Jesus led to doubting. How many times have believers become embittered with the Lord because the Lord did not do what they desired or prayed? Jesus told the disciples to pray because He knew that some of them would struggle in their faith when He would be crucified and die."([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**'Are You the Expected One, or do we look for (prosdokao) someone else?** - Look for can also convey the sense of to wait for. The idea is thinking of something that is viewed as yet future and often as in this context includes the sense of longing, expectation and/or anticipation (**THOUGHT** - Does this describe your heart -- longing with expectation and anticipation of seeing Jesus face to face at His Second Coming, cf 1Jn 3:2+). Beginning in Lk 7:21 Jesus gives them "proof" that He is indeed the "Expected One."

**John MacArthur** on John's question which expresses doubt - Honest doubt, on the other hand, is not a bad starting point, but it is a bad finishing point. Even the noblest of saints, such as Abraham (Gen. 17:17), Sarah (Gen. 18:12), Moses (Ex. 3:10-15), Gideon (Judg. 6:13-23, 36-40), Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-14), and the apostles (Matt. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 28:17; Luke 12:28; 24:38; John

20:24-25) had their moments of doubt. The capacity to doubt is an aspect of the rationality that is part of the image of God in man. A healthy skepticism, being able to discern truth from error, is critically important. For example, the Bible commends the noble-minded Bereans, who "received the word" preached by Paul and Silas "with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). Even the greatest man who ever lived up to his time (Matt. 11:11), John the Baptist, struggled with doubt. He had believed that Jesus was the Messiah. He had witnessed the testimony to His identity by the Father and the Spirit when he baptized Jesus. John had declared that Jesus was "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29), and testified concerning His identity to the Jewish leaders (vv. 26-27). But despite his powerful witness to Jesus as the Messiah, doubts had arisen in John's mind regarding His identity. This passage gives the reasons for John's doubt, and Jesus' response to that doubt. (See [MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

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Charles Wesley's great hymn has a description similar to "the Expected One"...

**[Come, thou long expected Jesus.](#)**

Born to set thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us;  
Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation,  
Hope of all the earth Thou art;  
Dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,  
Born a child and yet a King.  
Born to reign in us forever,  
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all sufficient merit,  
Raise us to thy Glorious throne.

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**Sent** (649) **apostello** from apo = from, away from + stello = to withdraw from, avoid) means literally to send away and so to send off, to send forth, to send out. In some context it means to commission as a representative, an ambassador, an envoy. The basic idea is to send forth from one place to another. But the meaning of apostello is more than just to send because it means "to send off on a commission to do something as one's personal representative, with credentials furnished" (Wuest) To send upon some business (Mt. 2:16; 10:5; 20:2). To send away in the sense of to dismiss (Mk 12:3, 4). To send or thrust forth as a sickle among corn (Mk 4:29).

**Apostello in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 1:19; Lk. 1:26; Lk. 4:18; Lk. 4:43; Lk. 7:3; Lk. 7:20; Lk. 7:27; Lk. 9:2; Lk. 9:48; Lk. 9:52; Lk. 10:1; Lk. 10:3; Lk. 10:16; Lk. 11:49; Lk. 13:34; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 14:32; Lk. 19:14; Lk. 19:29; Lk. 19:32; Lk. 20:10; Lk. 20:20; Lk. 22:8; Lk. 22:35; Acts 3:20; Acts 3:26; Acts 5:21; Acts 7:14; Acts 7:34; Acts 7:35; Acts 8:14; Acts 9:17; Acts 9:38; Acts 10:8; Acts 10:17; Acts 10:20; Acts 10:36; Acts 11:11; Acts 11:13; Acts 11:30; Acts 13:15; Acts 15:27; Acts 15:33; Acts 16:35; Acts 16:36; Acts 19:22; Acts 26:17; Acts 28:28;

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**[John MacArthur](#) gives a summary of "the Expected One" which is in essence a recap of many of the OT Messianic Prophecies...**

The Old Testament is filled with references to the Expected One that point unmistakably to Jesus Christ.

1. The Expected One, along with the Father and the Spirit, created everything (Gen. 1:1, 26; cf. John 1:1-3).
2. His coming was first promised to Adam and Eve immediately after the Fall. God reassured them that Satan, who had deceived and devastated them, would himself be destroyed by the Expected One (Gen. 3:15; cf. 1 John 3:8).
3. God's killing of animals to provide clothes to cover Adam and Eve's shame pictured His sacrifice for sin (Gen. 3:21).
4. The Expected One was to be a descendant of Abraham (Gen. 22:18; cf. Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:16), from the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10; cf. Heb. 7:14).
5. The Old Testament priest Melchizedek ("king of righteousness"; Heb. 7:2) pictured the Expected One in that his lack of a recorded genealogy symbolized Christ's perpetual priesthood (cf. Heb. 6:20).
6. Abraham's offering of his son Isaac (Ge 22:1-14) symbolizes the sacrifice of the Expected One; just as God provided a ram as

- a substitute for Isaac, so also is Jesus the sacrifice for sinners (1 John 2:1-2).
7. Joseph, scorned and rejected by his brothers, nevertheless became their deliverer. In the same way Jesus “came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name” (John 1:11-12).
  8. Noah’s ark, a place of refuge from God’s wrath, pictures Jesus—the true ark of safety in whom believers ride safely above the waves of divine judgment.
  9. The angel of the Lord (Gen. 16:7-13; 22:11-18; 31:11-13; Ex. 3:2-6; Jdg. 6:11-23; 13:2-22) was the preincarnate manifestation of the Expected One.
  10. Every spotless, innocent lamb offered as a sacrifice pictured the final sacrifice of the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29; cf. 1 Peter 1:18-19).
  11. The manna in the wilderness foreshadowed the coming of the Expected One, the true bread of life (John 6:31-58).
  12. Aaron and all the high priests who succeeded him pictured the Lord Jesus Christ, the great high priest (Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14-15; 6:20) who was to come.
  13. The fiery serpent in the wilderness, to whom sinners bitten by poisonous snakes looked and were healed, symbolizes Jesus, who declared, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life” (John 3:14-15).
  14. The Expected One was to be the ultimate prophet of whom Moses spoke (Deut. 18:15-19; cf. Acts 3:22-23; 7:37).
  15. Boaz, Ruth’s kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 4:1-12) was a type of Christ, the redeemer of His people (Matt. 1:21).
  16. Like David, the shepherd king, the Messiah would come as a shepherd (John 10:11) and King (Matt. 27:11; John 1:49; Rev. 17:14).
  17. The filling of the temple with God’s glory (1 Kings 8:10-11) provided a glimpse of the glory of Jesus (John 1:14).
  18. The Expected One is the Son of God and King of Psalm 2, the resurrected one of Psalm 16, the crucified one of Psalm 22, the shepherd of Psalm 23, and the betrayed one of Psalm 41.
  19. Isaiah predicted that the Messiah would be a light shining on those who walk in darkness (Isa 9:2), be born of a virgin (Isa 7:14), bear exalted titles (9:6), be God with us (Isa 7:14; cf. Matt. 1:23), be a descendant of David (Isa 11:1), and sit on his throne (Isa 9:7). Isaiah also described the crucifixion of the Messiah and its profound theological implications in Isaiah 53.
  20. The rest of the prophets filled in other details concerning Jesus, the Expected One. Micah predicted His birth in Bethlehem (5:2); Jeremiah, Herod’s slaughter of the innocent male babies (Jer 31:15; cf. Matt. 2:17-18); Hosea, the flight of Joseph, Mary and Jesus into Egypt (Hos 11:1; cf. Matt. 2:15); Joel saw that through the coming of the Expected One the Spirit of God would be poured out (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Acts 2:16-18); Daniel predicted His death (Da 9:26); Zechariah predicted the triumphal entry (Zech 9:9), the exact amount Judas would receive for betraying Jesus (Zech 11:12-13), the piercing of Jesus’ side (Zech 12:10), and the disciples’ forsaking of Him (Zech 13:7).

#### Related Resource:

- See Messianic Prophecies

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In his great little apologetic book [More than a Carpenter \(see free online\)](#) in chapter 9 "**Will the Real Messiah Please Stand Up**" Josh McDowell writes...

In the Old Testament there are sixty major messianic prophecies and approximately 270 ramifications that were fulfilled in one person, Jesus Christ. It is helpful to look at all these predictions fulfilled in Christ as his "address." You've probably never realized how important the details of your name and address are—and yet these details set you apart from the four billion other people who also inhabit this planet. With even greater detail, God wrote an "address" in history to single out his Son, the Messiah, the Savior of mankind, from anyone who has ever lived in history—past, present, and future. The specifics of this "address" can be found in the Old Testament, a document written over a period of 1,000 years which contains over 300 references to his coming. Using the science of probability, we find the chances of just forty-eight of these prophecies being fulfilled in one person to be only one in ten to the 157th power. The task of matching up God's address with one man is further complicated by the fact that all the prophecies of the Messiah were made at least 400 years before he was to appear. Some might disagree and say that these prophecies were written down after the time of Christ and fabricated to coincide with his life. This might sound feasible until you realize that the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, was translated around 150-200 B.C. This Greek translation shows that there was at least a two hundred-year gap between the prophecies being recorded and their fulfillment in Christ. Certainly God was writing an "address" in history that only the Messiah could fulfill. There have been approximately forty major claims by men to be the Jewish Messiah. But only one—Jesus Christ—appealed to fulfilled prophecy to substantiate his claims, and only his credentials back up those

claims.

What were some of those details? And what events had to precede and coincide with the appearance of God's Son? To begin, we need to go way back to Genesis 3:15. Here we have the first messianic prophecy. In all of Scripture, only one Man was "born of the seed of a woman"—all others are born of the seed of a man. Here is one who will come into the world and undo the works of Satan ("bruise his head"). In Genesis 9 and Genesis 10 God narrowed the "address" down further. Noah had three sons, Shem, Japheth, and Ham. Today all of the nations of the world can be traced back to these three men. But in this statement, God effectively eliminated two-thirds of them from the line of Messiahship. The Messiah will come through the lineage of Shem. Then, continuing on down to the year 2000 B.c., we find God calling a man named Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees. With Abraham, God became still more specific, stating that the Messiah will be one of his descendants.<sup>1</sup> All the families of the earth will be blessed through Abraham. When Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael, many of Abraham's descendants were eliminated when God selected his second son, Isaac.<sup>2</sup> Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau, and then God chose the line of Jacob.<sup>3</sup> Jacob had twelve sons, out of whom developed the twelve tribes of Israel. Then God singled out the tribe of Judah for Messiahship and eliminated  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the Israelite tribes. And of all the family lines within Judah's tribe, the line of Jesse was the divine choice.<sup>4</sup> One can see the probability building. Jesse had eight children and in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and Jeremiah 23:5 God eliminated  $\frac{7}{8}$  of Jesse's family line: we read that God's Man will not only be of the seed of a woman, the lineage of Shem, the race of the Jews, the line of Isaac, the line of Jacob, the tribe of Judah, but that he will also be of the house of David. A prophecy dating 1012 B.c.s also predicts that this Man's hands and feet will be pierced (i.e., he will be crucified). This description was written 800 years before crucifixion was put into effect by the Romans. Isaiah 7:14 adds that he will be born of a virgin: a natural birth of unnatural conception, a criterion beyond human planning and control. Several prophecies recorded in Isaiah and the Psalms describe the social climate and response that God's man will encounter: his own people, the Jews, will reject him and the Gentiles will believe in him. There will be a forerunner for him (Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1), a voice in the wilderness, one preparing the way before the Lord, a John the Baptist.

**THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER** Notice, too, the seven ramifications of a prophecy<sup>5</sup> that narrows the drama down even further. Here God indicates that the Messiah will (1) be betrayed, (2) by a friend, (3) for thirty pieces, (4) of silver, and that it will be (5) cast on the floor, (6) of the temple, and (7) used to buy a potter's field. In Micah 5:2 God eliminated all the cities of the world and selected Bethlehem, with less than 1,000 people, as the Messiah's birthplace. Then through a series of prophecies he even defined the time sequence that would set his Man apart. For example, Malachi 3:1 and four other Old Testament verses<sup>6</sup> require the Messiah to come while the temple of Jerusalem is still standing. This is of great significance when we realize that the temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 and has not since been rebuilt. The precise lineage; the place, time, and manner of birth; people's reactions, the betrayal; the manner of death. These are just a fragment of the hundreds of details that made up the "address" to identify God's Son, the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

**OBJECTION: SUCH FULFILLED PROPHECY WAS COINCIDENTAL** "Why, you could find some of these prophecies fulfilled in Kennedy, King, Nasser, etc.," replies a critic. Yes, one could possibly find one or two prophecies fulfilled in other men, but not all sixty major prophecies and 270 ramifications. In fact, if you can find someone, other than Jesus, either living or dead, who can fulfill only half of the predictions concerning Messiah which are given in Messiah in Both Testaments by Fred John Meldau, the Christian Victory Publishing Company of Denver is ready to give you a \$1,000 reward. II. Harold Hartzler, of the American Scientific Affiliation, in the foreword of a book by Peter W. Stoner writes: "The manuscript for Science Speaks has been carefully reviewed by a committee of the American Scientific Affiliation members and by the Executive Council of the same group and has been found, in general, to be dependable and accurate in regard to the scientific material presented. The mathematical analysis included is based upon principles of probability which are thoroughly sound, and Professor Stoner has applied these principles in a proper and convincing way." The following probabilities are taken from that book to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability. Stoner says that by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight prophecies, "we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th power." That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that "we take 100,000,000,000,000,000 silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight

prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom. "Now these prophecies were either given by inspiration of God or the prophets just wrote them as they thought they should be. In such a case the prophets had just one chance in 10 to the 17th power of having them come true in any man, but they all came true in Christ. "This means that the fulfillment of these eight prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of those prophecies to a definiteness which lacks only one chance in 10<sup>17</sup> of being absolute."<sup>9</sup>

**ANOTHER OBJECTION** Another objection is that Jesus deliberately attempted to fulfill the Jewish prophecies. This objection seems plausible until we realize that many of the details of the Messiah's coming were totally beyond human control. For example, the place of birth. I can just hear Jesus in Mary's womb as she rode on the donkey: "Mom, we won't make it . . ." When Herod asked the chief priests and scribes, "Where is the Christ to be born?" they said, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet" (Matthew 2:5). The time of his coming. The manner of his birth. Betrayal by Judas and the betrayal price. The manner of his death. The people's reaction, the mocking and spitting, the staring. The casting of dice for his clothes. The non-tearing of his garment, etc. Half the prophecies are beyond his fulfillment. He couldn't work it out to be born of the seed of the woman, the lineage of Shem, the descendants of Abraham, etc. No wonder Jesus and the apostles appealed to fulfilled prophecy to substantiate his claim. Why did God go to all this trouble? I believe he wanted Jesus Christ to have all the credentials he needed when he came into the world. Yet the most exciting thing about Jesus Christ is that he came to change lives. He alone proved correct the hundreds of Old Testament prophecies that described his coming. And he alone can fulfill the greatest prophecy of all for those who will accept it—the promise of new life: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.. Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

**Luke 7:21 At that very time He cured many *people* of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many *who* were blind.**

**KJV** And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

- **plagues** 1 Kings 8:37; Ps 90:7-9; Mark 3:10; 5:29,34; 1 Corinthians 11:30-32; Hebrews 12:6; James 5:14,15
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:19-20 Are You the Coming One?](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:18-20 Why the Believer Doubts, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:21-23 Why the Believer Doubts, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### **Related Passages:**

Mark 3:10 for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him.

Mark 5:29 Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

### **JESUS' MIRACLES VALIDATE HE IS THE MESSIAH**

**At that very time** - At what **time**? The context indicates (1) this is the time when John the Baptist had a doubt and a question as to whether Jesus was the Messiah and (2) secondly the time when his disciples came to query Jesus. This verse gives a summary of what they actually witnessed. Note that the answer is not a letter, email or text (not words), but authenticating actions substantiating that Jesus was indeed the "Expected One," the Messiah.

**Spurgeon** - Our old proverb says that [actions speak louder than words](#), so an answer in his actions would be more eloquent with these inquirers than even an answer in our Lord's own words. He bade them look at the evidences of his Messiahship which he gave them by his miraculous cures, and then he said to them, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard." It would be well if our lives were such that, if any enquired what we were, we should only have to say that they might judge us by what



they had seen and heard in our common everyday life and conversation.

**He cured (therapeuo) many people of diseases (nosos) and afflictions (mastix) and evil (poneros) spirits** - As explained above this verse gives a description of what John's disciples witnessed firsthand, a detail which is not mentioned in Matthew's parallel account Mt 11:2-19+. Jesus answered John's disciples with irrefutable actions not words. As they say "seeing is believing" and that would be an unequivocal testimony for them to present to John the Baptist. **Evil spirits** refers obviously to demon possessed persons. (cf Lk. 8:2; Acts 19:12; Acts 19:13) **Afflictions** would seem to be diseases but of a much more severe degree, for this same word **afflictions (mastix)** actually describes scourging in Acts 22:24 and Heb 11:36. In light of these uses, it seems reasonable to interpret **afflictions** as diseases of a more painful nature.

**Ryle** - Let it be noted that **evil spirits** are here mentioned as an **affliction** distinct from any bodily ailments. Bishop Pearce remarks, "We may conclude that evil spirits are reckoned by St. Luke, (who speaks of distempers with more accuracy than the other evangelists,) as things different from any disorders of the body included in the two former words." (Luke 7)

**Lawrence Richards** - Even John seemed to have expected Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom. To settle his doubts, he sent his followers to put the question to Jesus directly: "Are You the One?" Jesus listed specific healing works John's followers had seen, because the Old Testament declared that in the Messianic Age just such works would be performed! Isaiah 35 says, "Your God will come," and while the passage speaks of divine retribution, it also says, "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 tongue of the dumb shout for joy" (Isa 35:4-6; cf. 61:1-2). The evidence of Christ's works alone was sufficient to identify Him as the Messiah: as Israel's God, come at long last! The answer surely was enough for John. He would set aside his preconceived ideas about how God must work, and simply trust. The other day our Florida lottery reached 22 million dollars. "I'm praying about a ticket," a friend said. "God surely would want one of His own to have that money. Only a Christian could use it wisely." It seems logical, all right. Yet it's an idea of how God must work that is based on human reasoning. Like John of old, you and I must be willing to set aside all preconceived ideas. We have evidence of God's love in the Cross. Now we are to simply trust that what He chooses to do is what's best. By the way. No lottery win for my friend. Yet.

## SIGHT A GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE

**And He gave (charizomai) sight (blepo) to many who were blind (tuphlos)** - "He made a present of seeing." Many in Israel were physically blind in Jesus' day. Sadly many Jews had eyes to see Him, but were spiritually blind to His true identity and purpose to be the Savior of the World. Physical blindness is temporally sad, but spiritual blindness is eternally bad. If you are a believer, your blindness has been cured because He gave you spiritual sight. Praise God. Note that **gave** is the verb **charizomai** which is derived from charis (grace), so it speaks of His gift as a gift of grace. All of God's gifts are the result of His grace, because none of His gifts can be merited, earned or deserved.

**THOUGHT** - Pondering His gifts to each of us should motivate in each of us a continual state of humility and gratitude!

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**Cured (2323) (therapeuo)** from **therapon** = an attendant, servant) means primarily to care for, to wait upon, minister to. It has two main senses in the NT, one speaking of rendering service (Acts 17:25) and the more common use describing medical aspects such as to take care of the sick, to heal, to cure (Matt. 4:24; 12:10; Mark 1:34; Luke 6:7; 10:9), to recover health, to restore. Therapeúō means to heal miraculously in Matt. 4:23, 24; 10:1, 8; Acts 4:14. Providing care to improve a situation.

**To heal or restore** in these passages - Mt 4:24; 8:7, 16; 10:8; 12:15, 22; 14:14; 15:30; 17:16, 18; 19:2; 21:14; Mk 1:34; 3:2; 10; 6:13; Lk 4:23, 40; 10:9; 13:14b; J 5:10; Ac 4:14; 5:16; 8:7; 28:9; Uses of **therapeuo** by Luke - Lk. 4:23; Lk. 4:40; Lk. 5:15; Lk. 6:7; Lk. 6:18; Lk. 7:21; Lk. 8:2; Lk. 8:43; Lk. 9:1; Lk. 9:6; Lk. 10:9; Lk. 13:14; Lk. 14:3; Jn. 5:10; Acts 4:14; Acts 5:16; Acts 8:7; Acts 17:25; Acts 28:9

**Diseases (3554) nosos** means a physical malady, disease, illness. **BDAG** adds it was "frequently viewed in Mediterranean society as socially devaluing." **BDAG** says nosos was also used of moral malady but no uses like that in the NT (secular quote = "the adulterer gives satisfaction to his own **diseased** inclination"). **Liddell-Scott** adds the following on **nosos** - sickness, disease, malady, Hom., etc. II. generally, distress, misery, suffering, sorrow, evil, Hes., Trag. 2. disease of mind, Trag.; i.e. madness, Soph. 3. of states, disorder, sedition, Plat. 4. a plague, bane, of a whirlwind, Soph."

**Nosos** - 11x in NT - Matt. 4:23; Matt. 4:24; Matt. 8:17; Matt. 9:35; Matt. 10:1; Mk. 1:34; Lk. 4:40; Lk. 6:18; Lk. 7:21; Lk. 9:1; Acts 19:12.

**Afflictions (3148) (mastix)** is a whip (used especially to urge on horses or laborers), a scourge (Acts 22:24 = Paul was going to "be examined by scourging"; Heb. 11:36+; 1 Ki 12:11, 14 = "**whips**"; Pr. 26:3 = "a **whip** is for the horse"; Nah 3:2 = "whip").

Figuratively it referred to a condition of great distress, a distressing bodily condition and thus described torment, suffering, illness (Mk 3:10+, Mk 5:29+ Mk 5:34+, Lk 7:21+). In the Septuagint of Ps 32:10 it described a sinner's afflictions ("Many are the **sorrows** [Lxx = mastix] of the wicked") and in this usage would be in essence a "scourge" from God meaning a disease, plague as in Ps 91:10 (cf Ps 39:10 = "Remove Your **plague** from me"; Ps 89:32 "their iniquity with **stripes**"). In a Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 50:6 we read "I gave My back to those who **strike** (Lxx = mastix) Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting."

**Gilbrant** - Just as with the verb mastigoō, the noun mastix retains its classical and Septuagintal meanings in the New Testament. There was some distinction between the Roman method and that of the Jews. The New Testament usage in Acts 22:24 refers to the Roman method in which the person was stripped and tied in a bending posture to a pillar or stretched on a frame. The scourge was made of leather thongs, weighted with sharp pieces of bone or lead, which tore the flesh of both the back and the breast. Eusebius records his having witnessed the suffering of martyrs who died under this treatment. The context of Acts 22:24 reminds the reader that scourging of Roman citizens was prohibited by the Porcian law of 197 B.C. In Hebrews 11:36 mastix is employed of the sufferings of saints in the Old Testament times (cf. also 1 Kings 12:11,14). Among the Hebrews the usual mode, legal or domestic, was that of beating with a rod (cf. 2 Corinthians 11:25) or leather thongs. The figurative usage is "sharp pain, torment, or suffering" sent by God to men as bodily illness or disease (Mark 3:10; 5:29,34; Luke 7:21; cf. Job 5:21; Psalms 39:10; 89:32). The use of a scourge was a legal procedure with slaves, but a free man could not legally be so treated. Mastix is used mostly in the plural in situations concerned with examining someone by scourging (Acts 22:24; Hebrews 11:36; cf. Isaiah 50:6). (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

**Mastix** - 6x -Usage: affliction(2), afflictions(2), scourging(1), scourgings(1). Mk. 3:10; Mk. 5:29; Mk. 5:34; Lk. 7:21; Acts 22:24; Heb. 11:36.

**Mastix** - 19x in Septuagint - 1 Ki. 12:11; 1 Ki. 12:14; 1 Ki. 12:24; 2 Chr. 10:11; 2 Chr. 10:14; Job 5:21; Job 21:9; Ps. 32:10; Ps. 35:15; Ps. 38:17; Ps. 39:10; Ps. 73:4; Ps. 89:32; Ps. 91:10; Prov. 19:29; Prov. 26:3; Isa. 50:6; Jer. 6:7; Nah. 3:2;

**Gilbrant** on Septuagint uses - In classical Greek mastix denotes a "whip, scourge, horsewhip." It is also used metaphorically to mean "scourge, plague; the lash of eloquence" (*Liddell-Scott*). Occasionally in the late Second Century B.C. it was used in the sense of "policeman." Many of the Egyptian gods were pictured as carrying whips. It appears over 25 times in the Septuagint where it is usually used literally of a "whip" (cf. 1 Kings 12:11]; 2 Chronicles 10). Occasionally it is also used metaphorically of "sorrows" (Psalms 32:10; 38:17]). (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

**Vincent** on **mastix** - Lit., scourges. Compare Acts 22:24; Heb. 11:36. Our word **plague** is from πλῆγή, Latin plaga, meaning a blow. Pestilence or disease is thus regarded as a stroke from a divine hand. Πλῆγή is used in classical Greek in this metaphorical sense. Thus Sophocles, "Ajax," 279: "I fear that a calamity (πλῆγή) is really come from heaven (θεο, god)." So of war. Aeschylus, "Persae," 251: "O Persian land, how hath the abundant prosperity been destroyed by a single blow (ν μὴ πλῆγ). The word here, scourges, carries the same idea.

**Evil** (wicked, bad) (4190) **poneros** is one of two Greek words for "evil" the other being **kakos** describing evil in abstract or one's essential character, whereas **poneros** is stronger than **kakos** and describes active opposition to good, a desire to do harm. Thus it is fitting that Satan's other name is "the evil one" (ho **poneros**). It is interesting that of the 4 Gospel writers, only Luke uses the phrase "**evil spirit**" - (Luke 7:21 Luke 8:2 Acts 19:12 Acts 19:13 Acts 19:15 Acts 19:16) **Poneros** malignant character, pernicious (see Webster 1828 definition below), that which is morally or socially worthless, wicked, base, bad, degenerate. **Poneros** denotes determined, aggressive, and fervent evil that actively opposes what is good. **Poneros** is not just bad in character (like **kakos**), but bad in effect (injurious)!

**Poneros in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 3:19; Lk. 6:22; Lk. 6:35; Lk. 6:45; Lk. 7:21; Lk. 8:2; Lk. 11:13; Lk. 11:26; Lk. 11:29; Lk. 11:34; Lk. 19:22; Jn. 17:15; Acts 17:5; Acts 18:14; Acts 19:12; Acts 19:13; Acts 19:15; Acts 19:16; Acts 25:18; Acts 28:21;

**He gave** (5483) (**charizomai** from **charis** = grace, undeserved merit or favor) has the basic meaning of to give. To grant as a favor. To give gratuitously, generously, graciously and in kindness. It means to bestow as a gift of grace or out of grace. To give out of grace. To give help to those who don't deserve it. To show grace by providing undeserved help to someone unworthy (see Eph 4:32)

**Charizomai** - 19v in NT - Lk. 7:21; Lk. 7:42; Lk. 7:43; Acts 3:14; Acts 25:11; Acts 25:16; Acts 27:24; Rom. 8:32; 1 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 2:7; 2 Co. 2:10; 2 Co. 12:13; Gal. 3:18; Eph. 4:32; Phil. 1:29; Phil. 2:9; Col. 2:13; Col. 3:13; Phile 1:22

**Sight** (991)(**blepo**) in the present tense (continually able to see and in Lk 7:21 the verb form is used as a noun.

**Blepo in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 6:41; Lk. 6:42; Lk. 7:21; Lk. 7:44; Lk. 8:10; Lk. 8:16; Lk. 8:18; Lk. 9:62; Lk. 10:23; Lk. 10:24; Lk. 11:33; Lk. 21:8; Lk. 21:30; Lk. 24:12; Acts 1:9; Acts 1:11; Acts 2:33; Acts 3:4; Acts 4:14; Acts 8:6; Acts 9:8; Acts 9:9; Acts 12:9; Acts 13:11; Acts 13:40; Acts 27:12; Acts 28:26;

**Blind** (5185)(**tuphlos** from tuphlóo = envelop with smoke, be unable to see clearly) can refer to literal blindness (Mt 9:27, 28; 11:5; 12:22; Lk 7:21, 22; Jn 9:1, 2, 3.; Acts 13:11 Lv 19:14; Job 29:15) but more often is used to describe spiritual blindness. Figuratively then tuphlos picture one's mind as blind, ignorant, stupid, slow of understanding, being unable to understand, incapable of comprehending (see Mt 15:14; 23:16, 17, 19, 24, 26; Lk 4:18; Jn 9:39,40,41; Ro 2:19; 2Pe 1:9; Rev 3:17; Isa 42:16,18,19; 43:8) This sense speaks of both mental and spiritual blindness, often the result of self-deception so that one is unable to understand (spiritual truth). The Greek writers used tuphlos to describe those who were "mentally blind".

Luke's uses of **tuphlos** - Lk. 4:18; 6:39; 7:21, 22; 14:13, 21; 18:35;

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## **Rod Mattoon applies this section on John's questions from a dungeon -**

At this point I want to stop and ask, "Are you in a dungeon right now and facing some doubts in your life about the Lord and His Word? Do you doubt His awareness of your problems, His ability to provide solutions, or the accuracy of His promises?" You may ask, "Would a Christian ever do this?" Oh my, you better believe it. Fear can do a number on all of us. You may not feel hesitant or doubtful now, but you might later. Fear can grip your heart like a cold hand with icy fingers, leaving you with chills down your spine. You may not entertain these thoughts, doubts, or concerns, but others do. Let me say that God wants us to be people of faith and stability, especially when we pray. James 1:6—But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. James states that we are not to "waver" when we pray. The word "wavering" is from the Greek word diakrino which means "hesitating, doubting, or staggering." This is NOT to characterize our praying. Some call this "drunken praying" because the person staggers like a drunk at the promises of God and His ability to answer our prayers. His faith is weak. The person who goes to the Lord for wisdom, and then rushes to one person after another for advice, like a pinball bouncing from one bumper to another, and tries one scheme after another without God's direction, makes a mockery of his prayer for wisdom.

What causes us to waver or doubt and how do we deal with it? What causes us to double-check God and His Word in our dungeons? The Bible gives us some answers.

### **Causes of Double-Checking or Doubt**

#### 1. Suppositions or Expectations That Are Unfulfilled

Luke 7:20—When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

As we noted earlier, John's unfulfilled expectations of Jesus led to doubting. How many times have believers become embittered with the Lord because the Lord did not do what they desired or prayed?

#### 2. Skepticism:

Luke 1:18-20—And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. [19] And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. [20] And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

When we get cynical like Scrooge, we become doubtful. We start getting the attitude, "Sure, I've heard this before. Humbug!"

#### 3. Society's Wisdom and Reasoning:

1 Corinthians 1:18, 19—For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

The unbelief of unsaved people can intimidate the belief of believers if they are not careful. Don't listen to their skepticism.

#### 4. Spiritual Instability:

James 1:6, 7, 8—But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

Make up your mind to believe God and follow Him.

5. Small Faith:

Matthew 14:31—And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

6. Satan:

Genesis 3:4—And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

Satan desires to get us to question and doubt God's Word. His voice may seem logical like the argument of a trial lawyer or it may be seductive like a beautiful woman's whisper in your ear. No matter how Satan may tempt you, mark it down, he is powerful and will lead you astray if you are not careful. Do not underestimate his strength, and your weakness.

B. Conquering Doubt and the Urge to Double-Check God

1. Search the Scriptures:

Acts 17:11, 12—These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

2. Serve the Lord:

John 7:17—If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

3. The Scriptures Are to Be Believed:

Luke 16:27-31... Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: [28] For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. [29] Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. [30] And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. [31] And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

4. Substantiate the Lord's Power:

Malachi 3:10—Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

5. Supplications Are to Be Made to the Lord:

1 Timothy 2:8—I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.  
([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Luke 7:22 And He answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.**

**KJV** Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

- **Go** John 1:46
- **how** Lk 7:21; 18:35-43; Job 29:15; Ps 146:8; Isaiah 29:18,19; 32:3,4; 35:5,6; Isaiah 42:6,7,16; 61:1-3; Jeremiah 31:8; Matthew 9:28-30; 21:14; John 9:30-33; Acts 26:18
- **the lame** Matthew 15:30,31; Acts 3:2-8; 8:7; 14:8-10
- **the lepers** Lk 5:12-15; 17:12-19
- **the deaf** Isaiah 43:8; Mark 7:32-37
- **the dead** Lk 7:14,15; 8:53-55

- to Lk 4:18; Zephaniah 3:12; James 2:5
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:21-23 Why the Believer Doubts, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 11:4-5+ (**VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL TO LUKE'S VERSION**) Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report ([apaggello](#)) to John what you hear and see: 5 the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.

Matthew 5:3+ "Blessed are the **poor** in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Isaiah 35:5-6+ Then the eyes of the blind will be opened And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. 6Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness And streams in the Arabah.

**Steven Cole** comments - Isaiah 35:5 prophesied that Messiah would do such (**blind receive sight**), and Jesus had cited that reference when he told the messengers of John the Baptist, "*Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them*" (Lk 7:22-23). **In the Bible, only Jesus opened the eyes of the blind, and there are more of His recorded miracles in this category than any other. It shows Him to be the promised Messiah.** ([When Jesus Passes By](#))

Isaiah 42:7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.

Isaiah 61:1-2+ The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; 2 To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,

### JESUS' ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

The actions were those that were expected to be performed by the Messiah (See Isaiah passages above) and Jesus was actively carrying them out leaving no doubt about His identity.

**And He answered and said to them, "Go and report ([apaggello](#)) to John what you have seen and heard** - John's disciples were to give a witness which would include not only things they heard, but also things they personally saw. It is notable that He did not answer "I am the Messiah." He answered with actions that one would expect to be associated with the Messiah.

**NET Note on what you have seen and heard** - The following activities all paraphrase various OT descriptions of the time of promised salvation: Isa 35:5-6; 26:19; 29:18-19; 61:1. Jesus is answering not by acknowledging a title, but by pointing to the nature of his works, thus indicating the nature of the time.

**the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed ([katharizo](#)), and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up** - These are Messianic prophetic promises (cf Isa 35:5-6+, Isa 42:7, Isa 61:1-2+) which further support that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. John knew the OT and knew these prophecies spoke of the "Expected One." The days of salvation foretold by Isaiah had indeed commenced, and would be consummated when Christ returns to establish His Messianic kingdom ([Millennium](#)).

**Blind receive sight** - (Lk 4:18+; Lk 18:35-43+) This quote is taken by Jesus from Isaiah 35:5-6+ Then **the eyes of the blind will be opened** And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness And streams in the Arabah. **Lame walk** (Lk 5:17-25+). **Lepers are cleansed** (Lk 5:12-16+; Lk 17:11-19+) **Deaf hear** (cf. Isa. 29:18; 35:5; 42:18). **Dead are raised** (Luke 7:11-17; 8:40-56; cf. Acts 9:36-43) Augustine, in his sermon on this miracle, says: "Who knows how many dead the Lord raised visibly? For all the things that he did are not written. John tells us this. So then there were without doubt many others raised." (see John 21:25)

**IVP Background Commentary** - Some teachers compared the blind, lame and lepers to the dead because they had no hope of recovery.



**The POOR ([ptochos](#)) HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM ([euaggelizo/euangelizo](#))** Luke 4:18; 6:20; 14:13, 21).- Jesus is quoting from Isaiah 61:1+. In Luke 4:18+ Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1-2a stopping at the favorable year (His first coming) because "the day of vengeance" was a prophecy to be fulfilled at His Second Coming.

**Spurgeon** - According to our Lord's testimony, the preaching of the gospel to the poor is as great a proof of his Messiahship as the raising of the dead. Then how highly it ought to be prized by them, and how glad should they be who have the gospel now preached freely in their hearing!

**Barclay** - Note the proof that Jesus offered. He pointed at the facts. The sick and the suffering and the humble poor were experiencing the power and hearing the word of the Good News. Here is a point which is seldom realized—this is not the answer John expected. If Jesus was God's anointed one, John would have expected him to say, "My armies are massing. Caesarea, the headquarters of the Roman government, is about to fall. The sinners are being obliterated. And judgment has begun." He would have expected Jesus to say, "The wrath of God is on the march." but Jesus said, "The mercy of God is here." Let us remember that where pain is soothed and sorrow turned to joy, where suffering and death are vanquished, there is the kingdom of God. Jesus's answer was, "Go back and tell John that the love of God is here." ([Luke 7](#))

**Ryle on Go and report to John what you have seen and heard** - We should mark in these verses, the peculiar answer which the disciples of John received from our Lord. We are told that "in the same hour He cured many of their infirmities and plagues." And then, "He said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard." He makes no formal declaration that he is the Messiah that was to come. He simply supplies the messengers with facts to repeat to their master, and sends them away. He knew well how John the Baptist would employ these facts. He would say to his disciples, "Behold in him who worked these miracles, the prophet greater than Moses.—This is he whom you must hear and follow, when I am dead.—This is indeed the Christ." (Luke 7)

**THOUGHT - Ryle has a very interesting application of Jesus' answer to John's disciples** - Our Lord's reply to John's disciples, contains a great practical lesson, which we shall do well to remember. It teaches us that the right way to test the value of Churches and ministers, is to examine the works they do for God, and the fruits they bring forth. Would we know whether a Church is true and trustworthy?—Would we know whether a minister is really called of God, and sound in the faith?—We must apply the old rule of Scripture, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." As Christ would be known by His works and doctrine, so must true Churches of Christ, and true ministers of Christ. When the dead in sin are not quickened, and the blind are not restored to sight, and the poor have no glad tidings proclaimed to them, we may generally suspect that Christ's presence is wanting. Where He is, He will be seen and heard. Where He is, there will not only be profession, forms, ceremonies, and a show of religion. There will be actual, visible work in hearts and lives. (Luke 7)

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Report (declare, tell, announce, proclaim) ([518](#)) [apaggello](#)

**Cleansed** ([2511](#))([katharizo](#) from *katharos* = pure, clean, without stain or spot; English words - catharsis = emotional or physical purging, cathartic = substance used to induce a purging, Cathar = member of a medieval sect which sought the purging of evil from its members) means to make clean by taking away an undesirable part. To cleanse from filth or impurity. [Click here \(and here\)](#) for more background on the important Biblical concept of clean and cleansing.

**Poor** ([4434](#))([ptochos](#) from *ptosso* = crouch, cringe, cower down or hide oneself for fear, a picture of one crouching and cowering like a beggar with a tin cup to receive the pennies dropped in!) is an adjective which describes one who crouches and cowers and is used as a noun to mean beggar. These poor were unable to meet their basic needs and so were forced to depend on others or on society. Classical Greek used the *ptochos* to refer to a person reduced to total destitution, who crouched in a corner begging. As he held out one hand for alms he often hid his face with the other hand, because he was ashamed of being recognized. *Ptochos* describes not simply honest poverty, and the struggle of the laboring man to make ends meet but also describes abject poverty, which has literally nothing and which is in imminent danger of real starvation. *Ptochos* focuses on a state of dependence.

Uses of **ptochos** by Luke - Lk. 4:18; Lk. 6:20; Lk. 7:22; Lk. 14:13; Lk. 14:21; Lk. 16:20; Lk. 16:22; Lk. 18:22; Lk. 19:8; Lk. 21:3;

**Preached** (the gospel, good news)([2097](#))([euaggelizo/euangelizo](#) from *eu* = good, well + *aggéllō* = proclaim, tell; English = evangelize) means to announce good news concerning something. *Euaggelizo* was often used in the [Septuagint](#) for preaching a glad or joyful message (cf. 1Sam. 31:9; 2 Sa 1:20; 4:10). *Euaggelizo/euangelizo* in its original sense could be used to refer to a declaration of any kind of good news, but in the NT it refers especially to the glad tidings of the coming kingdom of God and of salvation obtained through Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Most of NT uses of *euaggelizo* are translated "preach" or "preach the gospel," whichever fits more smoothly into the context.

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## It's Okay To Ask

Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, . . . the poor have the gospel preached to them. —Luke 7:22

It's perfectly natural for fear and doubt to creep into our minds at times. "What if heaven isn't real after all?" "Is Jesus the only way to God?" "Will it matter in the end how I lived my life?" Questions like these should not be given quick or trite responses.

John the Baptist, whom Jesus called the greatest of the prophets (Luke 7:28), had questions shortly before his execution (v.19). He wanted to know for sure that Jesus was the Messiah and that his own ministry had therefore been valid.

Jesus' response is a comforting model for us to use. Instead of discounting the doubt or criticizing John, Jesus pointed to the miracles He was doing. As eyewitnesses, John's disciples could return with vivid assurances for their mentor. But He did more—He used words and phrases (v.22) drawn from Isaiah's prophecies of the coming Messiah (Isa. 35:4-6; 61:1), which were certain to be familiar to John.

Then, turning to the crowd, Jesus praised John (Luke 7:24-28), removing any doubt that He was offended by John's need for reassurance after all he had seen (Matt. 3:13-17).

Questioning and doubting, both understandable human responses, are opportunities to remind, reassure, and comfort those who are shaken by uncertainty. By Randy Kilgore [Used by permission from Our Daily Bread](#)

When my poor soul in doubt is cast  
And darkness hides the Savior's face,  
His love and truth still hold me fast  
For He will keep me by His grace.  
—D. De Haan

Reassurance comes as we doubt our doubts and believe our beliefs.

### Luke 7:23 "Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me."

**KJV** And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

**BGT** κα μα κ ρ ι ς σ π ι ν ς ν μ σ κ α ν δ α λ ι σ θ ν μ ο .

**ERV** And blessed is he, whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me.

**ESV** And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

**NIV** Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

**NLT** And tell him, 'God blesses those who do not turn away because of me. ' "

**YLT** and happy is he whoever may not be stumbled in me.'

**NJB** and blessed is anyone who does not find me a cause of falling.'

**ASV** And blessed is he, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me.

- Lk 2:34; Isaiah 8:14,15; Matthew 11:6; 13:57,58; John 6:60-66; Romans 9:32,33; 1 Corinthians 1:21-28; 2:14; 1 Peter 2:7,8
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:21-23 Why the Believer Doubts, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

## CHRIST THE STUMBLING BLOCK

**Blessed** ([makarios](#)) **is he who does not take offense** ([skandalizo](#)) **at Me** - To whom is this addressed? One might say this was for John's ears, but as stated earlier, it is clear that John believed, even though he had doubts. It is not as clear what was the condition of John's disciples. And so in context this this beatitude would seem to be addressed to John's disciples. Jesus promises them a blessing if they are not scandalized by Him, but believe in Him as the Messiah. In the next verse the disciples of John depart. Take offense at Me is paraphrased by the Jerusalem Bible "anyone who does not find me a cause of falling." The idea of the

verb [skandalizo](#) is literally "to be trapped," and thus to "be ensnare away from," the Truth. The interpretation of this verse is not straightforward. Was this to be spoken only to John or was it to be to any who might be offended by Him? Commentators are not in agreement.

**Norman Crawford** - The verb scandalizō (to take offence) is the word from which we get our English word scandal. It means to shock or offend moral feelings and to bring disgrace by shameful actions. This is the word that Paul uses about the attitude of unbelieving Jews toward the cross; it was an offence to them (1 Cor 1:23). Believers bore reproach and persecution because of "the offence of the cross" (Gal 5:11). In a day when a cross is a symbol of religious veneration, we can scarcely grasp what a scandal it presented to the minds of unbelieving Jews, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Deut 21:23; Gal 3:13). The Lord Jesus ever had the cross before Him, and we do not go beyond the meaning of the text when we suggest that the Lord is describing those who would stumble at Him, reject him and eventually crucify Him. We should never accuse John of taking such offence.

([What the Bible Teaches: Luke](#))

**William MacDonald** - This may be understood as a rebuke; John had been offended by the failure of Jesus to seize the reins of authority and to manifest Himself in the way people expected. But it may also be interpreted as an exhortation to John not to abandon his faith. C. G. Moore says: *I know of no hours more trying to faith than those in which Jesus multiplies evidences of His power and does not use it ... There is need of much grace when the messengers come back saying: "Yes, He has all the power, and is all that you have thought; but He said not a word about taking you out of prison...." No explanation; faith nourished; prison doors left closed; and then the message, "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." That is all!* (Borrow [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Merrill Tenney on take offense** - And he appealed to John not to be offended (v. 23) by the way he conducted his ministry. "Offend" (Gr. skandalizo) has the meaning of "cause to go astray," or "cause to err," rather than "to displease." (Wycliffe Bible Commentary - [Luke Comments](#))

**Cornerstone Biblical Commentary** - John's understandable doubt and disappointment could be safely put aside, for the telltale messianic signs were plainly in evidence. Jesus did not want John to give in to doubt and despair. The messengers were to tell him, "God blesses those who do not turn away because of me" (7:23). (See [Luke, Acts](#))

**Liefeld** comments "Jesus pronounces a blessing (v. 23) on the person who accepts his credentials rather than being trapped (*skandalisthe*, NIV, "fall away") because of a false evaluation of Jesus. (Borrow [The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**J C Ryle** - We should mark, lastly, in these verses, the solemn warning which our Lord gave to John's disciples. He knew the danger in which they were. He knew that they were disposed to question His claim to be the Messiah, because of His lowly appearance. They saw no signs of a king about Him, no riches, no royal apparel, no guards, no courtiers, and no crown. They only saw a man, to all appearance poor as any one of themselves, attended by a few fishermen and publicans. Their pride rebelled at the idea of such an one as this being the Christ! It seemed incredible! There must be some mistake! Such thoughts as these, in all probability, passed through their minds. Our Lord read their hearts, and dismissed them with a searching caution. "Blessed," He said, "is he that is not offended in me."

**THOUGHT**- Ryle applies Jesus warning message - The warning is one that is just as needful now as it was when it was delivered. So long as the world stands, Christ and His Gospel will be a stumbling-block to many. To hear that we are all lost and guilty sinners, and cannot save ourselves,—to hear that we must give up our own righteousness, and trust in One who was crucified between two thieves,—to hear that we must be content to enter heaven side by side with publicans and harlots, and to owe all our salvation to free grace,—this is always offensive to the natural man. Our proud hearts do not like it. We are offended. Let the caution of these verses sink down deeply into our memories. Let us take heed that we are not offended. Let us beware of being stumbled, either by the humbling doctrines of the Gospel, or the holy practice which it enjoins on those who receive it. Secret pride is one of the worst enemies of man. It will prove at least to have been the ruin of thousands of souls. Thousands will be found to have had the offer of salvation, but to have rejected it. They did not like the terms. They would not stoop to "enter in at the strait gate." They would not humbly come as sinners to the throne of grace. In a word, they were offended. And then will appear the deep meaning in our Lord's words, "Blessed is he who shall not be offended in me." (**ED: BUT THEN IT WILL BE TOO LATE!**) (Luke 7)

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**Blessed** (3107) ([makarios](#) from root makar, but others say from mak = large or lengthy) means to be happy, but not in the usual sense of happiness based on positive circumstances. From the Biblical perspective Makarios describes the person who is free from daily cares and worries because his every breath and circumstance is in the hands of His Maker Who gives him such an assurance (such a "blessing"). As discussed below makarios was used to describe the kind of happiness that comes from receiving divine

favor.

**Makarios uses by Luke** - Lk. 1:45; Lk. 6:20; Lk. 6:21; Lk. 6:22; Lk. 7:23; Lk. 10:23; Lk. 11:27; Lk. 11:28; Lk. 12:37; Lk. 12:38; Lk. 12:43; Lk. 14:14; Lk. 14:15; Lk. 23:29; Acts 20:35; Acts 26:2

**Take offense** (4624)(**skandalizo** from **skandalon**= a trap = put a snare or stumbling block in way; English = scandalize = to offend the moral sense of) means to put a snare (in the way), hence to cause to stumble, to give offense. To entrap, trip up, or entice to sin, offend. In Mt 5:29-30-**note** skandalizo is used in the active sense which conveys the idea to cause to do wrong, to entice to commit sin. In the passive sense it means to be led into sin, to be caused to do wrong. In the passive some uses mean to be offended (Mt 11:6), the idea being that one is taking offense at Jesus and/or refusing to believe in Him. Finally, skandalizo can mean to furnish an occasion for some to be shocked, angered, or offended (Mt 17:27). Luke's only other use is Lk 17:2 "It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than that he would cause one of these little ones to **stumble.**" **Robertson** on **skandalizo** in Lk 7:23 - has the double notion of to trip up and to entrap and in the NT always means causing to sin.

Skandalizo is derived from **skandalon** which refers to stick in a trap on which the bait is placed and which springs up and shuts the trap at the touch of the careless, unwary animal. It follows that the idea is to put a stumbling block or impediment in one's way, upon which another may trip and fall. Jesus' point is that anything or anyone that morally traps us (by our senses, visual, touch, and by expansion not excluding the other senses such as hearing), and causes us to fall into sin should be eliminated, radically and quickly. If we do not make every necessary effort to control our surroundings, what we watch and read, who we keep company with and speak with, etc, then those things will control us. If you cannot control something, it needs to be "jettisoned" to keep the boat afloat so to speak.

**Skandalizo** - 27v - cause(1), cause...to stumble(2), causes(2), causes...to stumble(6), fall away(7), falls away(1), led into sin(1), makes...stumble(2), offend(1), offended(1), stumble(3), stumbling(1), take(1), take offense(1), took offense(2). Matt. 5:29; Matt. 5:30; Matt. 11:6; Matt. 13:21; Matt. 13:57; Matt. 15:12; Matt. 17:27; Matt. 18:6; Matt. 18:8; Matt. 18:9; Matt. 24:10; Matt. 26:31; Matt. 26:33; Mk. 4:17; Mk. 6:3; Mk. 9:42; Mk. 9:43; Mk. 9:45; Mk. 9:47; Mk. 14:27; Mk. 14:29; Lk. 7:23; Lk. 17:2; Jn. 6:61; Jn. 16:1; 1 Co. 8:13; 2 Co. 11:29

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### Vance Havner - The Blessing of the Unoffended Luke 7:18-35

JOHN the Baptist, a rugged, outdoor ascetic, found prison life depressing and sent to know whether Jesus really was the Messiah. Great men may know moods of doubt and despondency. Our Lord simply declared that His works proved His mission, then paid John fine tribute. Here, He declared, was no comfortable, fashionable court preacher but a real prophet, and that no greater man had arisen. Yet the humblest believer in the age of grace is greater, in point of privilege, than John who lived under law. The difference is in position, not a matter of moral worth.

Our Lord declared (Matt. 11:12) that the kingdom suffered violence, and the violent took it by force—comparing those who were pressing into the kingdom to soldiers storming a fortress. Verily, the things of God are not for loafers: we must be violently resolute if we are to press into the deeper things; we must be diligent to make our calling and election sure. Then He said John was the Elijah prophesied in Malachi 4:5-6. Meanwhile, the Pharisees were like spoiled children who could not be suited with any kind of preaching, the fasting of John or the feasting of Jesus. But wisdom is vindicated by her children—in the lives of her disciples, in that wise children receive truth in any garb, and in the sense that wisdom is proven by what she does, the results she produces.

### Luke 7:24 When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"

**KJV** And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

- **What** Matthew 11:7,8
- **wilderness** Lk 1:80; 3:2; Matthew 3:1-5; Mark 1:4,5; John 1:23
- **A reed** Genesis 49:4; 2 Corinthians 1:17-20; Ephesians 4:14; James 1:6-8; 2 Peter 2:17; 3:17
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:24-27 The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived. Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

## JESUS EXPLAINS JOHN TO THE CROWD

**When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"** - Jesus is speaking figuratively of John the Baptist who was anything but a weak, slender reed that would be easily blown by the wind. Some take the reed shaken to literally refer to the reeds by the Jordan River. When uncertain, one should always default to the context for the most accurate interpretation. In this case the context actually has two more descriptions of men and suggests a progression from a non-reed-like man, to a non-soft dressed man, and finally to a true prophet. Most other writers agree with this interpretation of the reed as a figurative description of what John was NOT!

As **Spurgeon** said "John could never be compared to a reed shaken with the wind, for he was strong, sturdy, firm, and steadfast. He was not like so many preachers, nowadays, who are swayed by the ever-changing opinion of the age, — the thought of these modern times, — and so prove themselves to be mere reeds shaken with the wind."

**J C Ryle** - THE first point that demands our notice in this passage, is the tender care which Jesus takes of the characters of His faithful servants. He defends the reputation of John the Baptist, as soon as his messengers were departed. He saw that the people around him were apt to think lightly of John, partly because he was in prison, partly because of the inquiry which his disciples had just brought. He pleads the cause of His absent friend in warm and strong language. He bids His hearers dismiss from their minds their unworthy doubts and suspicions about this holy man. He tells them that John was no wavering and unstable character, a mere reed shaken by the wind.

**J Vernon McGee** - Was John the Baptist a reed shaken with the wind? Indeed, he was not. John was rough and rugged. He was unshakable.

**William MacDonald** - Whatever Jesus might say to John in private, He had nothing but praise for him in public. When the people had flocked out to the desert near Jordan, what had they expected to find? A fickle, spineless, wavering opportunist? No one could ever accuse John of being a reed shaken by the wind.

**The Bible Knowledge Commentary** Jesus used the occasion of John the Baptist's inquiry to teach the people about John's ministry and to commend him. He noted that John was not convictionless, like a reed blowing in the wind.

**ESV Study Bible** - Reed shaken by the wind suggests something flimsy and uncertain—far from an accurate description of John the Baptist (cf. Mark 1:6). John was more than a prophet: he was the prophet sent to fulfill Mal. 3:1.

**Pulpit Commentary** - When the messengers of John were departed, the Lord, fearful lest the people who had been standing by and listening to the question which the Baptist had put, and his answer, should entertain any disparaging thought of a great and sorely tried saint of God, spoke the following noble testimony concerning that true, faithful witness. It has been termed the funeral oration of John; for not long after it had been spoken he was put to death by Herod Antipas. The imagery was taken from the scenery in the midst of which John the Baptist had principally exercised his ministry — the reedy banks of Jordan. It was surely to see an everyday sight — a weak vacillating man blown to and fro with every wind. John, though his faith failed him for a moment perhaps, was no wavering reed.

**Vincent on To see** - expresses the calm, continuous contemplation of an object which remains before the spectator. Compare John 1:14. Another verb is used in Christ's repetition of the question, Mt 11:8, 9; ὄρεν in the ordinary sense of seeing. The more earnest expression suits the first question.

**Ryle on What did you go out into the wilderness to see?**- Let it be noted that both here and in the two following verses the question is equivalent to a strong and positive affirmation. It is as if our Lord had said, "John the Baptist was not a reed shaken by the wind;"—"was not a man clothed in soft raiment;"—"was not merely a prophet."—Such a form of expression is not uncommon in the Bible. A striking example is to be seen in the famous question, "What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" It is equivalent to saying, "It shall profit him nothing at all." (Luke 7)

**A reed shaken by the wind** - Picture of something flimsy, a far cry from the true picture of John the Baptist who "was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey." (Mk 1:6) In the context of the Roman soldiers mocking and spitting on and beating the head of our Lord, the "reed" is undoubtedly more like a cane, because this same Greek word was used to describe a fishing pole, which gives us some idea of the force of the blows of the strong Roman soldiers on the holy head of our Lord! (Mt 27:30, Mk 15:19)

**Spurgeon** - The wind on the banks of the Jordan, where there are plenty of reeds growing; — did you see a man who would bow before every breath of popular favor or popular wrath? Was John the Baptist such a man as that? No, certainly not.

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**See** (2300)(**theaomai** from *tháomai* =to wonder, from *thaúma* = wonder, admiration <> English = theatrical spectacular performance) means (1) to have an attentive look, to have regard for something, to contemplate, to take in with one's eyes (implying that one is impressed by what he sees - see use in Mt 22:11). *Theaomai* implies an intent contemplative gaze. The point is that it is not a mere glance or quick look, but a long, searching gaze (e.g., Lk 23:55). *Theaomai* describes intelligent beholding, a "careful and deliberate vision which interprets its object" (G. Abbott-Smith). It means to gaze at a show or demonstration or to watch as in a theater. (thus giving us the origin of our English word "*theater*").

**Reed** (2563)(**kalamos**) refers to a flexible stalk or stem of a plant. It refers to the plant itself which is easily shaken (bent or broken) and which sways in the wind (Mt. 11:7; 12:20 from Isa. 42:3; Lk 7:24; 1 Ki 14:15; Job 40:21). *Kalamos* can refer to the stalk which is cut for use, e.g., as a mock scepter in mocking Jesus, a "scepter" the soldiers then took and began to beat our Lord on the head (Mt. 27:29, 30). *Kalamos* describes a measuring reed (rod) in the Revelation and Ezekiel (Rev. 11:1; 21:15, 16; Ezek. 40:3, 5, 6 - see below for all uses in Ezekiel). *Kalamos* was used of reed for writing, (3 John 1:13; Ps. 44:1) which was used on papyrus. Used in medicine for [insufflation](#), etc.

**Kalamos** - 12x in 12v - measuring rod(2), pen(1), reed(8), rod(1).

Matt. 11:7; Matt. 12:20; Matt. 27:29; Matt. 27:30; Matt. 27:48; Mk. 15:19; Mk. 15:36; Lk. 7:24; 3 Jn. 1:13; Rev. 11:1; Rev. 21:15; Rev. 21:16

**Kalamos** - 28x in 22v in the Septuagint -

Exod. 30:23; Job 40:21; Ps. 45:1; Ps. 68:30; Song 4:14; Isa. 19:6; Isa. 35:7; Isa. 42:3; Ezek. 40:3; Ezek. 40:5; Ezek. 40:6; Ezek. 40:7; Ezek. 40:8; Ezek. 41:8; Ezek. 42:12; Ezek. 42:16; Ezek. 42:17; Ezek. 42:18; Ezek. 42:19; Ezek. 42:20;

**Gilbrant** - **Kalamos** was a very common reed grown in water but used extensively for many ordinary purposes. In classical Greek the reed is used as thatch, a flute, a fishing rod, a shaft for an arrow, a pen, a measure, and a measuring rod, a tube for physicians, and a stake for vines (cf. Liddell-Scott). In the Septuagint there are several references to the reeds and water (including a reference to a sweet-smelling reed [Exodus 30:23]) along with two other basic uses both already found in classical usage. Psalm 45:1 refers to the tongue as a reed of a rapid writer and Ezekiel 40–42 has 18 references to the reed meaning both a "measuring rod" and a "particular length of measure." ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Mattoon** - A "**reed**" is the cane-like grass that grows on the banks of the Jordan River. It grew twelve feet high with beautiful blossoms at the top. It was so slender that it yielded to a gust of wind by laying flat and then would stand upright again when the wind ceased. To compare a person to a reed was to say that the person was without moral fiber or courage, easily tossed about by various opinions, never taking a stand on anything. In addition, reeds were everywhere; they were commonplace. Obviously, the people did not flock into the wilderness to see something commonplace, nor did they go to see a weak and fearful person. Instead, the people were attracted by John's fiery preaching and willingness to speak out against sin. John was a man that stood firm and straight, no matter what way the winds of society were blowing. He was like a majestic oak tree that was unmoved by the gale winds of turbulent circumstances. John stood for the truth no matter where others stood or how much pressure was exerted upon him. He refused to compromise with evil, even if it meant he would lose his freedom. The hammer of Hell pounded him on the anvil of conformity, yet the sparks of his life revealed his hardness and unwillingness to compromise or conform to heathen molds and evil expectations. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Robertson** - The vivid questions about the people's interest in John are precisely alike in both Matthew and Luke. (Matthew 11:7,8)

**Ryle** - There is something deeply touching in these sayings of our Lord on behalf of his absent servant. The position which John now occupied as Herod's prisoner was widely different from that which he occupied at the beginning of his ministry. At one time he was the best-known and most popular preacher of his day. There was a time when "there went out to him Jerusalem and all Judæa, —and were baptized in Jordan." (Matt. 3:5.) Now he was a solitary prisoner in Herod's hands, deserted, friendless, and with nothing before him but death. But the want of man's favor is no proof that God is displeased. John the Baptist had one Friend who never failed him and never forsook him,—a Friend whose kindness did not ebb and flow like John's popularity, but was always the same. That Friend was our Lord Jesus Christ.

**THOUGHT** - **There is comfort here for all believers who are suspected, slandered, and falsely accused.** Few are the children of God who do not suffer in this way, at some time or other. The accuser of the brethren knows well that character is one of the points in which he can most easily wound a Christian. He knows well that slanders are easily called into existence, greedily received and propagated, and seldom entirely silenced. Lies and false reports are the chosen weapons by which he labors to injure the Christian's usefulness, and destroy his peace. But let all who are assaulted in their characters rest in the thought that they have an Advocate in heaven who knows their sorrows. That same Jesus who maintained the character of His

imprisoned servant before a Jewish crowd, will never desert any of His people. The world may frown on them. Their names may be cast out as evil by man. But Jesus never changes, and will one day plead their cause before the whole world. (Luke 7)

#### Related Resources:

- [Who was John the Baptist in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Was John the Baptist really Elijah reincarnated? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why was John the Baptist beheaded? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Did John the Baptist lose his faith in Jesus as the Messiah \(Matthew 11:3; Luke 7:19\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who baptized John the Baptist? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [In what way was John the Baptist the greatest \(Matthew 11:11\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the Essenes? Was John the Baptist an Essene? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why did John the Baptist refer to the Pharisees as a brood of vipers? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What was the meaning and importance of the baptism of John the Baptist? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why must Elijah return before the end times \(Malachi 4:5-6\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Luke 7:25 "But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces!"**

**KJV** But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

- **A man** 2 Kings 1:8; Isaiah 59:17; Matthew 3:4; 1 Peter 3:3,4
- **are in** 2 Samuel 19:35; 1 Kings 10:5; Esther 1:3,11; 4:2; 5:1; 8:15; Matthew 6:29
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:24-27 The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

### JOHN'S RUGGED ATTIRE

John would probably not have made the front cover of [GQ \(Gentleman's Quarterly\)](#)!

**But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly([endoxos](#)) clothed and live in luxury ([truphe](#)) are found in royal palaces!** - Probably many in the throng had been among those who went out to John when he was popular at the beginning of his ministry. And so the second point of defending John was that he was not a rich man. Anyone who saw him knew that was the case. He was in a palace of sorts at this very time but in the dungeon of the palace!

**Spurgeon** on a **man dressed in soft clothing**, etc - They do not preach repentance. As is their clothing, so is their doctrine. They try to show a royal road to heaven — a smooth and easy path. But was John the Baptist a preacher of that kind? No, that he was not. John had been preaching in the desert, with all his might warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come. He was no court preacher, but a minister to the multitude, who delivered his heaven-inspired message in his own straightforward earnest style.

**Ryle** - He tells them that John was no mere courtier and hanger-on about king's palaces, though circumstances at the end of his ministry had brought him into connexion with king Herod.

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**Splendidly** ([1741](#))([endoxos](#) from **en** = in + **doxa** = glory) means (1) held in high esteem, honored, of high repute, distinguished, eminent as in 1Co 4:10; Lxx - Gen 34:19, 1 Sa. 9:6; 22:14; Isa. 23:8. (2) BDAG says **endoxos** pertains to "possessing an inherent quality that is not ordinary" and thus glorious or splendid. Of the church, brilliant in purity Eph 5:27 (figuratively free from sin). Of splendid deeds Lk 13:17 (cp Lxx. Ex 34:10; Job 5:9; 9:10; 34:24) **Endoxos** describes clothing which is splendid, fine (Lk 7:25). (3) Finally, **endoxos** speaks of spiritual excellence, that which is glorious, splendid, wonderful (Eph 5:27) including wonderful things, splendid deeds (Lk 13:17; Dt 10:21 = awesome things)

**Live in luxury** ( [5172](#))([truphe](#) from **thrúptō** = to break up or enfeeble by luxury which destroys the integrity of body and mind) means to revel, to carouse, to live a life of luxury, exhibited especially by overindulgence in wine and food. Delicate living, self-indulgence (Luke 7:25; 2 Pet. 2:13; Sept.: Prov. 19:10; Song 7:1).



**KJV** But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

- **A prophet** Lk 1:76; 20:6
- **and** Lk 16:16; Matthew 11:9-14; John 3:26-30; 5:35
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:24-27 The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

## JOHN'S STATUS AS A PROPHET AND "THEN SOME"

**But what did you go out to see? A prophet ([prophetes](#))? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet ([prophetes](#))-**  
After two inaccurate descriptions of John, here Jesus gives an accurate portrayal of the man as a prophet and then some!

Trites has an interesting note that "By repeated use of a rhetorical question ("What did you go out [into the desert] to see?" Lk 7:24, 26, niv), Jesus challenged his hearers to face the serious moral and ethical issues posed by John as an authentic spokesman for God. (See [Luke, Acts](#) Cornerstone Biblical Commentary)

Why was John **more than a prophet**? Because he was sent to fulfill Malachi's prophecy. Malachi 3:1+ prophesied "Behold, I am going to send **My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me.** And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts." John was not only a **prophet** but was the **messenger** who introduced Jesus and the Gospel era.

**POSB** - John was more than a prophet. He was the subject of prophecy as well as the messenger of it. He was the herald who brought the message to the world that the Lord had come. In this John excelled over all other prophets. They only foresaw the Messiah's coming, but John saw Him come. John was the true forerunner. (Borrow [Luke Commentary](#))

**Robertson** on **prophet** - A real prophet will always get a hearing if he has a message from God. He is a for-speaker, forth-teller (προ-φητης [pro-phētēs]). He may or may not be a fore-teller. The main thing is for the prophet to have a message from God which he is willing to tell at whatever cost to himself. The word of God came to John in the wilderness of Judea (Luke 3:2). That made him a prophet. There is a prophetic element in every real preacher of the Gospel. Real prophets become leaders and molders of men.

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**Prophet** (4396) **prophetes** from próphemi = literally to tell beforehand in turn from pró = before, in front of, forth, on behalf of + phemí = speak, tell) is primarily a forth-teller or one who speaks out God's message, primarily to their own generation (EXACTLY WHAT JOHN DID), usually always calling the people to God's truth for them at that moment, often using the phrase "Thus saith the Lord." The prophet is one who speaks before in the sense of proclaim, or the one who speaks for, i.e., in the Name of (God). "As distinct from the sacral figures of pagan antiquity the biblical prophet is not a magician. He does not force God. On the contrary, he is under divine constraint. It is God Who invites, summons, and impels him--e.g., Jer 20:7" (Lamorte and Hawthorne) Although we commonly think of the **prophet** as predicting future events (foretelling) generally this was secondary to his work of forth-telling. When they functioned as predictors or prognosticators, the Biblical prophets foretold the future with 100 percent accuracy. And so if they were correct on the first coming of Messiah, they will be correct on His second coming and on the coming of the antichrist. In sum, forth-telling dealt with current events and fore-telling with future events, but in both the goal is the same -- to call us to trust the Lord and submit to His will for our lives, living in conformity with His Word. Lexham Bible - Prophetes is someone who is specially endowed or enabled to receive and deliver direct revelation of God's will.

**Vincent** on a **prophet** (προφήτην). The popular conception of a prophet is limited to his foretelling future events. This is indeed included in the term, but does not cover its meaning entirely. The word is from φημί, to speak, and πρό, before, in front of. This meaning of the preposition may have reference to time, viz., before, beforehand; or to place, viz., in front of, and so, publicly; and this latter meaning, in turn, easily runs into that of in behalf of; for. The prophet is, therefore, primarily, one who speaks standing before another, and thus forming a medium between him and the hearer. This sense runs naturally into that of instead of. Hence it is the technical term for the interpreter of a divine message. So Plato: "For this reason it is customary to appoint diviners or interpreters to be judges of the true inspiration. Some persons call them diviners, seers (μάντις); they do not know that they are only repeaters of dark sayings and visions, and are not to be called diviners at all, but interpreters (προφῆται) of things divine" ("Timaeus," 72). Similarly of an advocate to speak for, or

instead of one. The central idea of the word is, one to whom God reveals himself and through whom he speaks. The revelation may or may not relate to the future. The prophet is a forth-teller, not necessarily a foreteller. The essence of the prophetic character is immediate intercourse with God. One of the Hebrew names for "prophet," and, as some maintain, the earlier name, signified a shewer or seer. See 1 Sam. 9:10; and in 1 Cor. 14:26–30, Paul shows that revelation stands in necessary connection with prophesying.

**Prophetes** in Luke's writings - Lk. 1:70; Lk. 1:76; Lk. 3:4; Lk. 4:17; Lk. 4:24; Lk. 4:27; Lk. 6:23; Lk. 7:16; Lk. 7:26; Lk. 7:39; Lk. 9:8; Lk. 9:19; Lk. 10:24; Lk. 11:47; Lk. 11:49; Lk. 11:50; Lk. 13:28; Lk. 13:33; Lk. 13:34; Lk. 16:16; Lk. 16:29; Lk. 16:31; Lk. 18:31; Lk. 20:6; Lk. 24:19; Lk. 24:25; Lk. 24:27; Lk. 24:44; Acts 2:16; Acts 2:30; Acts 3:18; Acts 3:21; Acts 3:22; Acts 3:23; Acts 3:24; Acts 3:25; Acts 7:37; Acts 7:42; Acts 7:48; Acts 7:52; Acts 8:28; Acts 8:30; Acts 8:34; Acts 10:43; Acts 11:27; Acts 13:1; Acts 13:15; Acts 13:20; Acts 13:27; Acts 13:40; Acts 15:15; Acts 15:32; Acts 21:10; Acts 24:14; Acts 26:22; Acts 26:27; Acts 28:23; Acts 28:25;

#### Related Resource:

- [What is a prophet in the Bible? | GotQuestions](#)

**Luke 7:27 "This is the one about whom it is written, **BEHOLD**, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.'**

**KJV** This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

- **Behold** Lk 1:15-17,76; Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; 4:5,6; John 1:23
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:24-27 The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:27-28 The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passage:

John 1:23+ He said, "I am A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD,' as Isaiah the prophet said."

Isaiah 40:3 A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

**This is the one about whom it is written, **It is written** (1125)(**grapho** from root graph- = primarily means to scratch on or engrave as on an ornament, reports, letters, etc; English = graph, graphic, etc) means to engrave or inscribe with a pen or stylus characters or letters on a surface which can be wood, wax, metal, leather, stone, parchment, dirt (John ), paper, etc. **Grapho** is [perfect tense](#) (gegraphtai) signifying that God's Word has been written down at a point of time in the past (cf Lev 11:44, 19:2, 20:7 were originally inscribed with a stylus by Moses probably on clay tablets under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit circa 1500BC) and remains on record as the eternal, unchanging Word of God. It stands written! It was written 400 years earlier by the prophet Malachi (Mal 3:1). The [perfect tense](#) in this context also signifies the permanence of the written word of God.**

**Spurgeon** - John was the morning star, and Christ the glorious Sun. John was the herald proclaiming the coming of Christ, and Christ himself followed close at his heels.

'**BEHOLD** ([idou](#)), I (God the Father) **SEND MY MESSENGER** ([aggelos/angelos](#)) **AHEAD** ([pro](#) - before - Mt 11:10) **OF YOU** (Christ), **WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU** (Christ). - "The quotation is primarily from Mal 3:1 (see previous verse) with pronouns from Ex 23:20. Here is the forerunner who points the way to the arrival of God's salvation. His job is to prepare and guide the people, as the cloud did for Israel in the desert." ([NET Note](#))

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**Behold** ([2400](#))([idou](#)) is the second person singular aorist middle imperative of eidon which means to see, perceive, look at. In the NT idou is used as a demonstrative particle that draws attention to what follows. Idou in the [middle voice](#) means "you yourself look, see, perceive!" The [aorist imperative](#) is a command emphasizing "Do it now! Don't delay!" Spurgeon reminds us that "Behold is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board,

signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, behold is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

**Messenger** (32)([aggelos/angelos](#)) literally means a messenger; one sent to tell or bring a message, an envoy (one who bears a message - Lk 1:11, 2:9, etc or does an errand). Most of the NT uses refer to heavenly angels (messengers) who are supernatural, transcendent beings with power to carry out various tasks. All uses of *aggelos* that refer to angels are masculine gender (the feminine form of *aggelos* does not occur.) Here used of John the Baptist as forerunner Mt 11:10+; Mk 1:2+; Lk 7:27 (all quoting from Mal 3:1+; cp. Ex 23:20+).

All uses of **aggelos** in Luke's writing (Luke likes angels) - Lk. 1:11; Lk. 1:13; Lk. 1:18; Lk. 1:19; Lk. 1:26; Lk. 1:30; Lk. 1:34; Lk. 1:35; Lk. 1:38; Lk. 2:9; Lk. 2:10; Lk. 2:13; Lk. 2:15; Lk. 2:21; Lk. 4:10; Lk. 7:24; Lk. 7:27; Lk. 9:26; Lk. 9:52; Lk. 12:8; Lk. 12:9; Lk. 15:10; Lk. 16:22; Lk. 22:43; Lk. 24:23; Acts 5:19; Acts 6:15; Acts 7:30; Acts 7:35; Acts 7:38; Acts 7:53; Acts 8:26; Acts 10:3; Acts 10:7; Acts 10:22; Acts 11:13; Acts 12:7; Acts 12:8; Acts 12:9; Acts 12:10; Acts 12:11; Acts 12:15; Acts 12:23; Acts 23:8; Acts 23:9; Acts 27:23;

**Prepare** (2680)([kataskeuazo](#) from **kata** = intensifies the meaning of + **skeuazo** = prepare, make ready) means to prepare, make ready, put in a state of readiness (Mk 1:2+). It is used of persons who are mentally and spiritually prepared - "make ready a people **prepared** for the Lord." (Lk 1:17+). To build, construct, erect, create (Heb 3:3-4+, Heb 11:7+, 1 Pe 3:20+). To furnish or equip ([Heb 9:2, 6+](#)). *Kataskeuazo* means to make, construct or erect with idea of adorning and equipping with all things necessary.

**Luke 7:28 "I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."**

**KJV** For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

- **Among** Lk 1:14,15; 3:16
- **but** Lk 9:48; 10:23,24; Matthew 11:11; 13:16,17; Ephesians 3:8,9; Colossians 1:25-27; Hebrews 11:39,40; 1 Peter 1:10-12
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:27-28 The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 11:11+ "Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist! Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

### **NO ONE GREATER THAN JOHN THE BAPTIST**

**I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John** - "John was greater than the OT prophets because he actually saw with his eyes and personally participated in the fulfillment of what they only prophesied (Mt 11:10, 13; cf. 1Pe 1:10, 11). But all believers after the cross are greater still, because they participate in the full understanding and experience of something John merely foresaw in shadowy form—the actual atoning work of Christ." ([The Coming of the King](#))

**William MacDonald** - In speaking of John the Baptist, Jesus said that there was no greater prophet than he (Luke 7:28). Here the Savior was speaking about the greatness of John's position. No other prophet had the privilege of being the forerunner of the Messiah. It does not mean that John had a better character than any of the Old Testament prophets, but only that his was the unique assignment of introducing the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. (Borrow [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he** - The **least** today has the Spirit permanently and has the privilege of proclaiming the full message of salvation.

**Spurgeon** explains why we are now greater than John - His (John's) was the highest office of all, immediately to precede Messiah himself...Passing into the dispensation of clearer light, he who is least among the believers of the gospel of Jesus is, in some respects, greater than this man, who could only preach repentance, and point to a coming Saviour. We have a fuller gospel to

preach than John had, and we may expect to see greater results from the preaching of that gospel than John could hope to see.

**NET Note** on **he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he**- After John comes a shift of eras. The new era is so great that the lowest member of it (the one who is least in the kingdom of God) is greater than the greatest one of the previous era.

**The Kingdom of God** - One must understand that there are two phases to the **Kingdom of God**. The first phase is the invisible, internal **Kingdom of God** and which He later described as "**in your midst**" (Lk 17:21+), the Kingdom in which the King reigns in the heart of the person who has accepted Jesus as Messiah. When the King returns on "**the day that the Son of Man is revealed**" (Lk 17:30+) the heart of every person will also be revealed as to whether they sought the kingdom of "self" or the kingdom of the Savior! The future phase of the **Kingdom of God** is known as the **Messianic Age** or the **Millennial Kingdom**. (See more detailed explanation of Jesus' meaning of the **Kingdom of God** in [notes](#) on Luke 17:20-21).

**ESV Study Bible** - John's greatness among all the OT prophets, all those who came before the arrival of the kingdom of God, comes from his function as direct forerunner of Jesus the Messiah. But John was not part of the kingdom of God that Jesus was proclaiming and bringing to reality, for he was still part of the old covenant system. Therefore the one who is least in the kingdom of God (one who has believed in Jesus and has become a member of the new covenant kingdom) is actually greater than John, for those who come after John live in the age of fulfillment, following the coming of Jesus. This underscores the qualitative difference between the old age and the dawning of the new kingdom age (cf Matt. 11:11). (See [ESV Study Bible](#) or borrow [ESV Study Bible](#))

**Spurgeon** on why **greater** - "As we may say, as a rule, that the darkest day is lighter than the brightest night; so John, though first of his own order, is behind the last of the new or Gospel order. The least in the Gospel stands on higher ground than the greatest under the law."

**Morris** - This is a statement of historical fact. John belonged to the time of promise. The least in the kingdom is *greater*, not because of any personal qualities he may have, but because he belongs to the time of fulfillment. Jesus is not minimizing the importance of John. He is putting membership of the kingdom into its proper perspective. 'There is something more important than following John: entry to the kingdom' (Marshall). (Borrow [The Gospel according to St. Luke](#))

**Guzik** on why **greater** - Though John was great, he was not born again under the New Covenant. This is because he lived and died before the completion of Jesus' work at the cross and empty tomb. Therefore, he did not enjoy the benefits of the New Covenant (1 Corinthians 11:25, 2 Corinthians 3:6, Hebrews 8:6-13).

**MacDonald** - To enjoy the blessings of the kingdom is greater than to be the forerunner of the King.

**Wiersbe** on why **greater** - However, the humblest believer today has a much higher position in Christ than John had as a prophet, for John belonged to the old dispensation of law. Believers today are seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:1-10), a privilege that was never given to John. (Borrow [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#))

**NET Note** on **Kingdom of God** - The **kingdom of God** is a major theme of Jesus' proclamation. It is a realm in which Jesus rules and to which those who trust him belong. See Luke 6:20; 11:20; 17:20-21. It is not strictly future, though its full manifestation is yet to come. That is why membership in it starts right after John the Baptist.

**Kingdom of God** - 66x in 65v Matt. 12:28; Matt. 19:24; Matt. 21:31; Matt. 21:43; Mk. 1:15; Mk. 4:11; Mk. 4:26; Mk. 4:30; Mk. 9:1; Mk. 9:47; Mk. 10:14; Mk. 10:15; Mk. 10:23; Mk. 10:24; Mk. 10:25; Mk. 12:34; Mk. 14:25; Mk. 15:43; Lk. 4:43; Lk. 6:20; Lk. 7:28; Lk. 8:1; Lk. 8:10; Lk. 9:2; Lk. 9:11; Lk. 9:27; Lk. 9:60; Lk. 9:62; Lk. 10:9; Lk. 10:11; Lk. 11:20; Lk. 13:18; Lk. 13:20; Lk. 13:28; Lk. 13:29; Lk. 14:15; Lk. 16:16; Lk. 17:20; Lk. 17:21; Lk. 18:16; Lk. 18:17; Lk. 18:24; Lk. 18:25; Lk. 18:29; Lk. 19:11; Lk. 21:31; Lk. 22:16; Lk. 22:18; Lk. 23:51; Jn. 3:3; Jn. 3:5; Acts 1:3; Acts 8:12; Acts 14:22; Acts 19:8; Acts 28:23; Acts 28:31; Rom. 14:17; 1 Co. 4:20; 1 Co. 6:9; 1 Co. 6:10; 1 Co. 15:50; Gal. 5:21; Col. 4:11; 2 Thess. 1:5

#### Related Resource:

- See More In Depth Discussion of the Kingdom of God in comments on Luke 17
- [Luke 17 Where Is The Kingdom of God?](#) - John MacArthur Q & A
- [In what way was John the Baptist the greatest? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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**J C Ryle** on **he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he**- The second point which demands our attention in these verses is, the vast superiority of the privileges enjoyed by believers under the New Testament, compared to those of believers under the Old. This is a lesson which appears to be taught by one expression used by our Lord respecting John the Baptist. After commending his graces and gifts, He adds these remarkable words, "He that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Our Lord's meaning in using this expression appears to be simply this. He declares that the religious light of the least disciple who lived after His crucifixion and resurrection, would be far greater than that of John Baptist, who died before those mighty events took place. The weakest believing hearer of St. Paul would understand things, by the light of Christ's death on the cross, which John the Baptist could never have explained. Great as that holy man was in faith and courage, the humblest Christian would, in one sense, be greater than he. Greater in grace and works he certainly could not be. But beyond doubt he would be greater in privileges and knowledge.

Such an expression as this should teach all Christians to be deeply thankful for Christianity. We have probably very little idea of the wide difference between the religious knowledge of the best-instructed Old Testament believer and the knowledge of one familiar with the New Testament. We little know how many blessed truths of the Gospel were at one time seen through a glass darkly, which now appear to us plain as noon-day. Our very familiarity with the Gospel makes us blind to the extent of our privileges. We can hardly realize at this time how many glorious verities of our faith were brought out in their full proportions by Christ's death on the cross, and were never unveiled and understood till His blood was shed. The hopes of John the Baptist and St. Paul were undoubtedly one and the same. Both were led by one Spirit. Both knew their sinfulness. Both trusted in the Lamb of God. But we cannot suppose that John could have given as full an account of the way of salvation as St. Paul. Both looked at the same object of faith. But one saw it afar off, and could only describe it generally. The other saw it close at hand, and could describe the reason of his hope particularly. Let us learn to be more thankful. The child who knows the story of the cross, possesses a key to religious knowledge which patriarchs and prophets never enjoyed. (Luke 7)

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### Unlikely Giants

Among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist. —Luke 7:28

Dwight L. Moody was greatly moved by a lay preacher's statement that the world has yet to see what God can do through a person fully yielded to Him. Because an attitude of submission is far more important than outward appearance, some unlikely people have become spiritual giants.

The first time I met Pete, he had a 2-day growth of stubble, a missing front tooth, and a suit that looked as if he had slept in it. But I discovered that God was using him in an unusual way to reach disadvantaged people.

Philip Yancey described the late Bill Leslie as "disheveled," "disorganized," and one who "laughed uproariously at his own (bad) jokes." But he points out that as pastor of the LaSalle Street Church in Chicago, this man had led many people to Christ and brought great social and economic changes to that part of the city. This unlikely spiritual giant died at age 60 after three decades of work in the inner city.

Pete and Bill remind me of John the Baptist. Although he lived as a recluse and wore a rough, camel's-hair garment, he had a ministry to thousands. Jesus called him the greatest of the prophets (Lk. 7:28).

God uses ordinary people, and He wants to use you. Serve Him humbly, zealously, and expectantly. By Herbert Vander Lugt [Used by permission from Our Daily Bread](#)

True greatness does not lie with those  
Who strive for worldly fame;  
It lies instead with those who choose  
To serve in Jesus' name.

—DJD

God uses those who are small in their own eyes.

**Luke 7:29 When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, they acknowledged God's justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John.**

**KJV** And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

**Amplified** - And all the people who heard Him, even the tax collectors, acknowledged the justice of God [in calling them to repentance and in pronouncing future wrath on the impenitent], being baptized with the baptism of John.

**Wuest** - And both the entire people, having heard, and the tax collectors, having been baptized, declared God to have been right in the case of John's baptism.

ERV And all the people when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

ESV (When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John,

NIV (All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John.

NLT When they heard this, all the people-- even the tax collectors-- agreed that God's way was right, for they had been baptized by John.

- **they acknowledged God's justice** Lk 7:35; Judges 1:7; Ps 51:4; Romans 3:4-6; 10:3; Revelation 15:3; 16:5
- **being** Lk 3:12; Matthew 3:5,6; 21:31,32
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:27-28 The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 3:11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

## RECEPTION OF GOD'S JUSTICE

These next two verses are spoken as an aside and thus are placed in parentheses in some versions.

**When all the people and the tax collectors** ([telones](#)) **heard this** - They had ears to hear spiritual truth, whereas the supposed "spiritual" elites were deaf to God's spiritual truth.

**They acknowledged God's justice** ([dikaioo](#)) - They agreed that God's way was the right way. "in calling them to repentance and in pronouncing future wrath on the impenitent" (Amplified)

**NET Note** on **they acknowledged God's justice** - Or "vindicated God"; Grk "justified God." This could be expanded to "vindicated and responded to God." The point is that God's goodness and grace as evidenced in the invitation to John was justified and responded to by the group one might least expect, tax collector and sinners. They had more spiritual sensitivity than others. In receiving John's baptism, they recognized John was sent by God and as His prophet had a message from God.

**MacArthur** - The common people and the outcast tax collectors who heard John the Baptist's preaching acknowledged that what he required by way of repentance was from God and was righteous.

**Robertson** on the response of **all the people and the tax collectors** - They considered God just or righteous in making these demands of them. Even the publicans did. They submitted to the baptism of John

**Having been baptized** ([baptizo](#)) **with the baptism** ([baptisma](#)) **of John** - They humbled themselves and submitted to John's baptism in contrast to religious leaders in Lk 7:30. "Being baptized by John demonstrated a recognition of one's sin, a desire for spiritual cleansing, and a commitment to follow God's law in anticipation of the Messiah's arrival....John prepared the way for Christ by calling people to acknowledge their sin and their need for salvation. His baptism was a purification ceremony meant to ready the peoples' hearts to receive their Savior. " ([GotQuestions.org](#))

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**Tax collectors** (publicans) ([5057](#))([telones](#) from [telos](#) = tax + [onéomai](#) = to buy) means a reaper of the taxes or customs, tax-collector, one who pays to the government a certain sum for the privilege of collecting the taxes and customs of a district. The public revenues of the Greeks and Romans were usually farmed out. Among the latter, the purchasers were chiefly of the equestrian order and were distinguished as being of a higher class because they rode horses, or they were at least persons of wealth and rank like Zacchaeus who is called the chief tax collector (architelones [754](#)) in Lu 19:2). These farmers also had subcontractors or employed agents who collected the taxes and customs at the gates of cities, in seaports, on public ways and bridges. These, too, were called **telomnai** (pl.), publicans, or eklégontes (n.f.), (ek [1537], out of, + légo [3004], in its original sense meaning to collect), those



who collected out of the people. Such publicans in countries subject to the Roman Empire **were the objects of hatred and detestation so that none but persons of worthless character were likely to be found in this employment.**

**All 20 uses of telones** - Matt. 5:46; Matt. 9:10; Matt. 9:11; Matt. 10:3; Matt. 11:19; Matt. 18:17; Matt. 21:31; Matt. 21:32; Mk. 2:15; Mk. 2:16; Lk. 3:12; Lk. 5:27; Lk. 5:29; Lk. 5:30; Lk. 7:29; Lk. 7:34; Lk. 15:1; Lk. 18:10; Lk. 18:11; Lk. 18:13

**Acknowledged...justice** (1344)(**dikaioo** from dike = right, expected behavior or conformity, not according to one's own standard, but according to an imposed standard with prescribed punishment for nonconformity) primarily means to deem to be right. Dikaioo is a legal term having to do with the law and the courtroom, where it represented the legally binding verdict of the judge.

**Luke's uses of dikaioo** - Lk. 7:29; Lk. 7:35; Lk. 10:29; Lk. 16:15; Lk. 18:14; Acts 13:39;

**Baptized** (907)(**baptizo** from bapto = cover wholly with a fluid; stain or dip as with dye; used of the smith tempering the red-hot steel, used of dyeing the hair; of a ship that "dipped" = sank) has a literal and a figurative meaning in the NT. The literal meaning is to submerge, to dip or immerse as in water. A study of the 77 NT uses (See below) reveals that most of the uses of baptizo in the Gospels and Acts are associated with literal water baptism. The Greeks used baptizo to describe the dyeing of a garment, in which the whole material was plunged in and taken out from the element used. Baptizo was used of the act of sinking ships. Baptizo also meant to bathe of a boat which had been wrecked by being submerged and then stranded on the shore. Figuratively, baptizo pictures the introduction or placing of a person or thing into a new environment or into union with something else so as to alter its condition or its relationship to its previous environment or condition. In this sense baptizo means to be identified with.

**Luke's uses of baptizo** - Lk. 3:7; Lk. 3:12; Lk. 3:16; Lk. 3:21; Lk. 7:29; Lk. 7:30; Lk. 11:38; Lk. 12:50; ; Acts 1:5; Acts 2:38; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12; Acts 8:13; Acts 8:16; Acts 8:36; Acts 8:38; Acts 9:18; Acts 10:47; Acts 10:48; Acts 11:16; Acts 16:15; Acts 16:33; Acts 18:8; Acts 19:3; Acts 19:4; Acts 19:5; Acts 22:16

**Baptism** (908)(**baptisma** from bapto = dip as in dye to color - see study of verb **baptizo**) is the result of the act of dipping, plunging, immersing, washing. something or someone. The suffix -ma indicates the result of dipping or sinking or baptizing while baptismos is the act of baptizing.

**Luke's uses of baptisma** - Lk. 3:3; Lk. 7:29; Lk. 12:50; Lk. 20:4; Acts 1:22; Acts 10:37; Acts 13:24; Acts 18:25; Acts 19:3; Acts 19:4;

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#### **QUESTION - [What was the meaning and importance of the baptism of John the Baptist?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Though today the word *baptism* generally evokes thoughts of identifying with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, baptism did not begin with Christians. For years before Christ, the Jews had used baptism in ritual cleansing ceremonies of Gentile proselytes. John the Baptist took baptism and applied it to the Jews themselves—it wasn't just the Gentiles who needed cleansing. Many believed John's message and were baptized by him (Matthew 3:5–6). The baptisms John performed had a specific purpose.

In Matthew 3:11, John the Baptist mentions the purpose of his baptisms: **'I baptize you with water for repentance.'** Paul affirms this in Acts 19:4: **"John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."** John's baptism had to do with repentance—it was a symbolic representation of changing one's mind and going a new direction. **"Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River"** (Matthew 3:6). Being baptized by John demonstrated a recognition of one's sin, a desire for spiritual cleansing, and a commitment to follow God's law in anticipation of the Messiah's arrival.

There were some, like the Pharisees, who came to the Jordan to observe John's ministry but who had no desire to step into the water themselves. John rebuked them sternly: **"When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance'"** (Matthew 3:7–8). Even the religious leaders needed to repent of their sin, although they saw no need of it.

[Christian baptism today](#) also symbolizes repentance, cleansing, and commitment, but Jesus has given it a different emphasis. Christian baptism is a mark of one's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is representative of a cleansing that is complete and a commitment that is the natural response of one who has been made new. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross completely washes away our sins, and we are raised to new life empowered by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17–21; Romans 6:1–11). With John's baptism, a person repented of sin and was therefore ready to place his faith in Jesus Christ. John's baptism foreshadowed what Jesus would accomplish, much as the Old Testament sacrificial system did.

John prepared the way for Christ by calling people to acknowledge their sin and their need for salvation. His baptism was a purification ceremony meant to ready the peoples' hearts to receive their Savior. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

## Luke 7:30 But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.

**KJV** But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

**Amplified** - But the Pharisees and the lawyers [of the Mosaic Law] annulled and rejected and brought to nothing God's purpose concerning themselves, by [refusing and] not being baptized by him [John].

**Wuest** - But the Pharisees and the interpreters and teachers of the Mosaic law by rejecting the counsel of God thwarted its purpose and rendered it inefficacious with reference to themselves, not having been baptized by him.

- **rejected** or, frustrated. Lk 13:34; Jeremiah 8:8; Romans 10:21; 2 Corinthians 6:1; Galatians 2:21
- **the purpose** Acts 20:27; Ephesians 1:11
- **against or, within.**
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole

### Related Passages:

Matthew 3:7-8+ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 "Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance;

Luke 13:34+ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!

Jeremiah 8:8 "How can you say, 'We are wise, And the law of the LORD is with us'? But behold, the lying pen of the scribes Has made it into a lie.

Romans 10:21 But as for Israel He says, "ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE."

Ephesians 1:11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

## REJECTION OF GOD'S PURPOSE

**But** - Term of contrast. What is the striking contrast in this context?

**But the Pharisees ([pharisaiois](#)) and the lawyers ([nomikos](#)) rejected ([atheteo](#)) God's purpose ([boule](#)) for themselves - Amplified** = They "annulled and rejected and brought to nothing God's purpose." Both of these groups focused on the Law of Moses, but completely missed the intent of the Law (cf purpose of Law) which was ultimately to lead them to see their need for a Savior. Instead they made the Law an end unto itself and as a result chose death for no one can keep the Law perfectly and the wages of sin is death. They rejected John's baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins! They refused to have their hearts prepared for the Messiah's entrance!

**MacArthur** adds that "John's call to repentance was an expression of the will of God. By refusing repentance, they rejected not just John the Baptist, but also God Himself." Their rejection of God's will meant that God would reject them in the future judgment!

**Robertson** - These legalistic interpreters of the law refused to admit the need of confession of sin on their part and so set aside the baptism of John. They annulled God's purposes of grace so far as they applied to them.

**Ryle on rejected ([atheteo](#))** - The meaning of this expression appears to be that they despised, and frustrated, and made of no avail the gracious offer of repentance and salvation, which God sent to them by John the Baptist. The Greek word translated "**rejected**" is more frequently translated "despised." It is also rendered by the words to "disannul," to "cast off," to "frustrate," and to "bring to nothing." Luke 10:16; Gal. 3:15; 1 Tim. 5:11; Gal. 2:21; 1 Cor. 1:19. (Luke 7)

**Not having been baptized (baptizo) by John** - To refuse his baptism was to refuse to identify (and accept or receive) his message of confession of sins, repentance and forgiveness of sins.

**J C Ryle on rejected God's purpose for themselves** - The last point which demands our attention in these verses is, the solemn declaration which it makes about man's power to injure his own soul. We read that "The Pharisees and Scribes rejected the counsel of God against themselves." The meaning of these words appears to be simply this, that they rejected God's offer of salvation. They refused to avail themselves of the door of repentance which was offered to them by John the Baptist's preaching. In short they fulfilled to the very letter the words of Solomon: "Ye have set at nought all my counsel and would none of my reproof." (Prov. 1:25.)

That every man possesses a power to ruin himself forever in hell is a great foundation truth of Scripture, and a truth which ought to be continually before our minds. Impotent and weak as we all are for everything which is good, we are all naturally potent for that which is evil. By continued impenitence and unbelief, by persevering in the love and practice of sin, by pride, self-will, laziness, and determined love of the world, we may bring upon ourselves everlasting destruction. And if this takes place, we shall find that we have no one to blame but ourselves. God has "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." (Ezek. 18:32.) Christ is "willing to gather" men to His bosom, if they will only be gathered. (Matt. 22:37.) The fault will lie at man's own door. They that are lost will find that they have "Lost their own souls." (Mark 8:36.)

**THOUGHT** - What are we doing ourselves? This is the chief question that the passage should suggest to our minds. Are we likely to be lost or saved? Are we in the way towards heaven or hell? Have we received into our hearts that Gospel which we hear? Do we really live by that Bible which we profess to believe? Or are we daily travelling towards the pit, and ruining our own souls? It is a painful thought that the Pharisees are not the only persons who "reject the counsel of God." There are thousands of persons called Christians who are continually doing the very same thing. (Luke 7)

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**Pharisees** (5330)(**pharisaios** is transliterated from the Hebrew **parash** (06567 - to separate) from Aramaic word **peras** (06537) ("Peres" in Da 5:28-note), signifying to separate, owing to a different manner of life from that of the general public. After the resettling of the Jewish people in Judea on their return from the Babylonian captivity, there were two religious groups among them. One party contented themselves with following only what was written in the Law of Moses. These were called **Zadikim**, the righteous. The other group added the constitutions and traditions of the elders, as well as other rigorous observances, to the Law and voluntarily complied with them. They were called **Chasidim** or the pious. From the Zadikim the sects of the Sadducees and Karaites were derived. From the Chasidim were derived the Pharisees and the Essenes. In I Mac2:42, among the persons who joined Mattathias against Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), about 167 b.c., are named the Asideans (Asidaioi), who are described as voluntarily devoted to the law. The Asideans are mentioned also in I Mac 7:13; II Mac14:6. In the time of our Lord, the Pharisees were the separatists of their day, as well as the principal sect among the Jews. The Pharisees considered themselves much holier than the common people (Lu 18:11, 12). They wore special garments to distinguish themselves from others. **PRINCIPLE TENETS OF PHARISEES:** In opposition to those of the Sadducees, and the former group maintained the existence of angels and spirits and the doctrine of the resurrection (Acts 23:8), which the latter party denied (Mt 22:23; Mk 12:18; Lu 20:27). The Pharisees made everything dependent upon God and fate (Josephus, The Jewish Wars, ii.8.14). However, they did not deny the role of the human will in affecting events (Josephus, Antiquities, xviii.1.3). **ZEAL FOR TRADITION:** The Pharisees distinguished themselves with their zeal for the traditions of the elders, which they taught was derived from the same fountain as the written Word itself, claiming both to have been delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai (Mt 15:1-6; Mk 7:3-5). See also *parádoxis* (3862), tradition, and *éntalma* (1778), a religious precept versus *entole* (1785), commandment. ([See more detailed notes from William Barclay](#))

**Lawyers** (3544)(**nomikos** from **nomos** - law) means related to the law and generally refers to a legal scholar, an expert in the Mosaic law, in interpreting Jewish law. **Vincent on lawyers** - "Not *legal practioners*, but interpreters and doctors of the Mosaic law."

**Rejected** (set aside, nullified)(114)(**atheteo** from áthetos = not placed from a = without + thetós = placed) means to do away with what has been laid down, to set aside and thus to regard as nothing, to declare invalid, to not recognize, to annul (make ineffective, inoperative or nonexistent), to spurn or to despise. In the papyri **atheteo** was used of loans which were repaid and cancelled and for the rejection of certain officials who were described as inefficient and incapable of doing their duty. **Atheteo** was also used of grain rejected by the inspector as unfit for food. In Classic Greek **atheteo** is used to describe setting aside of a treaty or promise. Thayer writes that **atheteo** means "to act toward anything as though it were annulled; hence, to deprive a law of force by opinions or acts opposed to it, to transgress... to thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate...to render prudent plans of no effect (1Cor 1:19)...to reject, refuse, slight (eg, "the grace of God" Gal 2:21)

**Atheteo** - 12v - nullify(1), refuse(1), reject(1), rejected(1), rejects(6), rejecting(1), set aside(3), sets...aside(1), setting aside(1). Mk. 6:26; Mk. 7:9; Lk. 7:30; Lk. 10:16; Jn. 12:48; 1 Co. 1:19; Gal. 2:21; Gal. 3:15; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 Tim. 5:12; Heb. 10:28; Jude 1:8

**Purpose** (plan) (1012) **boule** when used of man expresses a decision, a purpose or a plan which is the result of inner deliberation

(Plan to kill Jesus - Lk 23:51). Boule is that which has been purposed and planned, as of God's eternal plan (Eph 1:11+). Boule has in it the ideas of intelligence and deliberation. In other words boule describes the result of deliberate determination which in the present context reflects the product of not just a "mastermind" but God's heart of infinite love. NIDNTT says that in secular Greek boule "denotes an intention, a deliberation. It also stands for the result of a deliberation in the sense of a decision of the will, a resolution, a counsel or an edict. So already in Homer (Il. 2, 53) an assembly of men is called a boule, when it became an institutional body (e.g. the Council of the Five Hundred in Athens, Herodotus 5, 72; 9, 5). **Friberg** - (1) as an inward thought process leading toward a decision deliberation, motive (1Co 4.5); (2) as the result of inner deliberation resolve, decision, purpose, plan (Acts 5.38); (3) as the result of community deliberation counsel (Acts 27.12); as the divine will counsel, purpose (Acts 2.23) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Boule** - 12v - Lk. 7:30; Lk. 23:51; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:28; Acts 5:38; Acts 13:36; Acts 20:27; Acts 27:12; Acts 27:42; 1 Co. 4:5; Eph. 1:11; Heb. 6:17

## Luke 7:31 "To what then shall I compare the men of this generation, and what are they like?"

**KJV** And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

- **Whereunto** Lamentations 2:13; Matthew 11:16-19; Mark 4:30
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:31-35 The Parable of the Brats: Style Versus Substance](#) - John MacArthur

### WHAT IS THIS GENERATION LIKE?

In Lk 7:31-35 Jesus is going to illustrate with two children games, neither of which the children wanted to play and make the analogy that God had sent two preachers John the Baptist and the Son of Man who had different styles but whose similar messages were both rejected.

**Alexander Maclaren** sums up Lk 7:31-35 - The point is clear enough. "If the message is unwelcome, nothing that the messenger can say or do will be right."

**To what then shall I compare the men of this generation ([genea](#)), and what are they like** - He is referring to those who rejected John's baptism. John MacArthur calls this the [The Parable of the Brats: Style Versus Substance](#) and it is a very insightful message writing "in this parable He identifies His generation as brats, impossible to please, impossible to satisfy, belligerent."

**MacArthur** on **what then shall I compare** and **what are they like** - That's a Hebraism, that's an old Hebraic way of speaking. In fact, in the Jewish *midrash* which the rabbis wrote, that is the most common way to introduce an analogy, with the words: "How am I to compare this?" or "To what shall I compare this?" or "What is this like?" That is a very typical rabbinic way of giving an analogy to explain a spiritual reality. That's precisely what Jesus does here.

**MacArthur** - **Genea** (generation) is used frequently in Luke's gospel in a **negative sense as a term of condemnation**. In Lk 9:41 Jesus spoke of this generation as an "unbelieving and perverted generation," and in Lk 11:29 described it as a "wicked generation" guilty of all the blood of the murdered prophets (vv. 50-51) and above all of rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ (Lk 17:25). By extension, the term can refer to any perverse and faithless generation (cf. Dt. 32:5; Jdg. 2:10; Jer. 7:29; Acts 2:40; Php 2:15).

**Keener** notes that **this generation** "does not refer to everyone then living but to the leaders and others who rejected both John the Baptist and Jesus, and who were still the dominant force in the culture. In their rejection of both the "ascetic" John and the "non-ascetic" Jesus, they were like children refusing to play either a sad or a happy game."

**Robertson** on **what are they like?** - This second question is not in Matt. 11:16. It sharpens the point.

**Generation** (1074) ([genea](#) gives us our English genealogy) literally refers to those descended from a common ancestor and in this sense refers to a race, a clan or descendants. In context this refers to those who had rejected John's and Jesus' warnings. In Lk 7:32 Jesus says they are like selfish, stubborn children, always insisting on their own way.

Genea - 37v - Matt. 1:17; Matt. 11:16; Matt. 12:39; Matt. 12:41; Matt. 12:42; Matt. 12:45; Matt. 16:4; Matt. 17:17; Matt. 23:36; Matt. 24:34; Mk. 8:12; Mk. 8:38; Mk. 9:19; Mk. 13:30; Lk. 1:48; Lk. 1:50; Lk. 7:31; Lk. 9:41;

**Luke 7:32 "They are like children who sit in the market place and call to one another, and they say, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.'**

**KJV** They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

- **are** Proverbs 17:16; Isaiah 28:9-13; 29:11,12; Jeremiah 5:3-5; Matthew 11:16-19
- **children** Zechariah 8:5
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:31-35 The Parable of the Brats: Style Versus Substance](#) - John MacArthur

## **A GENERATION LIKE CHILDREN**

**They are like children (paidion) who sit in the market place (agora) and call to one another** - Keep in mind that there is a big crowd surrounding Him and so these words are for their ears. The word of **children (paidion)** stresses the need for moral training and guidance. Jesus is telling us what this **generation** (Lk 7:31) is like. This generation refers primarily the Jews of His time but is applicable to any generation that acts "childish" like they acted. The **market place (agora)** was where children in ancient times played their little games.

Wiersbe - The leaders rejected God's Word through John (Lk 20:1-8), and the people were **childish** (ED: MACARTHUR CALLS THEM BRATS) instead of **childlike**. (ED: LATTER ARE THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN Lk 18:17) Nothing pleased them, neither the austerity of John nor the sociability of Jesus. (Borrow [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#))

**And they say, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep-** We are urged to have child-like faith, but not child-like immaturity and selfishness like these "brats." So here we see two "games," the first joyful as for example might be at a wedding, the second sorrowful as might be at a funeral. **We played the flute** pictures one group of children inviting others to join the game, but they would not join in and **dance**. When the joyful occasion (possibly a make believe wedding) did not attract the other children, they tried inviting them to a solemn setting (possibly a funeral). Again they refused to **weep**. This is why MacArthur likens them to brats.

**MacArthur** explains the refusal of the children to play - "The nature of the game was not the issue, since the peevish brats would not play either the happy or the sad game. They serve as an apt illustration of the people of that **generation**—ill-tempered malcontents."

**MacArthur** - Christ used strong derision to rebuke the Pharisees. He suggested they were behaving childishly, determined not to be pleased, whether invited to "dance" (a reference to Christ's joyous style of ministry, "eating and drinking" with sinners— Lk 7:34), or urged to "weep" (a reference to John the Baptist's call to repentance, and John's more austere manner of ministry—Lk 7:33).

**Ryle** - Let it be noted that the one point to be kept in mind, in the comparison of the generation among whom our Lord lived, to children, is the waywardness and determination not to be pleased, which is often observable in some children. In this respect they were exact types of the Jews when John Baptist and our Lord successively preached to them. Their two ministries were peculiarly unlike one another. But neither pleased the Jews. To attach deep spiritual meanings to the "market place," the "piping," "dancing," "mourning," and "weeping," of the similitude, is, to say the least, unprofitable. (Luke 7)

**Spurgeon** - They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, at play; the playing of children is often according to the manners and customs of grown up people...."You would not play a merry game when we asked you to do so."...."You would not play either at funerals or weddings."...These children could not agree as to what game they would play. "Come," they said, "let us imitate a wedding, we will pipe, and you can dance." But the others would not dance. "Well," they said, "let us play at something. Let us imitate a funeral; we will be the mourners." Then the others would not weep. **They would agree to nothing that was proposed, and that is the point of the Saviour's analogy, that there are multitudes of men who always quarrel with any kind of ministry that God may send to them.** This man's style is much too florid; he has a superabundance of the flowers of oratory. That other man is much too dull; there is nothing interesting about his discourses. This man is too coarse; he is so rough as even to be vulgar. That



other man is too refined, and uses language which shoots over people's heads. It is easy to find fault when you want to do so. Any stick will do to beat a dog, and any kind of excuse will do to allow your conscience to escape from the message of an earnest ministry. Our Lord told the people that this was the way they had acted towards Himself and John the Baptist.

**Mattoon** - Jesus uses the games of children to describe the behavior of the Pharisees. The children complained when they wanted their friends to play a "wedding" type game, but their friends would not dance. When they wanted to play a make-believe funeral, their friends would not pretend to mourn. In other words, they would not conform to their wishes. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Vincent on children** - Diminutive, little children. The Rev. Donald Fraser gives the picture simply and vividly: "He pictured a group of little children playing at make-believe marriages and funerals. First they acted a marriage procession; some of them piping as on instruments of music, while the rest were expected to leap and dance. In a perverse mood, however, these last did not respond, but stood still and looked discontented. So the little pipers changed their game and proposed a funeral. They began to imitate the loud wailing of eastern mourners. But again they were thwarted, for their companions refused to chime in with the mournful cry and to beat their breasts.... So the disappointed children complained: 'We piped unto you and ye did not dance; we wailed, and ye did not mourn. Nothing pleases you. If you don't want to dance, why don't you mourn?... It is plain that you are in bad humor, and determined not to be pleased' " ("Metaphors in the Gospels"). The issue is between the Jews (this generation) and the children of wisdom, 5:9.

**Lawrence Richards** - "Like children . . . calling out to each other". Jesus identified John as a great prophet. While the sinful of society recognized him, and responded to his message, the "Pharisees and experts in the Law" had rejected John—and God's purpose for them! Why? Jesus illustrates from the familiar scene of children, playing in the streets. They play "wedding" (v. 32b) and they play "funeral" (v. 32c). And they complain when other's won't play their game. And that, Jesus said, is what the religious leaders had done. They'd been playing games, and they whined because neither John, that gaunt and austere wilderness man, nor Jesus, a social, friendly Teacher, played their games with them! "If you won't play our way," Jesus pictured them saying, and we can clearly see the pout on petulant, childish faces, "we won't play at all. So there!" But Jesus wasn't playing games. And if you and I are to have a meaningful relationship with Him, we can't play games either! In Jesus, our God has come. And we must now be fully committed to Him.

**Robertson on children** - This parable of the children playing in the market place is given also in Luke 7:31f. Had Jesus as a child in Nazareth not played games with the children? He had certainly watched them often since. The interest of Christ in children was keen. He has really created the modern child's world out of the indifference of the past. They would not play wedding or funeral in a peevish fret. These metaphors in the Gospels are vivid to those with eyes to see.

**NET Note** - 'We played the flute for you, yet you did not dance ...' The children of this generation were making the complaint (see vv. 33–34) that others were not playing the game according to the way they played the music. John and Jesus did not follow "their tune." Jesus' complaint was that this generation wanted things their way, not God's.

**Ryle on They are like children** - WE learn, in the first place, from these verses, that the hearts of unconverted men are often desperately perverse as well as wicked.

Our Lord brings out this lesson in a remarkable comparison, describing the generation of men among whom He lived while He was on earth. He compares them to children. He says, that children at play were not more wayward, perverse, and hard to please, than the Jews of His day. Nothing would satisfy them. They were always finding fault. Whatever ministry God employed among them, they took exception to it. Whatever messenger God sent among them, they were not pleased. First came John the Baptist, living a retired, ascetic, self-denying life. At once the Jews said, "he hath a devil."—After him the Son of Man came, eating and drinking, and adopting habits of social life like the ordinary run of men. At once the Jews accused Him of being "a gluttonous man, and a winebibber."—In short, it became evident that the Jews were determined to receive no message from God at all. Their pretended objections were only a cloak to cover over their hatred of God's truth. What they really disliked was, not so much God's ministers, as God Himself.

Perhaps we read this account with wonder and surprise. We think that never were men so wickedly unreasonable as these Jews were. But are we sure that their conduct is not continually repeated among Christians? Do we know that the same thing is continually going on around us at the present day? Strange as it may seem at first sight, the generation which will neither "dance" when their companions "pipe," nor "lament" when they "mourn," is only too numerous in the Church of Christ. Is it not a fact that many who strive to serve Christ faithfully, and walk closely with God, find their neighbors and relations always dissatisfied with their conduct? No matter how holy and consistent their lives may be, they are always thought wrong. If they withdraw entirely from the world, and live, like John the Baptist, a retired and ascetic life, the cry is raised that they are exclusive, narrow-minded, sour-spirited, and righteous overmuch. If, on the other hand, they go much into society, and endeavor as far as they can to take interest in their neighbor's pursuits, the remark is soon made that they are no better than other people, and have no more real religion than those who make no profession at all. Treatment like this is only too common. Few are the decided Christians who do not know it by bitter



experience. The servants of God in every age, whatever they do, are blamed.

The plain truth is that the natural heart of man hates God. The carnal mind is enmity against God. It dislikes His law, His Gospel, and His people. It will always find some excuse for not believing and obeying. The doctrine of repentance is too strict for it! The doctrine of faith and grace is too easy for it! John the Baptist goes too much out of the world! Jesus Christ goes too much into the world! And so the heart of man excuses itself for sitting still in its sins.—All this must not surprise us. We must make up our minds to find unconverted people as perverse, unreasonable, and hard to please as the Jews of our Lord's time. We must give up the vain idea of trying to please everybody. The thing is impossible, and the attempt is mere waste of time. We must be content to walk in Christ's steps, and let the world say what it likes. Do what we will we shall never satisfy it, or silence its ill-natured remarks. It first found fault with John the Baptist, and then with his blessed Master. And it will go on cavilling and finding fault with that Master's disciples, so long as one of them is left upon earth. (Luke 7)

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**Children (3813) paidion** diminutive of pais = child) is a little child of either sex, ranging from an infant (Mt 19:13, 14; Mk 10:13-15; Lk 18:16, 17, etc) to children who are older (Mt 11:16; Mt 14:21; 15:38; 18:2-5, etc) Paidion is used repeatedly of the infant Jesus in Matthew (Mt 2:8-9, 11, 13-14, 20-21) Paidion is used as a term of comparison, Jesus making the point that we are to become like a little child (Mk 10:15 Lk 18:17), the implication of course being that this is not an infant but a child old enough to express saving faith in the Messiah!

**Uses of paidion in Luke** - Lk. 1:59; Lk. 1:66; Lk. 1:76; Lk. 1:80; Lk. 2:17; Lk. 2:27; Lk. 2:40; Lk. 7:32; Lk. 9:47; Lk. 9:48; Lk. 11:7; Lk. 18:16; Lk. 18:17

**Market place (58) (agora)** is the town-square where the people assembled in public. It can also refer to a market or thoroughfare or a broad street. Here it refers to a forum or a market place where things were exposed for sale and where assemblies and public trials were held (See similar use in Mk 7:4; Acts 16:19; 17:17) (see [use](#) in Acts 16:19)

**Vincent on market place - Agora** From ἄγω, to assemble. Wyc., renders cheepyng; compare cheapside, the place for buying and selling; for the word cheap had originally no reference to small price, but meant simply barter or price. The primary conception in the Greek word has nothing to do with buying and selling. ἄγορα is an assembly; then the place of assembly. The idea of a place of trade comes in afterward, and naturally, since trade plants itself where people habitually gather. Hence the Roman Forum was devoted, not only to popular and judicial assemblies, but to commercial purposes, especially of bankers. The idea of trade gradually becomes the dominant one in the word. In Eastern cities the markets are held in bazaars and streets, rather than in squares. In these public places the children would be found playing. Compare Zech. 8:5.

**Weep (2799) (klaio)** means to mourn, to weep, to lament or to wail with emphasis upon noise accompanying weeping. It expresses one's immediate and outward reaction to suffering. The picture is of one lamenting with sobs or wailing aloud and was used to describe the wailing that took place when someone died.

**Luke 7:33 "For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!'"**

**KJV** For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

- **came** Lk 1:15; Jeremiah 16:8-10; Matthew 3:4; Mark 1:6
- **He** Matthew 10:25; John 8:48,52; 10:20; Acts 2:13
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:31-35 The Parable of the Brats: Style Versus Substance](#) - John MacArthur

## **JOHN FALSELY ACCUSED OF BEING DEMON POSSESSED!**

The simple illustration of joyful and more solemn games that the children refused to play, is now applied to the ministries first of John and then of Jesus.

**For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon'** - Eating bread and wine was what normal people did. John did not come this way but came eating locusts and honey and dressed in camel's hair and a leather belt (Mt 3:4). In addition his habitat was not like other men because he lived in the desert until the day of His public ministry

(Lk 1:80). His message was somber (like the dirge mentioned in the illustration) with emphasis on the need to repent or experience fiery judgment (Lk 3:8, 9, 17). He was your prototypical hellfire and brimstone preacher! He denounced the hypocritical religious leaders as a "brood of vipers" who were like snakes trying to flee for a fire (Lk 3:7). The initial reaction to John was crowds flocking to hear him and be baptized with his baptism of repentance. But John's popularity plummeted quickly to the point that they thought he was out of his mind as the result of **demon** possession! The verb you say is in the present tense and indicates that some listening to this message had in fact made this assessment that John was demon possessed. Their reasoning was that no one would manifest the type of radical hermit like behavior unless he were possessed. Jesus would later be accused of being demon possessed (Lk 11:19, Jn 7:20, 8:48, 10:20).

**John MacArthur** explains why the people turned on John to this degree - The people's motive for so labeling John was their hatred of his message. Their hearts were hard and impenetrable, causing them to reject the divine diagnosis of their condition that he proclaimed. Being proud and self-righteous, they hated John's condemnation of them as sinners, desperately in need of repentance and forgiveness. They attacked John's person in order to justify their rejection of his message. They refused to join with him.

**Spurgeon** - An ascetic of ascetics, —"He came among you as an ascetic, denying himself, not only the luxuries of life, but even the common comforts that others enjoyed, and ye say, 'He hath a devil.'"

**Luke 7:34 "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'"**

**KJV** The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

- **eating** Lk 7:36; 5:29; 11:37; 14:1; John 2:2; 12:2
- **a friend** Lk 15:2; Lk 19:7; Matthew 9:11
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:31-35 The Parable of the Brats: Style Versus Substance](#) - John MacArthur

#### **Related Passages:**

Luke 15:2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

Luke 19:7 When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

Matthew 9:11 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?"

### **JESUS ACCUSED OF BEING A FRIEND OF SINNERS!**

**The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors (telones) and sinners (hamartolos)** - So just as the crowds had turned on John (like children refusing to weep when a dirge was sung - Lk 7:32), Jesus explains that they turned on Him. While John was ascetic, Jesus came like a normal person **eating and drinking**. He attended weddings as well as funerals and instead of confining His ministry to the wilderness, Jesus focused on the towns and synagogues. Whereas John was relatively anti-social, Jesus was very social and mixed with all levels of society including those the Pharisees considered the dregs of the society, such as **tax collectors (telones) and sinners (hamartolos)** (cf Mt 9:11, Lk 15:1, 2, Lk 19:7) and this outraged the religious hierarchy.

The question then arises is why did this **generation** (Lk 7:31) reject both preachers, John and Jesus. The answer is obvious. While they claim they are rejecting them because of their "lifestyles" of ascetic versus gluttonous and drunkard, the truth is that they rejected them because of their message.

The outward form of ministry is never the issue, but rather the truth of the message.

-- John MacArthur

**MacArthur** explains it this way - John was sober, severe, stark, a preacher of judgment, calling for repentance, weeping in light of God's wrath, and keeping himself separate from sinners. Jesus, in contrast, was tender, merciful, gracious, compassionate, a preacher of blessing who mingled with sinners, whom He came to seek and save. In the end, it is not the **style** of ministry that matters but its **substance**. **The people ultimately rejected the ministries of both John and Jesus.** Though their emphases may have differed, both John and Jesus called for repentance, promised forgiveness, warned of judgment, and proclaimed the coming of the kingdom. The outward form of ministry is never the issue, but rather the truth of the message. In every generation there will be spiritual brats who reject the truth, like those who refused to mourn with John or laugh with Jesus. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - That is the Lord Jesus himself. He comes as a man among men, and sits with you at your feasts, and does not lead the life of an ascetic. "He does not pretend to be an ascetic, he comes, on the contrary, to show that neither meat nor drink can save a man. What do you say, then, of this Son of man?" **There was no pleasing them either way; whichever form of preacher the Lord sent, whether an ascetic or one like themselves, they found fault....**"He is out of his mind altogether, possessed by the devil."

### Luke 7:35 "Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

**KJV** But wisdom is justified of all her children.

- Lk 7:29; Proverbs 8:32-36; 17:16; Hosea 14:9; Matthew 11:19; 1 Corinthians 2:14,15
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:18-35 Dealing With Doubt](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:31-35 The Parable of the Brats: Style Versus Substance](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related passage -

Mt 11:19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

**Yet** - This is a term of contrast. What is being contrasted? The previous description of the generation in which most rejected the preaching of John and Jesus, is here contrasted with those who receive the Gospel and are saved.

**Wisdom is vindicated by all her children** (Mt 11:19 "vindicated by her deeds") - Here wisdom is personified (as a "mother" who had children). The point is that **wisdom** is vindicated (shown to be right or correct, proven to be true) by its consequences, it's "fruit," or by what it produces, in this case by the righteous fruit of the "offspring" or the followers of John and Jesus. Jesus' point is that not all who hear the Gospel message will reject it. The wise plan of God is proven to be true by the changed lives and righteous deeds of all who follow that plan.

**Spurgeon** -There shall come a day when it shall be seen that, after all, God knew best what style of preacher to send. He had work for each man to do, and he adapted the man for the work he had entrusted to his charge..... Though the world contemns all wisdom's children, whichever way they go, and is not pleased with their manners, whatever manners they possess, yet, in the long run, when the wisdom of God shall be all unfolded, it will be seen that the roughness of John and the gentleness and lovingkindness of Jesus were both right in their proper place. If fish are not caught in the gospel fishery, it may sometimes be the fisherman's fault, but more often, it is the fault of the fish themselves. Here we have two very different kinds of fishermen, yet neither of them attracts all, though each of them draws some.

**MacArthur** adds "The preacher's style is not the determining factor; "the gospel," not the cleverness of the messenger, "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Ro 1:16). The same "word of the cross" that "is foolishness to those who are perishing" is to those "who are being saved... the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**IVP Background Commentary** - Jewish tradition often personified Wisdom as divine, usually as a holy woman exhorting the righteous to follow her; here she is the mother of the righteous.

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**Ryle on wisdom is vindicated by all her children** - We learn, secondly, from these verses, that the wisdom of God's ways is always recognized and acknowledged by those who are wise-hearted.

This is a lesson which is taught in a sentence of somewhat obscure character: "Wisdom is justified of all her children." But it seems difficult to extract any other meaning from the words, by fair and consistent interpretation. The idea which our Lord desired to impress upon us appears to be, that though the vast majority of the Jews were hardened and unreasonable, there were some who

were not,—and that though multitudes saw no wisdom in the ministry of John the Baptist and Himself, there were a chosen few who did. Those few were the “children of wisdom.” Those few, by their lives and obedience, declared their full conviction that God’s ways of dealing with the Jews were wise and right, and that John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus were both worthy of all honor. In short, they “justified” God’s wisdom, and so proved themselves truly wise.

This saying of our Lord about the generation among whom He lived, describes a state of things which will always be found in the Church of Christ. In spite of the cavils, sneers, objections, and unkind remarks with which the Gospel is received by the majority of mankind, there will always be some in every country who will assent to it, and obey it with delight. There will never be wanting a “little flock” which hears the voice of the Shepherd gladly, and counts all His ways right. The children of this world may mock at the Gospel, and pour contempt on the lives of believers. They may count their practice madness, and see no wisdom nor beauty in their ways. But God will take care that He has a people in every age. There will be always some who will assert the perfect excellence of the doctrines and requirements of the Gospel, and will “justify the wisdom” of Him who sent it. And these, however much the world may despise them, are they whom Jesus calls wise. They are “wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. 3:15.)

Let us ask ourselves, as we leave this passage, whether we deserve to be called children of wisdom? Have we been taught by the Spirit to know the Lord Jesus Christ? Have the eyes of our understanding been opened? Have we the wisdom that cometh from above? If we are truly wise, let us not be ashamed to confess our Master before men. Let us declare boldly that we approve the whole of His Gospel, all its doctrines and all its requirements. We may find few with us and many against us. The world may laugh at us, and count our wisdom no better than folly. But such laughter is but for a moment. The hour cometh when the few who have confessed Christ, and justified His ways before men, shall be confessed and “justified” by Him before His Father and the angels. (Luke 7)

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### **Wisdom Justified - Experiencing God Day by Day - Henry Blackaby**

- “Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children.”—Luke 7:35

The world is full of “experts.” There are people everywhere who want to convince you of the wisdom of their opinion. Yet God says that it is not the one who declares his viewpoint the most loudly or vociferously who is the wisest, but the one who is vindicated over time.

Wisdom is not proven by argument or debate. Wisdom is proven over time. Some people adamantly proclaim that their opinion is best. Regardless of how convincingly these people defend their viewpoint, time is the best judge of their wisdom. The result of a practice proves its validity, not how loudly it is promoted.

When you seek to obey what God has told you, you will sometimes meet resistance and criticism from others who disagree with the wisdom of your actions. Your immediate response may be the urge to vindicate yourself. However, if you wait patiently, time will reveal the wisdom of your actions far better than you could through argument.

Through the ages, the wisdom found in God’s Word has been tested and proven true. It is critical that you measure everything you hear against the Scriptures. Trends in psychology and philosophy come and go, but God’s Word is timeless. Whenever you share an opinion in counseling someone else, make sure that it comes from the Scripture and not merely from your best thinking. As long as you base your life choices on the Word of God, time will be your defender and will validate the wisdom of your choices. If, over time, you clearly see you are wrong, ask God’s forgiveness and seek a fresh word from God through the Scripture. Then obey that word and watch to see God confirm His wisdom in your life.

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### **No One Remembered!**

Read: Ecclesiastes 9:13-18 | He by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that same poor man. —Ecclesiastes 9:15

In a commentary on Ecclesiastes 9:15, Martin Luther cites the story of Themistocles, the soldier and statesman who commanded the Athenian squadron. Through his strategy, he won the Battle of Salamis, drove the Persian army from Greek soil, and saved his city. A few years later, he fell out of favor, was ostracized by his countrymen, and was banished from Athens. Thus, Luther concludes, “Themistocles did much good for his city, but received much ingratitude.”

The crowd, for some reason, seems to ignore or quickly forget the good that the poor and humble man accomplishes through his wisdom. No matter. “Wisdom is [still] better than strength” even if “the poor man’s wisdom is despised” (v.16). It’s better to be a quiet, honest sage who, though forgotten, leaves much good behind, than a swaggering, strident fool who, though many applaud him, “destroys much good” (v.18).

Accordingly, what matters in the end is not the recognition and gratitude we receive for the work we've done, but the souls of those gentle folk in whom we've sown the seeds of righteousness. Put another way: "**Wisdom is justified by all her children**" (Luke 7:35). Whom have you influenced through your wise and godly wisdom? By David H. Roper [Used by permission from Our Daily Bread](#)

Help me to walk so close to Thee  
That those who know me best can see  
I live as godly as I pray,  
And Christ is real from day to day.  
—Ryberg

A wise person sets his earthly goals on heavenly gains.

**Luke 7:36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.**

**KJV** And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

- **one** Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 11:2-16
- **And he** Lk 7:34; 11:37; 14:
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:36-39 Why Did Christ Allow a Prostitute to Wash His Feet?](#) - John MacArthur

**The gratitude of the sinful woman** (Luke 7:36-50)

1. The setting (Luke 7:36-38)
2. The Pharisee's reaction (Luke 7:39)
3. Jesus' explanation (Luke 7:40-48)
4. The result (Luke 7:49-50)

**Related Passages:**

Luke 11:37+ Now when He had spoken, a Pharisee \*asked Him to have lunch with him; and He went in, and reclined at the table.

Luke 14:1+ It happened that when He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on the Sabbath to eat bread, they were watching Him closely.

## INVITATION TO DINNER

**Now one of the Pharisees** ([pharisaiois](#) "Separated Ones") **was requesting** ([erotao](#)) **Him to dine with him** - One of the Pharisees whose name was **Simon** (Lk 7:40+). On the first glance this seems like a friendly thing to do. However undoubtedly Simon's motive was either to entrap Jesus or to find some reason to accuse Him, for earlier Luke recorded that "The scribes and the **Pharisees** were watching Him closely to see if He healed on the Sabbath, so that they might find reason to accuse Him." (Lk 6:7) We know this was not a "friendly encounter" because of what the Pharisee did not do (see Lk 7:44-46+). This is a snake (Lk 3:7+) summoning the Savior to a surreptitious supper! This is no friendly communal meal as commonly practiced in the orient as a time of intimate fellowship! The verb **requesting** is in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating he was doing this over and over. It was a continual request to which Jesus finally acquiesced. Jesus had a special treat in store for this Pharisee! Note the irony that Jesus had just been called a "Friend of Sinners," and yet here He is willing to dine with one of the worst sinners in Israel, a Pharisee, for those who were self-righteous Pharisees were more unreachable than the sinful woman as the story would reveal. Notice in this action Jesus is giving us the example of Lk 6:27+ to love your enemies in this case one of the Pharisees (they had accused Him of blasphemy - Lk 5:20; they had accused him of eating with tax-gatherers and sinners - Lk 5:30; they had accused him of breaking their man-made Sabbath rules - Lk 6:2; they were filled with rage when He healed on Sabbath - Lk 6:11). So Jesus knew full well this was [not going to be a](#)

["picnic."](#)

**MacArthur** - Now here Jesus was willing to go into the house of a man that He knew was a hypocrite. He knew the man had evil intentions toward Him. He knew the man was going to do everything he could to get some incriminating evidence against Jesus by something that Jesus did or said. He knew he was looking to mount the case for Him. But nonetheless, Jesus, gracious as He always is and coming to seek and to save that which was lost, is willing to expose this wicked, hypocritical Pharisee to the power that He has to transform. And so He entered the Pharisee's house.

**Robertson** on Pharisee's invitation to Jesus to dine - Luke has two other instances of Pharisees who invited Jesus to meals (Luke 11:37; 14:1) and he alone gives them. This is the Gospel of Hospitality (Ragg). Jesus would dine with a Pharisee or with a publican (Luke 5:29 = Mark 2:15 = Matt. 9:10) and even invited himself to be the guest of Zaccheus (Luke 9:5).

**IVP Background Commentary** - It was considered virtuous to invite a teacher over for dinner, especially if the teacher were from out of town or had just taught at the synagogue. That they are "reclining" rather than sitting indicates that they are using couches rather than chairs and that this is a banquet, perhaps in honor of the famous guest teacher.

**Spurgeon** - Invitations from Pharisees were rather scarce; they did not often ask Christ to their houses. Even before this meal is over, there will be sure to be something like a quarrel, depend upon it....It was usually a suspicious circumstance when a Pharisee desired to be familiar with Christ; it might generally be suspected that he wished to entrap him. Yet, on this occasion, if there was no real friendliness to Christ, there was at least the appearance of it. We see what our Saviour did when the Pharisee gave him an invitation: "He went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat." The Lord saw there an opportunity for usefulness. He knew that he would have a good reason for speaking personally to this Pharisee, who, peradventure, was one of the other sort. At all events, our Lord felt that it was right for him to go into that house, even if they did watch him, and try to catch him in his talk. If there was hypocrisy there, there was the more need for his presence, as Jesus himself said concerning his eating with publicans and sinners, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick."

[Click picture to enlarge](#)  
[Click here for further explanation](#)

## RECLINING FOR DINING

**And He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined ([kataklino](#)) at the table** - It was like Jesus coming into the lion's den, but little did the "lion" know that his pride would be the meal, so to speak. Reclining was in typical oriental style as depicted in the diagram above. Note that the feet are located at the greatest distance from the table, as they were considered very unclean (and in fact usually were dusty and dirty unless washed, which Jesus' feet were not in this encounter). Jesus' feet were particularly unclean in this situation because of the lack of hospitality by the Pharisee! But that uncleanness would soon be rectified in a most amazing way!

**Barclay** describes the scene - The scene is the courtyard of the house of Simon the Pharisee. The houses of well-to-do people were built round an open courtyard in the form of a hollow square. Often in the courtyard there would be a garden and a fountain; and there in the warm weather meals were eaten. It was the custom that when a Rabbi was at a meal in such a house, all kinds of people came in—they were quite free to do so—to listen to the pearls of wisdom which fell from his lips. That explains the presence of the woman. **When a guest entered such a house three things were always done.** The host placed his hand on the guest's shoulder and gave him the kiss of peace. That was a mark of respect which was never omitted in the case of a distinguished Rabbi. The roads were only dust tracks, and shoes were merely soles held in place by straps across the foot. So always cool water was poured over the guest's feet to cleanse and comfort them. Either a pinch of sweet-smelling incense was burned or a drop of attar of roses was placed on the guest's head. These things good manners demanded, and in this case not one of them was done. In the east the guests did not sit, but reclined, at table. They lay on low couches, resting on the left elbow, leaving the right arm free, with the feet stretched out behind; and during the meal the sandals were taken off. That explains how the woman was standing beside Jesus' feet. ([Luke 7](#))

"They sat according to the Eastern custom of sitting, which was rather lying at length, with the feet far out upon the couch or sofa" (Spurgeon) The typical dinner table of Jesus' day was usually not a classic rectangular table as in most modern kitchens and dining rooms. Instead the ancient tables were often 3 tables (each table a couch for 3 or so-called [triclinium](#)) in somewhat of a U-shape (which may have resembled the Roman counterpart below) with guests reclining on their left elbows. In ancient Rome the classic dining arrangement in wealthy homes was the [triclinium](#) ([see picture](#))

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**Was requesting ([erotao](#))** does not convey the idea of an authoritative command but rather that of a friend making an urgent appeal



to a friend. The Pharisee was "a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!" (Lk 7:34<sup>±</sup>).

**Reclined** (2625)(**kataklinō** from **kata** = down or functioning to intensify main verb root + **klino** = to incline, bend, bow) means literally to incline down, to lie sloping forward and descriptive of the oriental posture at meal (recline). See below for depiction of a typical dinner setup in Jesus' day (see also Lk 14:7-8-note). It is interesting that this word occurs in medical contexts of ancient literature contemporary with the NT, used for example, to describe a patient "lying down" for treatment (Moulton-Milligan). It is not surprising that the physician Luke is the only author who used **kataklinō**. **NET Note** on **reclined at the table** - as 1st century middle eastern meals were not eaten while sitting at a table, but while reclining on one's side on the floor with the head closest to the low table and the feet farthest away.

**Kataklinō** - 5x in 5v with no uses in Septuagint - reclined(2), sit down(2), take(1).

Luke 7:36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.

Luke 9:14+ (For there were about five thousand men.) And He said to His disciples, "Have them sit down to eat in groups of about fifty each."

Luke 9:15+ They did so, and had them all sit down.

Luke 14:8+ "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him,

Luke 24:30+ When He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them.

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**J C Ryle** - THE deeply interesting narrative contained in these verses, is only found in the Gospel of St. Luke. In order to see the full beauty of the story, we should read, in connection with it, the eleventh chapter of St. Matthew. We shall then discover the striking fact, that the woman whose conduct is here recorded, most likely owed her conversion to the well-known words, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." That wondrous invitation, in all human probability, was the saving of her soul, and gave her that sense of peace for which we see her so grateful.—A full offer of free pardon is generally God's chosen instrument for bringing the chief of sinners to repentance.

We see in this passage that men may show some outward respect to Christ, and yet remain unconverted. The Pharisee before us is a case in point. He showed our Lord Jesus Christ more respect than many did. He even "desired Him that He would eat with him." Yet all this time he was profoundly ignorant of the nature of Christ's Gospel. His proud heart secretly revolted at the sight of a poor contrite sinner being allowed to wash our Lord's feet. And even the hospitality he showed appears to have been cold and niggardly. Our Lord Himself says, "Thou gavest me no water for my feet; thou gavest me no kiss; my head with oil thou didst not anoint." In short, in all that the Pharisee did, there was one great defect. There was outward civility, but there was no heart-love.

We shall do well to remember the case of this Pharisee. It is quite possible to have a decent form of religion, and yet to know nothing of the Gospel of Christ,—to treat Christianity with respect, and yet to be utterly blind about its cardinal doctrines,—to behave with great correctness and propriety at Church, and yet to hate justification by faith, and salvation by grace, with a deadly hatred. Do we really feel affection toward the Lord Jesus? Can we say, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee?" Have we cordially embraced His whole Gospel? Are we willing to enter heaven side by side with the chief of sinners, and to owe all our hopes to free grace?—These are questions which we ought to consider. If we cannot answer them satisfactorily, we are in no respect better than Simon the Pharisee; and our Lord might say to us, "I have somewhat to say unto thee." (Luke 7)

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### **Fishing Where They Ain't Read: Luke 7:34-48**

One of the Pharisees asked [Jesus] to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. —Luke 7:36

I have a good friend I fish with now and then. He's a very thoughtful man. After climbing into his waders and boots and gathering up his gear, he sits on the tailgate of his truck and scans the river for 15 minutes or more, looking for rising fish. "No use fishing where they ain't," he says. This makes me think of another question: "Do I fish for souls where they ain't?"

It was said of Jesus that He was "a friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Luke 7:34). As Christians, we are to be unlike the world in our behavior, but squarely in it as He was. So we have to ask ourselves: Do I, like Jesus, have friends who are sinners? If I have only Christian friends, I may be fishing for souls "where they ain't."

Being with nonbelievers is the first step in "fishing." Then comes love—a heart-kindness that sees beneath the surface of their off-

hand remarks and listens for the deeper cry of the soul. It asks, "Can you tell me more about that?" and follows up with compassion. "There is much preaching in this friendliness," pastor George Herbert (1593–1633) said.

Such love is not a natural instinct. It comes solely from God. And so we pray: "Lord, when I am with nonbelievers today, may I become aware of the cheerless voice, the weary countenance, or the downcast eyes that I, in my natural self-preoccupation, could easily overlook. May I have a love that springs from and is rooted in Your love. May I listen to others, show Your compassion, and speak Your truth today." David H. Roper [Used by permission from Our Daily Bread](#)

When amazed by His love for me,  
To love Him back became my prayer.  
I sought an answer sincerely— It was:  
Love the neighbor who's there.  
—Verway

We are to be channels of God's truth— not reservoirs.

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### **James Smith - SAVED BY FAITH. Luke 7:36-50.**

"Triumphant Faith!  
Hers is a conquering path to Heaven,  
With feet fire-shod, because her hand is placed  
Immovably in God's; her eye doth rest  
Unchangeably on His."—Miss Tatham.

This Pharisee desired Jesus that He would eat with him, but he did not desire this woman, branded with the name "sinner," to come into his house. Her faith in the pity and compassion of Christ must have been strong when it constrained her to follow Him into such a house and at such a time. Such sorrowful sinners are never found weeping at a Pharisee's feet. There is a holy, winsome magnetism in the love of God, as manifested in the Person of Jesus Christ; the vilest may draw nigh and find the blessing of "eternal redemption."

**I. The Character of this Woman.** "She was a sinner" (Lk 7:37). Evidently a great sinner, for the Lord speaks of "her sins which are many" (Lk 7:47). The Pharisee called her a sinner with emphasis (Lk 7:39). Such a sinner as should not be touched; but Christ had to designate the Pharisees themselves as hypocrites (Lk 11:44). She was a sinner, so was Simon, but she had this advantage, that she knew it, while he was proudly unconscious of it. The one owed five hundred pence, the other fifty, but in their relation to God they were both alike, "having nothing to pay." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. There is none righteous, no, not one."

**II. The Workings of Her Faith.** "Even in a spark there is fire." Little faith may cling to an almighty Saviour. Faith is an operative energy of the soul that will not rest till the object desired has been grasped and enjoyed. Observe how it wrought in this woman. It constrained her to—

**1. COME TO JESUS** (Lk 7:37). Perhaps the sneer of the self-righteous Pharisees had awakened hope in her heart. "Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners" (Lk 7:34). Her faith constrained her to draw near to Him without any personal invitation. Does such an act not put to shame the many who are still refusing the call of God? (John 5:40).

**2. REPENT OF HER SINS.** "She stood at His feet behind Him weeping" (Lk 7:38). When one stands at His feet and contrasts his own life with His the bitter tears of contrition are sure to fall. Seeing ourselves in His light is always a humbling revelation. Such tears are precious jewels in the sight of God; they tell of mountains of guilt flowing down at His presence (Isa. 64:1). What effect has your faith had in this direction?

**3. SHOW THE TOKENS OF HER LOVE.** "She kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment" (Lk 7:38). Hers was the faith that worked by love. The kiss spoke of the affection of her heart, while the precious ointment poured out told of a willingness to consecrate her all to Him. The faith that does not work in this fashion is a dead faith (James 2:26). The lips of love must come into contact with Christ as well as the hands of faith. With the heart man believeth unto salvation.

### **III. The Blessed Results. She was—**

**1. APPROVED.** "Seest thou this woman?" (Lk 7:44-46). These words spoken to Simon would fall on the poor, sin-smitten soul of the woman as the music of Heaven. Jesus Himself knew the joy of being "a man approved of God" (Acts 2:22). Study to show thyself approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:15). Her manner of approach had His most gracious welcome, although she had no promise to plead. But what a solace to her heart that He

commended her!

**2. FORGIVEN.** "Thy sins are forgiven" (Lk 7:48). She was forgiven much, for she loved much. There was a great difference between the cold, calculating belief of Simon and the simple, loving, heartfelt faith of the woman. She came, and with her tears and kisses she reasoned together with her Lord, and her sins, which were as scarlet, were made white as snow (Isa. 1:18). What encouragement for the wicked to forsake their ways is found in His abundant pardon! (Isa. 55:7).

**3. ASSURED.** "Thy faith hath saved thee" (Lk 7:50). Faith in Christ not only saved her from the guilt of sin, but also from the tyranny of its power. She was now freed from the very love of sin. His grace saved her, His Word assured her. It was not the tears of her eyes nor the kisses of her lips that saved her, but the faith of her heart. By grace are ye saved through faith, and by the record given are we assured (1 John 5:11-13).

**4. COMMISSIONED.** "Go in peace" (Lk 7:50). Go in peace with God, because justified by faith (Rom. 5:1). Go in the peace of God, because now a child of God and an heir to the kingdom. Go and publish the Gospel of peace, as an ambassador for Him, who is the Prince of Peace, and who has made peace by the blood of His Cross. Go in peace back to your home and to your associates in sin as a messenger of mercy, telling them what great things He hath done for thy soul. Thy faith hath saved thee, go!

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## Paul Enns - STUDY THE BIBLE CULTURALLY

- Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. (Luke 7:36)

he best way to obtain insight into the culture of the Bible is to take a trip to Israel. As you enter the old city of Jerusalem you will see examples of life as it was in Jesus' day—women on their way to market carrying large baskets of bakery goods or clothes; rugged-looking men riding donkeys with big bundles tied behind them; people in the narrow streets hawking their products. In the countryside you will see Bedouin living in tents much like Abraham (except for the TV antenna) and shepherds on the Judean hills. It all reveals the culture of the Bible—a culture much different from our own.

In ancient Israel ordinary people lived in tents or small, one-room cottages with dirt floors. Beds were mats unrolled on the floor. Roofs were flat and used for drying grain or for prayer and refuge.

Food was simple. Meat was reserved for special occasions, but fish was a staple. Unleavened bread similar to crepes was used to scoop up the food with the hand (Matthew 26:23). Utensils were not normally used. "Why use a fork when God has given man so many fingers?" they said. People drank milk from goats and camels, and when it curdled it became lunch (Isaiah 7:15)! Olives were eaten as food and when crushed served as butter, but the oil also provided fuel and medicine. At mealtime family members sat cross-legged on cushions, whereas at banquets they reclined on couches (Luke 7:36).

Hospitality was very important (Genesis 18:1-8). Both men and women wore tunics and robes, but women's robes were more ornate. A cloak, which also served as a peasant's bedding (Exodus 22:26-27), was worn in cold weather. Women wore veils in public, still true of many Arab women today. Homes were patriarchal, and when the father died, the oldest son became ruler of the family, yet women were treated with respect. Parents arranged marriages (Genesis 24:58), and love came after the marriage (Titus 2:4). A groom's failure to provide a proper wedding feast could result in a lawsuit (John 2:3).

The culture of the Bible is both fascinating and important. A book such as Ralph Gower's *New Manners & Customs of Bible Times* (Moody) has beautiful pictures and is very helpful. Study the culture for added insight into the Bible.

**LESSON:** Understanding the culture of the Bible is important in interpreting the Word of God.

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### J R Miller The Penitent Woman Luke 7:36-50

Jesus did not turn His back on social pleasures. Herein He differed from the Baptist. We are almost certainly right in saying that John would not have gone to the wedding feast in Cana—Jesus went, and went gladly. John, we are quite sure, would not have gone to dinner at the Pharisee's house—Jesus accepted the invitation without a question and without hesitation. His heart was full of gracious love for men, and He sought every opportunity to do good. He was in the world—but His life remained heavenly in its purity and sweetness. Wherever He went—He carried blessing.

The two characters, besides Jesus, in this story, are the woman and the Pharisee. The woman was spoken of as "a sinner." The Pharisee was as sinner, too—but not of the same kind as the woman. Yet he scarcely seems to have been conscious that he was a sinner.

The woman was known as a bad woman; but something had happened just before we see her coming into Simon's house which had wrought a great change in her. Some of the gracious words of Jesus had fallen into her heart—and had started there the vision of a better life.

The woman had followed Jesus into the house, drawn by love for Him who had saved her. She carried in her hand a box of costly ointment. She fell at the Master's feet. She wept, bathing His feet with her tears, then drying off the tears with her untressed hair, kissing them, and then anointing them with the ointment. All this was an expression of deep love which was quite in accordance with Oriental ways. It was the grateful act of a truly penitent sinner.

Jesus seems not to have been disturbed by the woman, and not to have said anything to her. But His host saw what was going on, and his spirit was vexed within him. He said nothing, either—but into his heart came the thought, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner." According to Simon's religion, a godly man should keep himself altogether away from all who are wicked. The touch of sinners would defile him.

What was the Pharisee's mistake? Did Jesus not know what kind of woman this was? Yes, He knew all about her—her whole past life, all its shame and guilt. But He knew also that she had repented, had given up her sin, had turned to God, and was now a saved woman.

The Pharisee thought that if Jesus had known who the woman was—He would have spurned her. But Jesus had come to the world to be a physician, and a physician does not spurn the sick—they are the very people it is in His mission to receive and to help. The lost are the very ones Jesus came to save, and He will not turn His back on one of them. This woman was welcome at His feet—just because she was a sinner, now penitent.

Of all those who come to Christ, none are so welcome as those who have in their hearts a deep sense of unworthiness. The banished woman in "Lalla Rookh," wandered everywhere, searching for earth's most precious thing, having been told that when she brings it, the gate of heaven would be opened to her. Again and again she brought precious things—but it was only when she bore, last of all, a penitent's tear that the gate of heaven opened to her. The dearest thing on earth to God—is a heart broken with sorrow for sin. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise" (Psalm 51:17)

In a beautiful parable, Jesus explained to Simon the secret of the woman's love and her act of devotion. Two debtors, one of whom owed much, the other little, were both forgiven. Which would be the more grateful? Simon was able to answer the question, although it is doubtful if he understood its application. Two thoughts may be noted here: one is that, though the debts of the two men were different, both were debtors, and neither could pay what he owed. Sinners differ as to the amount of their debt to God—but he who has sinned least, is as unable to pay as he who has sinned the most.

The other thought is that both were forgiven. That was the only way either could become free from his debt, for neither could pay. The only hope of sinners is in the divine mercy. One man may look with pity upon his fellow in the depths of some great wickedness, yet he himself is a sinner, too, one who must be forgiven or perish. God's forgiveness is astonishing. It is great enough for the worst sinner. It wipes out as utterly the blackest sins, as the least defiling.

Jesus showed Simon that this woman loved more than he did—by comparing her treatment of him with Simon's. She had a deeper sense of her sin—and consequently a deeper sense of the mercy she had received than Simon had. She had wet His feet with her tears, and anointed them with ointment, while Simon had not even given Him water for His feet. The more we realize our sinfulness, the greater is our love for Christ when we are forgiven. It is often true, that the worst sinners—make the best Christians. They love more because they owe more to Christ. All through Paul's life of wonderful devotion, the memory of his past enmity to Christ appears as a motive for his sublime consecration. He sought to burn out the shame of his past wickedness, by more intense devotion and more earnest service. If we understood better how much we owe to God's mercy—we would be more earnest in our Christian consecration. "Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."

The words of Jesus to the penitent woman were full of comfort. He told her first that her faith had saved her. How that word "save" must have thrilled her! The poor, shame-soiled, sin-ruined thing that the Pharisee would have spurned from his feet—saved! An heir of heaven now, destined to walk the heavenly streets in white!

Christ touched this sinful soul—and it was transformed into beauty! That is what He is doing everyday, and can and will do for everyone who creeps to His feet in penitence and faith.

Another of Christ's words of comfort to the woman was, "Go in peace." Peace comes with forgiveness. There never can be any true peace—while sins are unforgiven. The dwellers on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius plant their gardens and live in their villas and go on with their work and pleasure, and yet they know that beneath them sleep evermore, the awful fires of the volcano, which any day or night may burst out and sweep them away to death. The sinner with his life's sin unforgiven, can never have true peace. He is

sleeping over a volcano. But when sin is forgiven—there is peace with God.

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### **Mark 2:10 Luke 7:36-50** TODAY IN THE WORD

The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. - Mark 2:10

Ann Judson, the pioneer missionary who left behind a comfortable life in America to go to Burma with her husband Adoniram (see the February 4 study), once wrote to her sister, ""A little sacrifice for the cause of Christ is not worth naming, and I feel it a privilege, of which I am entirely undeserving, to have had it in my power to sacrifice my all for Him who hesitated not to lay down His life for sinners.""

Any sacrifice we can make has to seem small compared to what Jesus Christ has done for us. No sinner who has come to Him in repentance and faith has ever been turned away. Jesus' compassion was always extended to those who sought forgiveness.

The story of the sinful woman and the self-righteous Pharisee is a perfect example of Jesus' infinite compassion for lost people. There are several amazing things about this incident.

The first is that this woman, despite her soiled reputation, felt safe in approaching Jesus to demonstrate repentance and sorrow for her sin. She was taking a huge risk of rejection and humiliation, should Jesus refuse to have anything to do with her, or hold her up to ridicule. It's obvious she would have received nothing but scorn from Simon, Jesus' host.

It's also amazing to see Jesus' complete composure as this woman wept on His feet, kissed them, and poured perfume on them. There isn't another man on earth who could have dealt with this potentially embarrassing and awkward situation the way Jesus did.

Simon the Pharisee's lack of passion for lost souls was mirrored in his treatment of Jesus. Simon's failure to provide the customary courtesies for his guest betrayed a low sense of value for Jesus and His mission of seeking and saving the lost. And it revealed Simon's pride of heart that made him feel superior to a ""sinner.""

What a moment it must have been when Jesus forgave this woman her many sins! It left the other dinner guests in amazement. The woman left free of her sin, declared righteous in God's sight--the act of God's grace that Paul would later call justification by faith.

**TODAY ALONG THE WAY** Have you ever glanced at someone, perhaps on the street--and then stopped to really look at that person? When you do that, you begin to see things you didn't notice at first glance. That's what we need to do with people on the spiritual level. Simon only saw a sinner; Jesus saw a sinner who was eager for salvation. Seeing people through Jesus' eyes can make all the difference. Ask God to help you do that with the people around you. But be careful: seeing people the way Jesus sees them will intensify your passion for souls!

**Luke 7:37 And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume,**

**KJV** And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

- **which** Lk 7:34,39; 5:30,32; 18:13; 19:7; Matthew 21:31; John 9:24,31; Romans 5:8; 1 Timothy 1:9,15; 1 Peter 4:18
- **an** Matthew 26:7; Mark 14:3; John 11:2; 12:2,3
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:36-39 Why Did Christ Allow a Prostitute to Wash His Feet?](#)- John MacArthur

Alabaster Vial

## **A SINNER CRASHES THE PARTY TO WORSHIP JESUS**

**And there** - Literally this is "**And behold**" where **behold** ([idou](#)) serves to draw our attention to this unique scene. This is a very important "behold" which is a good lesson that translations like even the NAS are not always literal. The ESV gets it right - "An behold." (Lk 7:37ESV) **Behold** serves to add interest and emphasis in this context. **Spurgeon** says "For it is a wonder of grace: "**Behold.**"

**TECHNICAL NOTE** - Some commentaries confuse this event in Luke 7 with a similar event involving a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume (Mt 26:6) as described in Mt 26:6–13; Mk 14:3–9 and Jn 12:2–8. In addition to this similarity, the men in both events were named Simon, but that is a very common Jewish name (e.g., Simon Peter, Simon the zealot, etc, etc), not to mention that the second Simon was identified as a leper (Mk 14:3) not a Pharisee. Another difference is that the event at Simon the Leper's home occurred in Judea (Bethany near Jerusalem - Mk 14:3), not in Galilee and the time was shortly before Jesus' crucifixion. The woman anointing Jesus at Simon the Leper's home was Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, and she anointed His head not His feet. Finally the woman in Luke 7 is not named and is almost surely not Mary Magdalene because she was not named until Lk 8:2. To name her in the next chapter and not in this event be very unlikely considering Luke's attention to detail.

**Was a woman in the city who was a sinner** ([hamartolos](#)) - What an interesting description of this woman "a sinner." We should now all be engaged in what Luke is about to say, because we are all sinners, all "dead in our trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1+). Pharisees saw anyone who did not follow their man made rules and ceremonial rituals felt were necessary to produce righteousness to be worthy of being designated as a sinner. The Pharisees would never classify themselves in the low category "sinner." Commentators speculate she was likely a prostitute, a reasonable interpretation in light of the fact that she had enough funds to purchase perfume which was generally not cheap.

**TECHNICAL NOTE ON "SINNER"** - [MacArthur](#) points out that "Sinner" is a term used in the Gospel of Luke many times (ED: 16x in 15v - Lk 5:30, 32, Lk 6:32, 33, 34, Lk 7:34, 37, 39, et al)....it is a term to designate an unregenerate person, a person who is marked by their sinfulness. It is used that way in the New Testament. Even James 4:8, "**Cleanse** your hands, you sinners." "Sinners" is a term to describe [reprobate](#) people..... (**Sinner**) is a term that has some disdain in it. It refers to those who were sort of the [low life](#). The Pharisee would have had a catalog of sinners. It would have included tax collectors and the thugs and thieves...those who would be categorized as unacceptable, outcast sinners....when it came to the feminine side, "**sinner**" was a synonym for a prostitute, a woman who chose to be a professional adulteress, immoral, filthy, impure, perverse and living a flagrantly sinful life at a public level.

**And when she learned** ([epiginosko](#)) **that He was reclining** ([katakeimai](#)) **at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial** ([alabastron](#)) **of perfume** ([muron](#)) - **Learned** ([epiginosko](#)) means she had exact knowledge that Jesus was at the house of the Pharisee. This fact moved her heart to make her move! It was a common practice that when a banquet was held uninvited people could enter and stand away from the dining table and quietly listen to the discussions of the host and the guests. That this woman was able to get in is somewhat surprising given her known reputation. We can only speculate that either the Pharisee had no one checking out those who entered or it was night time and it would have been difficult to recognize her face. **Reclining** ([katakeimai](#) in present tense) indicates the guests were in place with outstretched feet as in the diagram below and meal was about to commence. One has to wonder if anything was ever consumed at this meal given the subsequent events. **She brought an alabaster vial** ([alabastron](#)) **of perfume** indicates she was prepared to carry out one of the greatest acts of adoration recorded in the entire Bible. The vial was made of **alabaster** stone that was most often used for precious perfumes and had a long neck, a sealed opening so that it had to be broken to pour out the contents.

**Vincent** on the **woman...a sinner** - A sinner. Wyc., a sinneress. Her presence there is explained by the Oriental custom of strangers passing in and out of a house during a meal to see and converse with the guests. Trench cites a description of a dinner at a consul's house in Damietta. "Many came in and took their places on the sideseats, uninvited and yet unchallenged. They spoke to those at table on business or the news of the day, and our host spoke freely to them" ("Parables"). Bernard beautifully says: "Thanks to thee, most blessed sinner: thou hast shown the world a safe enough place for sinners—the feet of Jesus, which spurn none, reject none, repel none, and receive and admit all. Where alone the Pharisee vents not his haughtiness, there surely the Ethiopian changes his skin, and the leopard his spots" (cit. by Trench, "Parables").

**William Barclay** describes what this woman may have looked like - Round her neck she wore, like all Jewish women, a little phial of concentrated perfume; they were called alabasters ([Wikipedia](#)); and they were very costly. She wished to pour it on his feet, for it was all she had to offer. ([Luke 7](#))

**Spurgeon's** expository notes - In a particular sense, a sinner; one whose very trade was sin. A sinner by profession, a public and notorious sinner. (Ed: Methinks we are all sadly sinners by profession!)....Her name is not given; and there are good reasons why it should not be given. Certainly, she was not Mary the sister of Lazarus, nor yet Mary Magdalene, we may be quite sure of that. Our Saviour leaves her in an anonymous condition; and it is usually best that converts of this character should not be exhibited, and their names made known. I believe that much cruel wrong has been done to reclaimed sinners when they have been pushed to the front. "Behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner," —She was not a sinner in the ordinary sense of the word, but she was "a sinner" by trade, "a sinner" by profession. It always seems to me that, in this description of her, every word is emphatic. There is much



meaning in every separate action of the woman; and even in her little mannerisms there is something that is instructive to us. Our Lord was reclining at his meal, and his feet were turned towards the door, so that she had not to come far into the house before she reached his feet; and there she stood "at his feet." Those are blessed words: "at his feet." That is where we also would stand and weep. That is where we would sit and learn. That is where we would wait and serve. That is where we hope to live and reign for ever: "at his feet." This woman "stood at his feet behind him," — as if she were unworthy to be looked upon by him, but found it honour enough to be behind him, so long as she was but near him: "at his feet behind him weeping," — with sorrow for her sin, with joy for her pardon, with delight in her Lord's presence, perhaps with grief at the prospect of what yet awaited him. And she "began to wash his feet with tears." O sweet repentance, which fills the basin better than the purest streams of earth could ever do! Then she unbound her tresses, — those nets in which she had, mayhap, caught many a man when she had hunted for the precious life after her former sinful manner. But now she uses those tresses for something better, she makes a towel of her hair. That which was her pride shall now fill that humble office, and even be honoured thereby. "And kissed his feet." Oh, the tenderness of her love, and the strength of her passion — a sacred one, not born of earth at all, — for that dear Lord of hers! she kissed his feet; and then she poured upon them the precious perfumed ointment which had cost so much. ([Luke Exposition](#))

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**Sinner** (268) ([hamartolos](#) from [hamartano](#) = deviate, miss the mark which some lexicons say is from **a** = [privative](#) or negative + **meiromai** = attain -- thus meaning not to attain, not to arrive at the goal) is an adjective (e.g., *that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful*) - see Ro 7:13<sup>±</sup>) that is often used as a noun (e.g., Ro 5:19<sup>±</sup>) to describe those who are continually erring from the way, constantly missing God's mark, living in opposition to His good and acceptable and perfect will.

Uses of **hamartolos** by Luke - Lk. 5:8; Lk. 5:30; Lk. 5:32; Lk. 6:32; Lk. 6:33; Lk. 6:34; Lk. 7:34; Lk. 7:37; Lk. 7:39; Lk. 13:2; Lk. 15:1; Lk. 15:2; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 15:10; Lk. 18:13; Lk. 19:7; Lk. 24:7

**Learned** (recognized, understood) (1921) [epiginosko](#) means to know fully, to know with certainty, to become thoroughly acquainted with or to know thoroughly, exactly, fully, or completely. Epiginosko means to possess more or less definite information about, and can imply a degree of thoroughness.. It can also mean recognized.

**Reclining** (dining) (2621) [katakeimai](#) from **katá** = down + **keimai** = lie outstretched) means to lie down, lie prostrate, often with the implication of some degree of incapacity (Mk 1:30; Mk 2:4; Lk 5:25; Jas 5:3, 6; Acts 9:33; Acts 28:8). Colloquially of a sick person we say they are "down sick." To recline on a couch at a dinner table and thus to dine or eat a meal (Mk 2:15; 14:3; Lk 5:29; 7:37; 1 Cor 8:10). The Greek papyri uses this verb in the following phrases - "the blows caused me to be laid up with sickness" "she is laid up."

**Alabaster** (211) ([alabastron](#)) means alabaster and by metonymy referred to a container for perfumed ointment - alabaster jar, flask, (small) bottle. It was a round vase without handles for holding perfumes (see picture above). **Gilbrant** - This is a soft, white, and translucent gypsum (sometimes gray or colorless like crystal) which was used for carving into vases, ornaments, or flasks for containing various perfumes and ointments. This stone was usually brought to Palestine from Egypt and was made of calcium carbonate. However, in Palestine in the Jordan Valley, a small amount of alabaster was made of calcium sulphate.

**Alabastros** - Matt. 26:7; Mk. 14:3; Lk. 7:37. Once in 2Ki 21:13

**Related Resource** - [What is an alabaster box?](#)

**Mattoon - Alabaster jars of perfume** were so valuable in the first century they were often purchased as investments. This box may have been extremely expensive, as costly as one year's wages. These boxes were made from a stone found near Alabastron in Egypt, so the Greeks gave them the name of the city and called them alabastron or "Alabaster." This name was given to the stone of which they were made. Alabaster was ideal for holding perfumes and fragrant oils. The quality of the stone helped preserve the oils. The alabaster that was used<sup>38</sup> to hold these perfumes was like a whitish, soft marble that was easily carved and shaped. The containers usually had a long neck and wide bottom. Many women wore smaller vials that were hung around their delicate necks and rested on their chest. This is how they carried their perfume when they needed to freshen up. If they started to stink from sweat or if their breath smelled, they had oils they could use to touch their tongue or spread on their skin. Clove oil or peppermint oil, for example, is a great breath or body freshener. Oils were used for medicine and to anoint the body after bathing. This helped to protect their bodies from the brazen winds and arid conditions of the desert. They would also put the oil on their clothing to give them a pleasant smell. Many of the perfumes were made of olive oil and spices that had been boiled and blended together. While the water was boiling, the spices were added. Common spices used that you would recognize were myrrh, frankincense, and cinnamon. Many other ingredients were used in different combinations. After the ingredients were blended, they were transferred to suitable containers. To preserve the special scents of the ointment, alabaster jars with long necks were sealed at the time the ointment was prepared and then broken just before use (Mark 14:3). They usually contained about a half a pint of oil. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Robertson** on **alabaster** - The flask was of alabaster, a carbonate of lime or sulphate of lime, white or yellow stone, named alabaster from the town in Egypt where it was chiefly found. It was used for a phial employed for precious ointments in ancient

writers, inscriptions and papyri just as we speak of a glass for the vessel made of glass. It had a cylindrical form at the top, as a rule, like a closed rosebud (Pliny).

**Perfume** (3464)(**muron**) is ointment, perfume, sweet-smelling substance made not from animal fats. Apart from a single reference in Revelation 18:13, **muron** occurs only in the four Gospels (13 times). The Synoptic Gospels record anointings of Jesus' head by Mary of Bethany. Matthew and Mark clearly link this anointing to Jesus' upcoming burial (Matthew 26:12; Mark 14:8). **Gilbrant - Muron** is the juice-like aromatic extract from plants, or perfumed oil. As a cosmetic **muron** could be translated "perfume." "Ointment" is perhaps a useful English translation, since **muron** was often medicinal and at times cultic in significance, being used for anointing (e.g., for burial). Another common use was in the embalming process (cf. Bauer). **Muron occurs 18 times in the Septuagint.** The Hebrew counterpart to **muron** is most regularly a form of **shemen**, usually denoting "oil" or "perfumed oil." A cultic use of **muron** in Israel's religion is attested on several occasions (e.g., Exodus 30:25, **rōqach**, "sacred anointing oil," NIV; 1 Chronicles 9:30, "spices," NIV; cf. Psalm 133:2). The cosmetic understanding occurs throughout the Song of Solomon (e.g., Song 1:3; 4:10,14; cf. Wisdom of Solomon 2:7; Amos 6:6). Oils were a priceless commodity in the ancient world (Isaiah 39:2; cf. Revelation 18:13 and the context of the Gospel accounts). ([Complete Biblical Library](#)) **Liddell-Scott** on **muron** - sweet juice extracted from plants, sweet-oil, unguent, balsam, Hdt., etc. 2. a place where unguents were sold, the perfume-market, **NET Note** - Nard or spikenard is a fragrant oil from the root and spike of the nard plant of northern India. This perfumed oil, if made of something like nard, would have been extremely expensive, costing up to a year's pay for an average laborer.

**Muron** - 14x in 13v - Usage: ointment(1), perfume(12), perfumes(1). Matt. 26:7; Matt. 26:12; Mk. 14:3; Mk. 14:4; Mk. 14:5; Lk. 7:37; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:46; Lk. 23:56; Jn. 11:2; Jn. 12:3; Jn. 12:5; Rev. 18:13

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#### Related Resources:

- [What is the significance of Jesus eating with sinners?](#)
- [Is there any sin that God will not forgive?](#)

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#### THE TROUBLE WITH GOOD PEOPLE. . . WOE TO YOU, . . . HYPOCRITES.—Mt 23:13–15 - Joseph Stowell

The sobering thing about Christ's terse condemnation of hypocrites is that He was indicting the really good people of His day, people who knew the law in every nuance and kept it precisely. These were the people who, as Christ said, honored Him with their lips though their hearts were far from Him (Matthew 15:7–8).

The trouble with being good is that the better we get the worse we might become. Keeping all the rules, going to all the right places, and saying all the right things has a nasty way of making us feel smug about ourselves. Our Christianity soon becomes more about ourselves than Jesus. And as that happens, pride takes its place on center stage, and anyone who is not "our kind" is looked down on and condemned.

**I have been taken with the story in Luke 7, where the town prostitute crashes the party held in the home of Simon the Pharisee, where Jesus is a guest.** She falls at His feet to gratefully worship Him for the forgiveness He has extended to her. Simon is aghast. Offended by her presence, he distances himself from both Jesus and the woman. Can it be that we can become so good that we don't even recognize Jesus as He really is and rejoice in His love and mercy for the worst of the lost?

As one author noted, Simon was typical of a whole group of "good" people. Describing Simon, he wrote:

[Simon is] *humorless, prudish, constrained in his affections, incapable of enjoying himself, repressed, inhibited, pouting and censorious.*

*There are hundreds of people like that today: respectable, conventional, good people. They look down their noses at the permissive society. They curl their lip at the decay in moral standards. They think they're good but they are not; they're simply dull. They think they're being moral, but they are not; they're simply feeling sanctimonious.*

What an important warning to those of us who value righteousness and truth. Humility, compassion, love, and righteous tolerance mark true followers. We can never forget that we are debtors to grace who, in the presence of Jesus, know we still have a long way to go.

Pray for the humility to know that you have not yet arrived (Strength for the Journey)

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#### James Smith - AT JESUS' FEET.

1. For Redemption, Luke 7:38

2. For Adoration on account of mercies received, Luke 8:35
3. For Instruction, Luke 10:39
4. For Consolation, John 11:32
5. For Intercession on behalf of others, Mark 7:25
6. For Worship, Matt 28:9

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**James Smith - Luke 7:37, 38.**

1. She Came to His feet, Faith.
2. She Stood at His feet, Expectancy.
3. She Wept at His feet, Contrition.
4. She Washed His feet, Sympathy.
5. She Wiped His feet, Submission.
6. She Kissed His feet, Affection.
7. She Anointed His feet, Adoration

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**CAN YOU SEE HER? AND BEHOLD, THERE WAS A WOMAN IN THE CITY WHO WAS A SINNER.—Luke 7:37**

What a contrast. Jesus loved and forgave the town prostitute. Simon, the good person in town, was repulsed by her presence.

Lisa DePalma, a recent Moody grad, ministers to prostitutes on Chicago's West and North Sides. Always used and never loved, they hear—some of them for the first time—that God has wonderfully loved them in Jesus Christ. Recently, I sat in a small gathering where Lisa was describing her work with these women. We sat stunned, gripped by the awfulness of her stories of shattered throwaway lives. For most of us, prostitutes are some distant reality, a repulsive part of the dark underside of society. Few of us have ever thought about them, let alone of taking the love of Jesus to them. My guess is that more often than not we think of prostitutes with Simon's kind of sanctimonious aloofness—the aloofness that often plagues our kind of Christianity.

Lisa wrote these pleading lines:

Can you see her? Will you let God show you?  
Her face instead of her clothes? Her eyes instead of her body?  
Can you see her? Will you let God show you?  
She has a name instead of a label, A broken heart instead of a hard one  
Can you see her? Will you let God show you?  
The image of God instead of an object of scorn  
Her worth to the Savior instead of her worthlessness to the world  
Can you see her? Will you let God show you?  
His heart of forgiveness instead of your heart that judges  
His blood that covers instead of your rules that condemn  
Can you see her? Will you let God show you?  
And when you do see, what then?

I wish Lisa had been there to whisper these words to Simon as he watched with revulsion the outpouring of the prostitute's love at Jesus' feet. His well-conformed life had shut her out. Christ welcomed her in. Are there any sinners that you could love in Jesus' name? - Joe Stowell

**Luke 7:38 and standing behind *Him* at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.**

**KJV** And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

- **weeping** Lk 6:21; 22:62; Judges 2:4,5; Ezra 10:1; Ps 6:6-8; 38:18; 51:17; 126:5,6; Isaiah 61:3; Jeremiah 31:9,18-20; Joel 2:12; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 5:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10,11; James 4:9
- **wash** Lk 7:44; Genesis 18:4; John 13:4,5

- **and anointed** Lk 7:45,46; Ecclesiastes 9:8; Song of Solomon 1:3; Isaiah 57:9
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:36-39 Why Did Christ Allow a Prostitute to Wash His Feet?](#) - John MacArthur

Sinful Forgiven Woman Washing the Savior's Feet With Tears

## ADORATION AND ANOINTING WITH TEARS AND PERFUME

While the picture above is striking, it is not completely accurate. Yes, Jesus was reclining, but His back side was toward her as she washed and anointed His feet. Only after His short parable on great forgiveness does He turn to face her (Lk 7:44).

**And standing behind Him at His feet, weeping** ([klaio](#)), **she began to wet** ([brecho](#)) **His feet with her tears** ([dakruon](#)) - Recall that Jesus is reclining at the table on one elbow with feet removed as far as possible from the table (feet were considered unclean and kept far from the dining table). The woman stands behind his feet, continually ([klaio](#) in present tense) weeping, literally overwhelmed with deep emotion. Her tears began to fall on Jesus' feet, the word **wet** ([brecho](#)) often being translated as rain. There are not just one or two tears like I often experience when I weep. This sinful woman was literally "raining" tears on His feet, drenching his feet with her tears! Why was she **weeping**? The outward act of **weeping** is the result and expression of the inward state of grief, repentance, or joy over the forgiveness of sin, and it was the latter cause in her case!

What a blessed amalgam of humility penitence, gratitude, and love!

-- C H Spurgeon

**MacArthur** on the presence of this woman **standing behind Him at His feet**- Jesus was reclining at a low table, as was the custom. It would have been shocking to all for a woman of such low reputation to come to a Pharisee's house. Such dinners involving dignitaries were often open to spectators—but no one would have expected a prostitute to attend. Her coming took great courage, and reveals the desperation with which she sought forgiveness. Her "weeping" was an expression of deep repentance.

**And kept wiping** ([ekmasso](#)) **them with the hair of her head, and kissing** ([kataphileo](#)) **His feet and anointing** ([aleipho](#)) **them with the perfume** ([muron](#)) - **Wiping** ([ekmasso](#)) is in the imperfect tense painting a picture of her taking her hair and again and again wiping his feet. The tears were "raining" down and she kept wiping those beautiful feet of Jesus with her long hair. Normally women in public had their hair bound up for to have it loosed was a shameful act. She may have come in with it bound, but now it is loose, and far from being shameful, is demonstrating one of the most incredible acts of worship in the Bible! But her grateful adoration knew no bounds, for she then began **kissing** ([kataphileo](#) = an intense verb = fervently, tenderly, affectionately, caress) **His feet where the verb kissing** again in the imperfect tense indicating that again and again her lips would meet the Savior's skin in humble, incomparable worship. This verb was used of the returning Prodigal (Lk 15:20+). But her worship continued as she broke the neck of the alabaster jar and lavished the precious **perfume** ([muron](#)) on the precious feet of Jesus, the verb **anointing** ([aleipho](#)) (you guessed it) again being in the picturesque imperfect tense! She did not just put a drop of perfume, but repeatedly poured it on His feet! Lavish love in action! Put yourself in the place of the other dinner guests and imagine what was going through the mind of the host!

**TECHNICAL NOTE ON HAIR** - "All Jewish women in public were required to wear their hair up. Not to do that was a sign of shame and looseness. But she had no choice except to use her hair to clean and dry His dirty feet. Some of the rabbis said if a woman did this in public, she would be divorced." ([MacArthur](#))

**Barclay** describes this woman - For a Jewish woman to appear with hair unbound was an act of the gravest immodesty. On her wedding day a girl bound up her hair and never would she appear with it unbound again. The fact that this woman loosed her long hair in public showed how she had forgotten everyone except Jesus. (ED: HE WAS THE TRUE LOVER OF HER SOUL, HER BRIDEGROOM FOREVER!)

It is not a disgrace to weep in the shadow of Calvary;  
the disgrace lies in not weeping.

-- William MacDonald

**Spurgeon** - His feet probably lay towards the door as he reclined at the table, and she could readily get at them without becoming too conspicuous in the room: she "stood at his feet behind him weeping," —What a blessed amalgam of humility penitence, gratitude, and love! All these are seen in what she did, especially in that unbinding of the tresses of her beauty, which had been her nets in which she had taken the souls of men, now she uses these for a towel. She "began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe

them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.”....For water she gives her tears, for a towel, her hair; to heal the blisters of his weary pilgrimage, there are her soft lips for liniment; and then for ointment comes this precious salve. ([Luke Exposition](#))

**NET Note** - The series of verbs in this verse detail the woman’s every move, much as if the onlookers were watching her every step. That she attended the meal is not so surprising, as teachers often ate an open meal where listeners were welcome, but for her to approach Jesus was unusual and took great nerve, especially given her reputation.

**New Manners and Customs - Kissing the Feet** - A customary practice among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans. It was a mark of affection and of reverence. It was also the practice of supplicants, and of those who had an important request to present. See Luke 7:45.

**IVP Background Commentary** - Jewish people did not consider perfume sinful, but because this woman is a “sinner” and uses the perfume as a tool of her trade, Jesus’ acceptance of the gift of perfuming would offend religious sensitivities. That she stands “behind him” and anoints his feet instead of his head has to do with the posture of guests reclining on the couches; he would have had his left arm on the table and his feet away from the table toward the wall. (See [The IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

**Lawrence Richards** - Don’t think the woman was forgiven after she wet Jesus’ feet with her tears. Oh, no. She was forgiven before. That was an act of love; an expression of gratitude. Her “many sins” had been purged, and her tears were tears of joy. Jesus’ later comments were explanation to Simon the Pharisee, and confirmation to the woman (Lk 7:48, 50). It’s the same in our lives. Faith and forgiveness precede both joy and service.

**James Smith** - The love that cannot sacrifice is shallow and hypocritical. The sinner in Simon's house, because of her "much love," sacrificed her "hair" and her "precious ointment" to Him (Luke 7:38; see also John 12:3). The apostle who could say, "He loved me and gave Himself for me," did also say, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die for the Name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). "Love can be bought with nothing but with itself." Just as the highest act of God's love was the sacrifice of His Son, the express image of Himself, so the highest act of human love is the sacrifice of self for the glory of God.

#### Related Resources:

- [Luke 7 Christ's Holiness and Our Sinfulness](#) - John MacArthur Q & A
- [Luke 7:36-39 Why Did Christ Allow a Prostitute to Wash His Feet?](#) - John MacArthur Q & A

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**Weeping** ([2799](#)) ([klaio](#)) means to mourn, to weep, to lament or to wail with emphasis upon noise accompanying weeping. It expresses one’s immediate and outward reaction to suffering. The picture is of one lamenting with sobs or wailing aloud and was used to describe the wailing that took place when someone died.

**Wet** ([1026](#)) ([brecho](#)) means to send rain, cause rain (Mt 5:45, Lk 17:29) and in Lk 7:38 to moisten or make wet (as with tears). And so brecho means to moisten or make wet as with tears (Lk 7:38, [44+](#)), to send rain or cause to rain (Mt 5:45). In Luke 17:29 "on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it **rained** fire and brimstone." In Rev 11:6 the two witnesses possess "the power to shut up the sky, so that rain ([huetos](#)) **will not fall** during the days of their prophesying." **Classical** writers understood brechō to mean “to make wet,” “to be rained upon,” “to steep,” “to drench,” and various other verbal ideas whose main concept is “to (make) wet” (Liddell-Scott). In the papyri brechō is particularly used of “to irrigate” the land (Moulton-Milligan).

**Tears** ([1144](#)) ([dakruon](#)) describes the salty watery fluid from the eyes. describes the salty watery fluid from the eyes. Gilbrant - This term has many references in classical and Koine Greek and is found 35 times in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew word dim'āh. In the New Testament Paul used this word to describe how he ministered to those he discipled (i.e., “with many tears”; cf. [Acts 20:19, 31](#); [2 Corinthians 2:4](#)). This was in a manner similar to Jesus’ description of the woman who ministered to Him with her “tears” ([Luke 7:38, 44](#)). [Revelation 7:17](#) and [21:4](#) both use words from [Isaiah 25:8](#) to say that God will wipe away “every tear” from His people’s faces.” ([Complete Biblical Library](#)) Secular use - that which drops like tears, gum, sap, τ ς κόνθης Hdt.2.96.

Dakruon - 10v - Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:44; Acts 20:19; Acts 20:31; 2 Co. 2:4; 2 Tim. 1:4; Heb. 5:7; Heb. 12:17; Rev. 7:17; Rev. 21:4

**Wiping** ([1591](#)) (ekmasso from **ek** = out, out of or intensifies + **masso** = to knead, to handle, to wipe) means to wipe off, dry away, wipe dry. In secular Greek of an artist, to mould or model in wax or plaster. Plat.-Med., toke,wn evkma,ssetai i;cnh he impresses anew the footsteps of his fathers, i.e. walks in their steps, Theocr.

Ekmasso - 5x - wipe(1), wiped(3), wiping(1). Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:44; Jn. 11:2; Jn. 12:3; Jn. 13:5. Not in Septuagint

**Kissing** ([2705](#)) ([kataphileo](#) from **kata** = intensifies action + **phileo** = to love, to kiss) is an intense verb which means "to kiss much"

(Thayer), to kiss fervently, tenderly, affectionately, with caressing. The [imperfect tense](#) gives us a vivid picture of this scene, for over and over she is kissing her Lord's feet! Imagine the consternation of the religious Pharisee (Lk 7:39)! Sadly this same verb is used of the "Judas Kiss" = "Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and **kissed** Him." (Mt. 26:49, Mk 14:45)

**Kataphileo** - 6x in 6v - Usage: kiss(1), kissed(4), kissing(1). - Mt. 26:49; Mk. 14:45; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:45; Lk. 15:20; Acts 20:37

**Anointing** (218)(**aleipho**) means to rub, to cover over, besmear (Mtt. 6:17; Mark 6:13; 16:1; Luke 7:38, 46; John 11:2; 12:3; James 5:14; Sept.: Gen. 31:13; Ezek. 13:10–12). **Aleipho** is used in Septuagint in Ge 31:13 of Jacob's anointing of a pillar in Bethel where he made a vow to God. Used of anointing the priests in Ex 40:15 (Nu 3:3) which also uses the word *chrisma* (anointing). Ruth was to anoint herself before going to meet Boaz (Ru 3:3). David anointed himself after his illicit son with Bathsheba died (2 Sa 12:20).

**Zodhiates** on **aleipho** versus **chrío** (anoint) - Contrast **chrío** (5548), anoint as pertaining to the sacred and religious. **Aleiphō** is used indiscriminately of either oil or ointment (*aleiphē* in Mod. Gr.) in all actual anointings. The Jew was accustomed not only to rubbing his head with oil or ointment at feasts in token of joy, but also both the head and the feet of those whom he wished to distinguish by special honor. In the case of sick persons and also of the dead, they rubbed the whole body (see Gen. 50:2; Ps. 23:5; 45:7; 104:15; Eccl. 9:8; Luke 7:37, 38; John 19:40). This was also done by the Greeks and Romans. Sometimes this rubbing was used for physical relaxation after washing (Sept.: Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; Dan. 10:3; Mic. 6:15). In the NT, the product used was either oil or ointment (Luke 7:38, 46). It is also used of rubbing a pillar (Sept.: Gen. 31:13), or captives (Sept.: 2 Chr. 28:15), or daubing a wall with mortar (Sept.: Ezek. 13:10–12, 14, 15), and in the sacred sense of anointing priests (Sept.: Ex. 40:13; Num. 3:3). In James 5:14, the word is used in the aor. part. *aleípsantes* which means that the rubbing with oil was the medicinal means applied prior to prayer. (Borrow the [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Aleipho** - 9x in 8v - Matt. 6:17; Mk. 6:13; Mk. 16:1; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:46; Jn. 11:2; Jn. 12:3; Jas. 5:14

**Aleipho** - 19x in 17v in the Septuagint - Gen. 31:13; Exod. 40:15; Num. 3:3; Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; 2 Sam. 14:2; 2 Ki. 4:2; 2 Chr. 28:15; Est. 2:12; Ezek. 13:10; Ezek. 13:11; Ezek. 13:12; Ezek. 13:14; Ezek. 13:15; Ezek. 22:28; Dan. 10:3; Mic. 6:15;

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This sinful woman's theme song could well have been the hymn ["I'd Rather Have Jesus"](#)

I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold  
I'd rather be His than have riches untold  
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land  
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand

Than to be the king of a vast domain  
And be held in sin's dread sway  
I'd rather have Jesus than anything  
This world affords today

I'd rather have Jesus than worldly applause  
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause  
I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame  
Yes, I'd rather be true to His holy name

Than to be the king of a vast domain  
And be held in sin's dread sway  
I'd rather have Jesus than anything  
This world affords today

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### Dry-Eyed Christianity - William MacDonald

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." (Lam. 1:12).

Sometimes as I sit at the Lord's Supper, I have to ask myself, "What is the matter with me? How can I sit here and contemplate the passion of the Savior and not be melted in tears?"

An unknown poet faced the same questions; he wrote:



“Am I a stone, and not a man, that I can stand,  
O Christ, beneath Thy cross,  
And number, drop by drop,  
Thy blood’s slow loss,  
And yet not weep?  
Not so the sun and moon,  
which hid their faces in a midnight sky,  
while earth convulsed and groaned —yet only I  
can look, unmoved, unwooed.  
Great God, I must not be,  
or I shall know the anger that He bore.  
Oh Lord, I pray Thee, turn and look once more,  
and smite this rock, my heart.”

Another wrote in a similar spirit:

“O wonder to myself I am,  
Thou loving, bleeding, dying Lamb,  
that I can scan the mystery o’er,  
and not be moved to love Thee more.”

I admire those sensitive souls who are so moved by the sufferings of the dying Redeemer that they break down and cry. I think of my Christian barber, Ralph Ruocco. Often as he stood over me, he would talk about the agonies which the Savior endured. Then with his tears falling on the cloth cover, he would say, “I don’t know why He was willing to die for me. I am such a wretch. Yet He bore the penalty of my sins in His body on the Cross.”

**I think of the sinful woman who washed the Savior’s feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with ointment (Lu. 7:38). Although living on the other side of the Cross, she was more attuned emotionally than I with all my superior knowledge and privilege.**

**Why am I such a block of ice? Is it that I have been brought up in a culture where it is considered unmanly to weep? If so, then I wish I had never known that culture. It is not a disgrace to weep in the shadow of Calvary; the disgrace lies in not weeping.**

Borrowing Jeremiah’s words, I must henceforth pray, “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night” (Jer. 9:1); weep, that is, over the sufferings and death which my sins brought on the sinless Savior. And I take as my own the immortal words of Isaac Watts:

Well might I hide my blushing face,  
while His dear cross appears;  
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,  
and melt my eyes to tears.

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**Stephen Olford** - “Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, ‘Greetings, Rabbi!’ and kissed Him.” —Matthew 26:49

Darby renders this verse: “Hail, Rabbi, and covered him with kisses.”

What an antithesis this is to the picture in Luke 7:38. There we see a woman who had been forgiven much, expressing the true love of her heart in kissing the feet of Jesus. Covering them with kisses!

Here, in verse 49, it is not the kiss of love but the kiss of betrayal. It is inconceivable and incredible that a man who had so lived and learned of Christ could be capable of such an act of treachery. The only solution is that we read, “Satan entered him [Judas]” and he went out (John 13:27, 30).

Lord, keep me from ever betraying You with the outward sign of love!

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**"BEHOLD MY FEET." James Smith** Luke 24:39. HIS feet are suggestive of—

1. Suffering "They pierced My feet" (Psa. 22:16).
2. Mercy. "She stood at His feet weeping" (Luke 7:38).

3. Power. "Lame, blind... cast at Jesus' feet, and He healed them all" (Matt. 15:30)
  4. Rest. "Sitting at the feet of Jesus... in his right mind" (Luke 8:35)
  5. Hope. "She came and fell at His feet" (Mark 7:25; John 11:32).
  6. Teaching "Mary sat at His feet" (Luke 10:39).
  7. Comfort. "Why are ye troubled?...Behold My feet" (Luke 24:38, 39)
  8. Service. "Mary anointed the feet of Jesus... house filled" (John 12:3).
  9. Worship. "They held Him by the feet and worshipped Him" (Matt. 28:9).
  10. Victory. "Thou hast put all things under His feet" (Heb. 2:8).
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### **Robert Neighbour - At Jesus' Feet**

- At His Feet to Worship (Rev. 1:17, 18).
- At His Feet to Learn (Luke 10:39).
- At His Feet in Trouble (Mark 7:25).
- At His Feet in Confession (Luke 17:15, 16).
- At His Feet in Anticipation (John 12:3).
- At His Feet a Sinner (Luke 7:38).
- At His Feet Restored (Luke 8:35).

We have been running through our Bible and looking into the marvelous occurrences which took place at the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our own hearts have been stirred by this study. We have known all the time that our place was at the feet of our Lord, but it refreshed us to review the blessings which have been obtained both by sinner and by saint as they laid themselves low at the feet of Christ.

The very essence of sin is the exaltation of self. We love to lift ourselves above our fellowmen; we like the place of authority, the position of power. There is a passion which is natural to the flesh, which desires the pre-eminence. God tells us of one, Diotrefes who desired such pre-eminence, but he was a snare instead of a support to the Church of God.

Satan said: "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. \* \* I will be like the Most High."

The antichrist will exalt himself "above all that is called God or that is worshipped."

Pharaoh had the spirit of both Satan and the antichrist when he said, "I know not the Lord, neither will I obey His voice."

God has said, "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

May the Lord help us to-day, as in humility of mind, in meekness of spirit and with a contrite heart, we bow the head and bend the knees, and take our place along with the others at the Master's feet.

"At the feet of Jesus,  
In that morning hour,  
Loving hearts receiving  
Resurrection power:  
Haste with joy to preach the Word:  
'Christ is risen, Praise the Lord!'

"At the feet of Jesus, risen now for me,  
I shall sing His praises through eternity.

### **At His Feet a Sinner**

"And stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment" (Luke 7:38).

One of the Pharisees had desired Christ that He would eat with him. The Lord had acquiesced. It was as He sat down to meat that a woman in the city who was a sinner and who knew that Jesus was there, brought an alabaster box of ointment and stood at His feet behind Him weeping. As she rained tears upon His feet she did wipe them with the hairs of her head and repeatedly she kissed His feet and anointed them with the ointment.

When the host who was a Pharisee saw this, he said to himself, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him; for she is a sinner."

How quickly did the Master rebuke the proud Pharisee and how quickly did He approve of the woman's tears and kisses and of her ointment. Turning He said of the woman, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." And then He said to the woman, "Thy sins are forgiven."

Thank God, there is a place where a poor lost sinner can find a sympathetic hearing and a sure relief. He need not stay away, even now the Lord is standing with extended hands and saying, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

"None are excluded, thence but those  
Who do themselves excuse,  
Welcome the learned and polite  
The ignorant and rude."

Let the sinner rejoice that there is One at the right hand of God Who is the Saviour, if he will throw himself at His feet, confessing himself a sinner and pleading the mercies of the Saviour; if he will believe that God is willing and able; if he will receive the Lord Jesus Christ, he shall be saved.

At the Cross, at the Cross,  
Where I first saw the light,  
And the burden of my sin rolled away,  
It was there by faith I received my sight,  
And now I am happy all the day.

**Luke 7:39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner."**

**KJV** Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

- **he spake** Lk 3:8; 12:17; 16:3; 18:4; 2 Kings 5:20; Proverbs 23:7; Mark 2:6,7; 7:21
- **This man** Lk 7:16; John 7:12,40,41,47-52; 9:24
- **would** Lk 7:37; 15:2,28-30; 18:9-11; Isaiah 65:5; Matthew 9:12,13; 20:16; 21:28-31
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 7:36-39 Why Did Christ Allow a Prostitute to Wash His Feet?](#) - John MacArthur

## THE PHARISEE FINALLY NOTICES

**Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet([prophetes](#)) He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching ([hupto](#)) Him, that she is a sinner ([hamartolos](#))** - The Pharisee doesn't say anything out loud but he did not need to as Jesus in His omniscience knew his thoughts. The clause "**if this man...**" is a second class conditional sentence which means contrary to the fact. In other words the Pharisee is reasoning to himself "If this man were a **prophet** (but he is not)." In other words he is reasoning that Jesus could not be a true **prophet** since He did not know the sordid state of the sinner who was **touching Him** (cf another woman touching Him in Lk 8:44+). In Lk 7:14+ Jesus had touched a coffin making Him ceremonially unclean and here a woman who is a sinner touches Him making Him ceremonially unclean in the eyes of these religious legalists!

**Spurgeon** - She is a sinner, and does he let her touch Him, and kiss His feet, and show such tokens of affection? What man must He be who allows a harlot's kiss, even though it be upon His feet? Ah! poor foolish Pharisee! He judged according to the sight of the eye, or else he might have known that the best of men would never be angry at a harlot's tears, for the tears of repentance, come from whatever heart they may, are always like diamonds in the esteem of thee who judges rightly.

**Spurgeon** - Well, what did he say? I think that, if some of us, taught of God, and let into the secret of eternal love, had been there, we should have whispered to one another, "What a change has been wrought in that woman! There she is, weeping, and washing the Saviour's feet, when, but the other day, she was standing at the corners of the streets, in the attire of a harlot, plying her

accursed trade." How greatly we should have rejoiced to see her! But it is only grace that teaches us to rejoice over even one sinner that repenteth, and Simon the Pharisee appeared to know little or nothing of grace. He had, however, the good manners not to say aloud what he thought, but "he spake within himself, saying," —Yet "this man" was a **prophet**, and he did know "who and what manner of woman" that was who touched him. More than that, he knew what manner of woman his grace had made her, and how true, how pure, was the love which she was then manifesting to him; and he knew how deep was her repentance, how changed her heart, how renewed her entire life was. He knew all about her, but poor Simon could not know "this woman" as Christ knew her.

**MacArthur on what sort of...woman** - The Pharisees showed nothing but contempt for sinners. Simon was convinced that if Jesus knew her character, He would have sent her away, for her touching Him was presumed to convey ceremonial uncleanness. (Ed: Clearly Jesus is showing the shallowness of their attention to ceremony over substance, of external over internal or heart response).

**IVP Background Commentary** - Adult women who were religious were expected to be married and thus would have their heads covered; any woman with her hair exposed to public view would be considered promiscuous. That this woman wipes Jesus' feet with her hair would thus indicate not only her humility but also her marginal religious status, even had Jesus not been a prophet and had she not been known in the community's gossip.

**William Barclay** - The story demonstrates a contrast between two attitudes of mind and heart. (i)**Simon** was conscious of no need and therefore felt no love, and so received no forgiveness. Simon's impression of himself was that he was a good man in the sight of men and of God. (ii) The **woman** was conscious of nothing else than a clamant need, and therefore was overwhelmed with love for him who could supply it, and so received forgiveness. The one thing which shuts a man off from God is self-sufficiency. And the strange thing is that the better a man is the more he feels his sin. Paul could speak of sinners "of whom I am foremost" (1 Timothy 1:15). Francis of Assisi could say, "There is nowhere a more wretched and a more miserable sinner than I." It is true to say that the greatest of sins is to be conscious of no sin; but a sense of need will open the door to the forgiveness of God, because God is love, and love's greatest glory is to be needed. ([Luke 7](#))

**Luke 7:40 And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, 'Say it, Teacher.'**

**KJV** And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

- **answering** Lk 5:22,31; 6:8; John 16:19,30
- **Master** Lk 18:18; 20:20,21; Ezekiel 33:31; Malachi 1:6; Matthew 7:22; 26:49; John 3:2; 13:13
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

**And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, 'Say it, Teacher.'** ([didaskalos](#)) - Note the verb **answered him**, but **Simon** had not said anything. Jesus is answering what **Simon** had spoken in his mind! In the previous passage the conditional statement signifies the Pharisee (now named Simon) did not consider Jesus to be a prophet. Jesus' words in this verse must have startled him, because it indicates Jesus had in effect "read his mind" in Lk 7:39! **Say it** is actually a command ([aorist imperative](#)). The Pharisee may have called Him Teacher, but he certainly was not a true learner, so there has to be an element of insincerity in this mode of addressing Jesus.

**Spurgeon on Jesus answered him** - Christ often answers people who do not speak audibly, he answers those who only speak in their hearts. So you, who are silently praying, may take comfort. If Jesus answers a Pharisee who speaks in his heart against him, much more readily will he answer his own people when they are speaking in their hearts to him. It was a hopeful sign that Simon used a respectful title in speaking to Christ, and that he was willing to listen.

**Robertson** - Jesus answers the thoughts and doubts of Simon and so shows that he knows all about the woman also. Godet notes a tone of [Socratic irony](#) here.

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**Teacher** ([1320](#)) ([didaskalos](#) from [didasko](#) = teach to shape will of one being taught by content of what is taught <> [didaskalía](#)) is one who provides instruction or systematically imparts truth.

**Luke 7:41 "A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty."**

**KJV** There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. a certain Lk 11:4; 13:4; \*marg;; Isaiah 50:1; Matthew 6:12; 18:23-25

**NET** "A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed him five hundred silver coins, and the other fifty.

- **the one** Lk 7:47; Romans 5:20; 1 Timothy 1:15,16
- **pence** See Matthew 18:28; \*marg:
- **the other** Lk 12:48; Numbers 27:3; Jeremiah 3:11; John 15:22-24; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8-10
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

## A PITHY PARABLE OF TWO DEBTORS

**A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty** - A **moneylender** was one who would lend money for interest. (As an aside Herod Agrippa I was deeply in debt to many moneylenders) **Debtors** is chreopheiletes (chreos = loan, debt + opheiletes = debtor) is used only here and Lk 16:5 and refers to one who owes a debt. In ancient times a person may take a loan to avert hunger or loss; rarely if ever was a loan issued for commercial enterprise. And though the Old Testament required mercy in the payment of debts (Ex 22:25; Dt 24:6, 17; Job 24:3, etc.), by New Testament times the treatment of debtors became harsh under Roman influence (Mt 5:25, 26; 18:34). And since a **denarius** was worth about a day's wages, the **500** signifies a little less than 2 years wages and the **50** almost 2 months wages, and while very different, they were nevertheless still significant debts which would be very difficult or almost impossible for a day laborer to repay. The outlook for these debtors if they could not pay was imprisonment or enslavement.

**Vincent on denarii** - A denarius, the chief silver coin of the Romans at this time, and of the value of about seventeen cents. We must remember to reckon according to the rate of wages in that day. A denarius was regarded as good pay for a day's work. It was the pay of a Roman soldier in Christ's time. In almost every case where the word occurs in the New Testament it is connected with the idea of a liberal or large amount. Compare Matt. 18:28; Mark 6:37; Luke 7:41; John 12:5. For a penny is, literally, out of or on the strength of a penny; the payment being that on the strength of which the agreement was made. The agreement arose out of the demand on the one hand and the promise on the other.

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### THE TWO DEBTORS. Luke 7:41-43. -James Smith

This little pithy parable was spoken in Simon's house, who desired Jesus to eat with him, and Jesus did not refuse. He never does. Then Simon sat in judgment on Him in allowing this woman to touch Him.(v. 39). Simon's cold heart was a stranger to the love of Christ. Like many a modern Pharisee his religion was an outward form. But Jesus had a meat to eat that Simon knew not of. The woman's love was more precious to Him than Simon's feast. It is the heart He seeks. Giving can only grieve Him when it is heartless. There are many Simons who show outward respect to religion, but who have no heart sympathy with Jesus Christ in His saving mission.

I. The Certain Creditor (v. 41). The great Creditor, no doubt, represents God Himself. There is something graciously beautiful about this thought, because—

1. A creditor is one who is supposed to have A GOOD REPUTATION. Can God deceive? Is His character not trustworthy? He cannot lie.
2. A creditor is one who has SUFFICIENCY FOR OTHERS. Our sufficiency is of God. Human need can be fully met only in Him. "All my salvation and all my desire." The sinner's needs are deep and many, but the fulness of His mercy is enough. "Come unto Me."
3. A creditor is one who looks for SOME RETURN FOR HIS OUTLAY. He gives only on loan. God gives His best, and expects our best; but, alas, we have returned Him evil for good. Evil is poor payment for good; hatred is a miserable return for love. Could you reckon up the good He has given? How much owest thou my Lord?

II. The Different Debtors. "Two" (v. 41).

The 500 and the 50. Representing two classes of actual transgressors, the great and the little, and implying all the grades that lie between. The fifty pence debtor is the religious moralist who lacks "one thing." The five hundred pence debtor is the open profligate

that lacks everything. But there is the hundred pence debtor, who has been somewhat indifferent to the goodness of God. The two hundred pence debtor who has been wholly indifferent to the gifts of God, and the three hundred pence debtor who questions His love and mocks at His people, and the four hundred pence debtor who denies God and despises His mercy, yet whose outward character is counted respectable. But all with whom the Great Creditor has been dealing in grace are His debtors. "All have sinned," "all have come short." He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all.

### III. The Helpless Bankrupts. "

They had nothing to pay" (v. 42). The great and the little debtor were both alike in the same insolvent condition. "No difference." Just so with every sinner in God's sight. Our responsibilities to God may be different, but the hopelessness of our condition in His sight is the same. By nature all are alike, "without strength." Where there was no sprinkled blood Jehovah could make no difference (Exod. 12:13). All outside of the ark were treated alike in His judgment. They had nothing. Who but God only can create out of nothing? We can only make nothing out of nothing. Then payment is impossible. There is no other creditor from whom we can borrow. So one of two things must follow—a pardon or a prison.

IV. The Happy Deliverance. "He frankly forgave them both" (v. 42). These few words reveal the heart of God as big with abounding grace. Notice—

1. WHAT HE DID. "He forgave." He did not compromise. How suited His way was to their sad circumstances! Forgiveness is God's gracious remedy for the sinner's debt. "I believe in the forgiveness, not the payment of sins" (Luther). Oh, that men would believe God's willingness and readiness to forgive!
2. WHOM HE FORGAVE. "Both." Both alike needed it. The self-righteous moralist and the respectable church-going fifty pence debtor need forgiveness just the same as the five hundred pence ne'er-do-weel. One can have no more claim than another, both are debtors.
3. HOW HE FORGAVE. "Frankly." In a free, liberal, loving manner, not grudgingly, just as the father forgave the prodigal, with open arms and joyful heart. "He delighteth in mercy." He keepeth mercy for thousands. When God pardons a sinner He does it as Joseph forgave his brethren, with a heart ready to burst with deep, unutterable compassion.
4. WHEN HE FORGAVE. "When they had nothing to pay." It was when the prodigal had spent all that he had that he came and was accepted. When Joseph's brethren had nothing to eat, then they were enriched by him whom they had despised. The young ruler came with a great price in his hand, and he went away sorrowful. The Laodicean Church "had need of nothing" while Christ stood outside. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." "Jesus paid it all." Accept His settlement. Buy without money. "Nothing to pay."

V. The Grateful Evidence. "Love." Which of them will love Him most? "He to whom He forgave most," says Simon. "Thou hast rightly judged," says Jesus. It is right judgment, then, to expect the forgiven to manifest in some way or other their love for Him who frankly forgives all. The poor woman had been forgiven much, and she loved much, and showed it.

1. Much love WEEPS (v. 44). Not only tears of regret for the past, but of deepest gratitude toward God, and of tenderest sympathy toward the perishing. The world needs such tears. Christ shed them, so did Paul (Phil. 3:18).
2. Much love WASHES. "She hath washed My feet" (v. 44). Many a dusty foot and life love has washed. "He loved me, and washed me." Love covereth a multitude of sins. Christ, as our Head, is in Heaven; we, as His feet, are on earth.
3. Much love STOOPS. "She wipes His feet with her hair" (v. 44). She puts her glory at His feet. If He is to increase, I must decrease. The heart must bow if Jesus is to be served.
4. Much love KISSES. Her lips of affection are pressed to His feet (v. 45). The feet of the body of Christ, the dusty, naked members, are often neglected. Love seeks contact with them.
5. Much love ANOINTS. The Father anoints His head, but the forgiven one must anoint His feet (v. 46). "Do as I have done unto you."
6. Much love FOLLOWS. She followed Him into Simon's house. She heeded not the reproach of others. Love constrained her (1 John 4:19).
7. Much love GIVES. "She brought her box of ointment" (v. 37). This was all her treasure, and she laid it at His feet, not only her ointment, but herself.

Lovest thou Me? How much? Let the life testify.



Contrast the three characters: (1) The proud-hearted Pharisee. (2) The broken-hearted sinner. (3) The loving-hearted Saviour.

**Luke 7:42 "When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?"**

**KJV** And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

- **when** Ps 49:7,8; Matthew 18:25,26,34; Romans 5:6; Galatians 3:10
- **he** Ps 32:1-5; 51:1-3; 103:3; Isaiah 43:25; 44:22; Jeremiah 31:33,34; Daniel 9:18,19; Micah 7:18-20; Matthew 6:12; Acts 13:38,39; Romans 3:24; 4:5-8; Ephesians 1:7; 4:32; Colossians 3:13
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

### **JESUS' QUESTION IS A "NO BRAINER!"**

**When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave (*charizomai*) them both. So which of them will love (*agapao*) him more** - Jesus ends this short forgiveness parable with what should be a "soft ball" question, even for a legalistic Pharisee! I love what Ryle says here "Let us observe that the debt was not forgiven because the debtors loved their creditor, but out of free grace, mercy and compassion. And the love of the debtors was the consequence of their debts being forgiven. A right understanding of this is the clue to the whole passage." (Luke 7)

[John MacArthur](#) makes a very interesting comment on a forgiven debt - What makes it so generous is anytime somebody forgives a debt they themselves incur that debt in full. If I lend you 500 denarii and you can't pay and I say, "I forgive that," then now I've incurred that debt completely. That debt is now mine. The cost is transferred to me. I pay. To understand that is to get an insight into the forgiveness of God. And when God forgave your sins, He then incurred the debt and Jesus Christ died to pay it. The debt doesn't go away. It still has to be paid, but the forgiver incurs it and pays it. So it's not just forgiveness and it's done. It's forgiveness and then the debt is transferred to the forgiver.

**Spurgeon** - There were no bonds, no promises of what they would do in the future, but he frankly forgave them both. "Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most." Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. Now, dear friends, I hope that those of us who have had much forgiven are proving, by the warmth of our love, how right was this judgment on the part of Simon. If thou hast had much forgiven, be well to the front in every struggle on behalf of the cause of Christ. Be well to the front also with thy gift for him; bring thy alabaster box, and break it for him. With not for anyone to ask thee, much less to press thee, to give to him who gave his all for thee, but, spontaneously, out of the love thou bearest to trial who has loved thee so much as to die for thee, prove that thou lovest him most of all.

**IVP Background Commentary** - Although debts were to be forgiven in the seventh year, experts in the law had found a way to get around that requirement. Those who could not pay could be imprisoned, temporarily enslaved or have certain goods confiscated; but this creditor goes beyond the letter of the law and extends mercy.

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**Graciously forgave** (5483)(*charizomai* from *charis* = grace) means "to bestow a favor unconditionally, then to remit a debt, and hence to forgive. *Charizomai* primarily denotes to show a favor (*charis*). The predominant idea of the NT uses is of a free, unconditioned act is involved.

**Charizomai** -19v - bestowed(1), forgave(2), forgive(3), forgiven(4), forgiving(2), freely give(1), gave(1), given(1), graciously forgave(1), granted(4), hand(2), things freely given(1) - Lk. 7:21; Lk. 7:42; Lk. 7:43; Acts 3:14; Acts 25:11; Acts 25:16; Acts 27:24; Rom. 8:32; 1 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 2:7; 2 Co. 2:10; 2 Co. 12:13; Gal. 3:18; Eph. 4:32; Phil. 1:29; Phil. 2:9; Col. 2:13; Col. 3:13; Phlm. 1:22

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**When they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both.** Luke 7:42

During the great depression of the 1930's, a shy elderly lady approached the front desk of an insurance office in Minneapolis. When asked what she wanted, she showed them a policy and explained that she was unable to make additional payments. She said that it

was hard for her to get work, and what little she did get was scarcely enough to keep a roof over her head. After a quick investigation, the clerk saw that the policy was very valuable. He warned that it would not be wise to stop the payments. Besides, didn't her husband have anything to say? It was his policy, made out to her benefit. Her husband? She quickly explained that he had been dead for three years! Company officials soon discovered that she was telling the truth and gave her the full amount of the policy along with the overpaid premiums. The money kept her in comfort the rest of her days! She had not realized that she was entitled to the face value of the policy as soon as her husband died!

The greatest benefit of all time became due when Jesus died on the cross! But thousands of people keep trying to make payment on their soul's salvation while all they need to do is accept God's immeasurable gift! —M. R. D. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

THE WORLD IS DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS OF PEOPLE—  
THE SAINTS AND THE AIN'TS!

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**J C Philpot** - "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked--who can know it?" Jeremiah 17:9

The sin of our fallen nature is a very mysterious thing. We read of the mystery of iniquity as well as of the mystery of godliness; and the former has lengths, depths, and breadths as well as the latter; depths which no human plumb-line ever fathomed, and lengths which no mortal measuring line ever yet measured out. Thus the way in which sin sometimes seems to sleep, and at other times to awake up with renewed strength, its active, irritable, impatient, restless nature, the many shapes and colors it wears, the filthy holes and puddles in which it grovels, the corners into which it creeps, its deceitfulness, hypocrisy, craftiness, persuasiveness, intense selfishness, utter recklessness, desperate madness, and insatiable greediness are secrets, painful secrets, only learned by bitter experience.

In the spiritual knowledge of these two mysteries, the mystery of sin and the mystery of salvation, all true religion consists. In the school of experience we are kept, day after day, learning and forgetting these two lessons, being never able to understand them, and yet not satisfied unless we know them, pursuing after an acquaintance with them, and finding that they still, like a rainbow, recede from us as fast as we pursue. Thus we find realized in our own souls those heavenly contradictions, those divine paradoxes, that the wiser we get, the greater fools we become (1 Cor. 3:18); the stronger we grow, the weaker we are (2 Cor. 12:9, 10); the more we possess, the less we have (2 Cor. 6:10); **the more completely bankrupt, the more frankly forgiven (Luke 7:42);** the more utterly lost, the more perfectly saved; and when most like a little child, the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18:4).

**Luke 7:43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly."**

**KJV** Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

- I Lk 7:47; 1 Corinthians 15:9,10; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15; 1 Timothy 1:13-16
- **Thou** 10:38; Ps 116:16-18; Mark 12:34
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

**Simon answered and said, "I suppose (hupolambano) the one whom he forgave (charizomai) more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly."** - Suppose in English means to think probable or in keeping with the facts or to admit as possible. It is as if he doesn't want to give the obvious answer.

**MacArthur** on **suppose** - It could be sarcasm, like it's almost insulting His intelligence. I mean, are you kidding? You've got one 500 and one fifty, isn't it obvious? And is he's saying, "I suppose," you know, sarcastically, "I suppose." Or he might be even saying, "Well I suppose it's the one whom he forgave more," wondering whether Jesus has something up His sleeve that's going to put a twist on this story and embarrass him if he gives the wrong answer. So he's just a little shy of giving a complete and straightforward answer.

**Great love comes from great forgiveness.**

**Robertson** adds that **suppose** is an "Old verb, originally to take up from under, to bear away as on high, to take up in speech (Luke 10:30), to take up in mind or to assume as here and Acts 2:15. Here with an air of supercilious indifference (Plummer)."

**You have judged correctly** - **Correctly** is orthos (English orthodontist, etc). As [Robertson](#) says "Socrates was fond of [panu orthōs]. The end of the argument."

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**Suppose** (5274) (hupolambano) to take up, to assume, to suppose w. an air of supercilious indifference. Friberg - (1) take up someone (from below) (Acts 1.9); (2) receive as a guest, help, support (3Jn 8); (3) to introduce a response to a question; (a) take up (a word) and answer, reply, retort (Lk 10.30); (b) take up (an idea), suppose, think, assume (Lk 7.43)

5v - received(1), replied(1), support(1), suppose(2). Lk. 7:43; Lk. 10:30; Acts 1:9; Acts 2:15; 3 Jn. 1:8

**Luke 7:44 Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.**

**KJV** And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

- **Seest thou** Genesis 19:2; Judges 19:21; 1 Samuel 25:41; 1 Timothy 5:10; James 2:6
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

## ILLUSTRATION OF GREAT LOVE

**Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair** - So Jesus has just established the principle that great love comes from great forgiveness. Simon has admitted that this principle is true. So now Jesus turns **toward the woman** who is behind Him, instead of turning to Simon. Jesus knew that Simon had seen the woman because He knew what was in Simon's heart. It is as if He points to her and presents her front and center as His witness to the truth of the parable He has just spoken that great love comes from great forgiveness. He describes the woman's great love which Simon had witnessed.

As **Spurgeon** says regarding **I entered your house** "Therefore thou wast bound by the obligations of a host." The fact that the Pharisee had failed to practice the common hospitality of providing water to wash His feet adds to the impression that the Pharisee's invitation was not out of kindness but motivated by a desire to find some incriminating evidence against Him. In effect the Pharisee had insulted Jesus by not offering water.

**IVP Background Commentary** - Common hospitality included providing water for the feet (though well-to-do householders left the washing to servants); the oft-invoked example of Abraham's hospitality (Gen 18:4) would render the host without excuse. Oil for the dry skin on one's head would also be a thoughtful act. A kiss was an affectionate or respectful form of greeting. Jesus faces her finally in Lk 7:44.

**Spurgeon of do you see this woman** - "You did see this woman, and you looked upon her with a frowning face; now take another look at her by the light of my parable." "Simon, seest thou this woman?" "I became thy guest; and, therefore, as my host, the first thing thou shouldst have done was to give the ordinary Oriental hospitality of washing my feet: 'Thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.'" What a changing of places there is now! The Lord has made the first to be last, and the last to be first. Simon thought himself far in advance of this woman; but now that Christ had explained their true positions, I should think he began to see that the woman was far ahead of him.

**Spurgeon on I entered your house** - "Therefore thou wast bound by the obligations of a host," — An ordinary commonplace courtesy in the East, almost a necessity for those who have walked far, and whose feet are weary and dusty: "Thou gavest me no water for my feet:" —Costly water this! "She hath washed my feet with tears." "She has done it, she has done it better than thou wouldst have done it, she has done it best of all, she has done what thou oughtest to have done, she has done it when there seemed to be no claim upon her to do it."...."Though it was only a common act of courtesy, such as should always be shown to a guest, thou didst neglect that;" —"She has given my feet no common washing, for she has washed them with her tears. You would only have brought me a linen napkin, but she hath 'wiped them with the hairs of her head.'"

[Robertson](#) - For the first time Jesus looks at the woman and he asks the Pharisee to look at her. She was behind Jesus. Jesus was

an invited guest. The Pharisee had neglected some points of customary hospitality. The contrasts here made have the rhythm of Hebrew poetry. In each contrast the first word is the point of defect in Simon: water (Lk 7:44), kiss (Lk 7:45), oil (Lk 7:46).

**J C Ryle** on the demonstrable love of **this woman** - We see, in the next place, in this passage, that grateful love is the secret of doing much for Christ. The penitent woman, in the story before us, showed far more honor to our Lord than the Pharisee had done. She "stood at His feet behind Him weeping." She "washed His feet with tears." She "wiped them with the hairs of her head." She "kissed His feet, and anointed them with costly ointment." No stronger proofs of reverence and respect could she have given, and the secret of her giving such proofs, was love. She loved our Lord, and she thought nothing too much to do for Him. She felt deeply grateful to our Lord, and she thought no mark of gratitude too costly to bestow on Him.

More "doing" for Christ is the universal demand of all the Churches. It is the one point on which all are agreed. All desire to see among Christians, more good works, more self-denial, more practical obedience to Christ's commands. **But what will produce these things? Nothing, nothing but love.** There never will be more done for Christ till there is more hearty love to Christ Himself. The fear of punishment, the desire of reward, the sense of duty, are all useful arguments, in their way, to persuade men to holiness. But they are all weak and powerless, until a man loves Christ. Once let that mighty principle get hold of a man, and you will see his whole life changed.

Let us never forget this. However much the world may sneer at "feelings" in religion, and however false or unhealthy religious feelings may sometimes be, the great truth still remains behind, that feeling is the secret of doing. The heart must be engaged for Christ, or the hands will soon hang down. The affections must be enlisted into His service, or our obedience will soon stand still. It will always be the loving workman who will do most in the Lord's vineyard. (Luke 7)

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### Do You See This Woman? - Ray Pritchard

"Do you see this woman?" (Luke 7:44)

This was Simon's fundamental problem. He never really saw the woman.

The Bible is very discreet in calling her "a woman who had lived a sinful life" (Luke 7:37). This is a delicate way of saying she had been a prostitute. She made her living by selling her body to men. She was a professional and I have no reason to doubt that she was good at what she did. The shock is that she would come to the house of a Pharisee. In ordinary times Simon and this woman would never meet. He would not go near a woman like her; she would not go near a man like him. They are from opposite ends of the spectrum. Yet strangely, they are thrown together for the same purpose. They both want to meet Jesus.

Simon's problem is easy to see. He thought he was better than the prostitute. Simon said, "She is a sinner." Jesus said, "No, she was a sinner." God changed the tenses in her life.

"Simon, your problem is that you see her as she was and not as she is. You think you see her but you don't. For years, you knew her one way ... but now she's clean ... and you can't handle it."

That leads me to this statement: A person who is never deeply committed to anything cannot understand somebody who is transformed by Jesus Christ. Simon simply had no category for a former prostitute whose life has been radically changed by Jesus Christ.

It's strange, isn't it, that the worst sinners often make the best saints. Why? Because flagrant sinners are more likely to discover that they are sinners.

Your love for the Lord is directly related to your estimate of how greatly you have sinned and how much he has forgiven you. It's not how much you sin, but how deeply you feel it that matters. If you figure that you are a "little sinner," then all you need is a "little Savior." If you are a "moderate sinner," then what you need is a "moderate Savior." But if you are "big sinner," you need a "big Savior." And those who have a "little Savior," will love him very little. But those who have a "big Savior" will love him greatly. Many of us who were raised in the church struggle precisely at this point. We don't love Christ very much because we have forgotten what we were and what we would have been if Christ had not found us. When our sin seems small, our love cannot be very great.

Since we are all sinners and we all stand in need of the grace of God, there is no room for spiritual pride in the body of Christ. There's no need to talk about who's "better" and who's "worse" because apart from the grace of God, we'd all be going to hell.

Better to be like the repentant prostitute than to be like super-religious Simon. Hard truth for us to hear, but that's why this story is in the Bible.

Almighty God, you have poured your grace upon us. We are truly "miserable sinners" whether we know it or not. May we never forget what it cost Jesus to forgive our sins. From pride and from a judgmental spirit, deliver us, O Lord. Amen.

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**Tim LaHaye** in **Embracing Eternity - Relationship with God** Today's Reading: Psalm 25:14-[see note](#); Luke 7:36-50-note. **With them he shares the secrets of his covenant. Psalm 25:14 --**

WE WILL NEVER understand the heart of God until we learn to revere the holiness of God. If we want to know Him, we must first learn to honor Him. "**Friendship with the Lord is reserved for those who fear Him**" writes the psalmist. "**With them he shares the secrets of his covenant**" (Psalm 25:14). The hidden things of God are revealed only to those who understand His greatness in the face of our unworthiness. It is intended for those who come to Him in humility and admiration. When Jesus was invited to eat at the home of a Pharisee, a sinful woman showed up with a bottle of expensive perfume. She knelt at his feet weeping. Then she anointed his feet with her perfume and wiped them with her hair. She sat broken before him. When the Pharisee realized who she was, he said to himself, "This proves that Jesus is no prophet. If God had really sent him, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!" (Luke 7:39-note). While the woman wept, the Pharisee accused her in his thoughts. While she knelt at his feet, he judged. While she humbled herself in the presence of the Deity, he tried to humiliate the Divine One. So what did she understand that the Pharisee had missed? he knew that friendship begins with honor. That forgiveness begins with brokenness. That being right with God begins with reverence for Him. Jesus said to the Pharisee, When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You didn't give me a kiss of greeting, but she has kissed my feet again and again from the time I first came in. You neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume. I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven. (Luke 7:44-47-note) **Too often we want to sit and dine with Jesus, but we neglect to kneel before Him.** We want the pleasure of his company but not necessarily at the expense of our dignity. We want to talk face-to-face, yet never think to stoop and wash his feet. We want friendship with God without a healthy reverence for Him. Jesus is our friend, but He is also our Lord. If we want a relationship with Him, we begin by remembering who He is.

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### **The Woman Who Loved Much Luke 7:44–47 - John Phillips**

Who was she? What dark sin stained her soul? Where did she find the courage to come, to dare the Pharisee's scorn? How did she know that Jesus would not be embarrassed, would not chase her away? Did she dare to believe that this Friend of publicans and sinners would read her heart and defend her in the race of hostility and scorn? What a lesson this woman has taught the world of penitence! What a stage she set up that day—a stage upon which the Christ of God could manifest His wisdom, love, and power! It will be one of the joys of heaven to meet this woman and shake her hand and thank her for what she did.

1. Her Outright Penitence (Lk 7:44)  
("But")
2. Her Outpoured Passion (Lk 7:45–46)  
("But")
3. Her Outward Preparation (Lk 7:47)  
("But")

Note: The **but**s of the Bible are always interesting. Like the hinges upon which massive doors swing, so these butts are usually the hinges upon which a story turns. Mark them in the lives of such people as Solomon, Uzziah, the prodigal son. **On the three butts in the story here, we trace the forward movement of this woman's growth in grace from contrition through consecration to coronation.** (100 NT Sermon Outlines)

**Luke 7:45 "You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet.**

**KJV** Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.  
gavest

- Ge 29:11; 33:4; 2 Sa 15:5; 19:39; Mt 26:48; Ro 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 1 Th 5:26
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

### **THE PHARISEES FAILURE TO GIVE A GREETING KISS**

**You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet-** Jesus continues to drop the hammer

on the Pharisee. The kiss Jesus refers to is of course a formalized kiss of greeting, standard in that culture. When orientals would greet their guest, instead of shaking hands they would give a kiss.

**Spurgeon on You gave Me no kiss** - Though that was the ordinary mode of an honoured guest, — a kiss upon the cheek or upon the forehead. — Which was usually given as a greeting to guests at that time. Simon had not given to Jesus the honour which was due to him, which would have been to kiss his forehead. Every word is emphatic to show how far she had gone beyond Simon, who thought himself so much better than she was.

**Spurgeon on has not ceased to kiss My feet**- You said in your heart that, if I had been a prophet, I should have known who and what manner of woman this was. I do know, and I am telling you. If you had given me a kiss, you would only have coldly kissed my brow, but she has found it in her heart to honour me by kissing my feet. Since I came in, she has not ceased to kiss them, unwashed as they were; and she has not only kissed them, but she has also washed them with her tears.”...“At best, thou wouldst only have kissed me once, but this woman, since I came in, has never left off kissing my feet. With a sacred audacity of love, she has lifted my feet to her lips, and kissed them again and again.” So, see here again how the first is last, and the last first.

**Spurgeon** - She has done what thou oughtest to have done; she has done it better than thou couldst have done it; she has done it when there was no claim upon her to do it, except that she had been forgiven much, and, therefore, loved much.

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### Warren Wiersbe - NT Words for Today

You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. LUKE 7:45

**An insincere invitation.** Simon the Pharisee asked Jesus to dine at his house, and Jesus accepted the invitation. It's interesting how much ministry Jesus was able to have with people as he ate with them at the table, even those who opposed him. He knew that Simon's purpose was insincere, for the Pharisees were constantly looking for opportunities to criticize Jesus and get him into trouble with the religious leaders. Simon proved his insincerity by the way he treated Jesus. He did not welcome Jesus with a kiss, he did not anoint his head with perfumed oil, and he did not provide water for washing his feet. Four times in Matthew 23, Jesus called the Pharisees blind (vv. 16–17, 24, 26), and the word certainly applied to Simon. He was blind to his own sins, he was blind to the remarkable transformation of the woman, and he was blind to the person of Jesus Christ. Yet he invited Jesus to his table! Jesus accepted, not for his own good but for the good of Simon. Sometimes we have to go to dinners only for the good of others.

**A surprising interruption.** When the woman came into the banquet hall, Simon must have been terribly embarrassed. Simon was a self-righteous man whose heart had never broken over his sins nor had he ever experienced the kind of repentance and love demonstrated by this woman. He was religious, but it was only playacting, keeping up appearances. The woman had been guilty of sins of the flesh, but Simon was guilty of sins of the spirit (2 Cor. 7:1). She had been a prodigal daughter, but Simon was an elder brother who knew how to criticize others but not how to forgive them (Luke 15:25–32). The woman did not come hoping to get some food; she came to pour out her love to Jesus. If you check a harmony of the Gospels, you will find that many Bible students think she had trusted Christ when he spoke that gracious invitation recorded in Matthew 11:28–30, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heaven laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Everything the woman did to Jesus, Simon had neglected to do. There are sins of omission as well as sins of commission. She washed his feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and poured expensive ointment on them. This was her way of saying that Jesus was her Savior and Lord, that she had heard and believed his invitation and had found rest.

An embarrassing revelation. Jesus knew what Simon was thinking, so he told him a parable and rebuked him for his unkind thoughts. The Good Shepherd always defends his sheep (Rom. 8:31–34). He openly told Simon and his guests how the host had treated him, and Simon could not deny it. Would we want our sins announced at the next church banquet? Probably not, but God already knows them.

**A gracious benediction.** Jesus said to the woman, “Your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you. Go in peace” (Luke 7:48, 50). It was not her expensive gift or her tears that saved her, but her faith in the Savior. Everything she had done to Jesus only revealed that she had repented of all her sins and trusted Christ, and now she loved him and wanted to thank him. Faith brings salvation and salvation brings peace.

Faith, peace, love, and tears. Has this been your experience? Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . . because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts. Romans 5:1, 5

**Luke 7:46 "You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.**



**KJV** My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

- Ru 3:3; 2 Sa 14:2; Ps 23:5; 104:15; Eccl 9:8; Da 10:3; Amos 6:6; Micah 6:15; Mt 6:17
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

**You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume-**

**Spurgeon on anoint My head with oil** - "Thou, the host, whose duty it was to anoint guest, didst not do it," —Another usual Eastern custom with guests whom the host intended to honour. (The "sinner") Anointed them, not with ordinary olive oil, but with precious costly ointment. The best unguent she possessed or could procure.

**Oil** is elaiion (from elaia = olive) which is common olive oil, a striking contrast with the expense **perfume** (muron) the woman had used. **Vincent** comments "Christ means to say to Simon, "thou didst not anoint my head, the nobler part, with ordinary oil. She hath anointed my feet with costly ointment."

**NET Note** - This event is not equivalent to the anointing of Jesus that takes place in the last week of his life (Mt 26:6–13; Mk 14:3–9; Jn 12:1–8). That woman was not a sinner, and Jesus was eating in the home of Simon the leper, who, as a leper, could never be a Pharisee.

**ILLUSTRATION** - Robert Falconer tells the story of his witnessing among destitute people in a certain city and of reading them this story of the woman who wiped Jesus' feet with her tears. While he was reading, he heard a loud sob and looked up at a young, thin girl whose face was disfigured by smallpox. After he spoke a few words of encouragement to her, she said, "Will He ever come again, the One who forgave the woman? I have heard that He will come again. Will it be soon?"

Falconer replied. After sobbing again uncontrollably, she said, "Sir, can't He wait a little while? My hair ain't long enough yet to wipe His feet." Let me ask, "Do you have the same desire and attitude of gratitude for what the Lord has done for you?"

**Luke 7:47 "For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little."**

**KJV** Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

- **Her** Lk 7:42; 5:20,21; Exodus 34:6,7
- **which** Isaiah 1:18; 55:7; Ezekiel 16:63; 36:29-32; Micah 7:19; Acts 5:31; Romans 5:20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:14; 1 John 1:7
- **she** Lk 7:43; Matthew 10:37; John 21:15-17; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 6:24; Philippians 1:9; 1 John 3:18; 4:19; 5:3
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

## **NO LIMIT TO JESUS' FORGIVENESS OF SINS**

**For this reason** - Whenever you observe a term of conclusion like this pause and ponder with a question like "For what reason?" It will force you to re-read the preceding context, never a waste of time!

**I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven(aphiemi) , for she loved (agapao) much; but he who is forgiven (aphiemi) little, loves agapao)little** - Sins are figuratively seen as debts we owe to God and incur by constantly "missing the mark." This woman had "missed the mark" more times than most people would have done at her age. Her "debt" was huge and could never be repaid. But her **sins** had been **forgiven**. When? Before she entered the house. Her seeking out Jesus was not to earn her forgiveness, but to show her overwhelming sense of gratitude for Jesus having promised to pay her sins which were many. Obviously Jesus had not yet borne her sins in His body on the Cross, but He soon would and thus her sins were forgiven "on credit" so to speak, pending the promised payment on the Cross. Note that **have been forgiven (aphiemi)** is in the perfect tense signifying

that her sins had been forgiven in the past and were permanently forgiven. The point is that Jesus was not just now declaring that her sins were forgiven. They had already been forgiven. And it was because of her getting a sense of the greatness of Jesus' forgiveness in light of the great multitude of her sins, she was literally overwhelmed with an unspeakable sense of gratitude prompted the incredible acts of worship that day in the Pharisee's house.

**Spurgeon on her sins, which are many, have been forgiven** - "Not because she has done this, but this is an evidence that her sins are forgiven. This act of greater love is the proof that she must be conscious of the greater forgiveness: 'she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.'" It is always like that; your converted Pharisees have to be made to feel like this woman before they will render love like hers; and if Simon is ever made to feel that his sin, in a certain light, is as great as the sin of this fallen woman, then he will love as much as she does, but not till then. Jesus said unto her, "Thy sins are forgiven." Oh, the marvellous music of that short sentence! If I had to choose from all language the choicest sentence that my ear could hear when under a sense of him, it would be these four words which the Master addressed to this woman who was a notable public sinner, "Thy sins are forgiven." "You know that her sins were many, and I tell you that they have been forgiven, and you can see, by her actions, that she loves much."

**Sins...forgiven, for she loved much** - One could misinterpret this statement. **For** is probably not the best translation because it is a term of explanation and thus suggest her sins were forgiven **for** (because) she loved much. Other translations have "therefore" (ESV, NET) which is preferable because that is more a term of conclusion. The idea would then be that she loved much because she was forgiven. This is made clear in Lk 7:50 where Jesus states it is her **faith** that **saved** her. The good (great) deeds she did were a reflection of the fact that she was saved. She was saved by faith alone but faith that genuinely saves is not alone, but is accompanied by fruit in keeping with repentance and belief.

**Ray Pritchard** - Think of how many sins he has covered for you. Think of the punishment you deserved that did not happen to you because of God's grace. Jesus said, "He who has been forgiven little loves little" (Luke 7:47). Your willingness to forgive is in direct proportion to your remembrance of how much you have been forgiven. We are great sinners greatly forgiven. If we believe that, by God's grace we can forgive "seventy times seven."

**MacArthur** says it this way - This is not to suggest that she was forgiven because she loved much. The parable (Lk 7:41-43) pictured a forgiveness that was unconditional, and love was the result. Therefore to make the woman's love the reason for her forgiveness would be to distort the lesson Jesus is teaching here. "For" here has the sense of "wherefore." And her faith (Lk 7:50), not the act of anointing Jesus' feet, was the instrument by which she laid hold of His forgiveness.

**NET Note for she loved much** - The connection between this statement and the preceding probably involves an ellipsis, to the effect that the  $\tau\iota$  clause gives the evidence of forgiveness, not the ground. For similar examples of an "evidentiary"  $\tau\iota$ , cf. Luke 1:22; 6:21; 13:2. See discussion in D. L. Bock, Luke [BECNT], 1:703-5. Further evidence that this is the case here is the final statement: "the one who is forgiven little loves little" means that the one who is forgiven little is thus not able to love much. The REB renders this verse: "her great love proves that her many sins have been forgiven; where little has been forgiven, little love is shown." Jesus' point (**she loved much**) is that the person who realizes how great a gift forgiveness is (because they have a deep sense of sin) has a great love for the one who forgives, that is, God. The woman's acts of reverence to Jesus honored him as the one who brought God's message of grace.

**James Smith** - Where there is love to Christ, He is always quick to recognise and confess it. The woman in Simon's house who had washed, wiped, kissed, and anointed His feet because "She loved much," was not only noticed and commended, but used by the Lord as a powerful rebuke to the frozen-hearted Pharisee (Luke 7:44-47). It is only love alone that can understand love, and make an adequate response. Perfect love casteth out fear.

**THOUGHT** - If our love for God has grown cold, if we have forgotten the depth of the sin from which we have been delivered, we must remember it anew. May we then go on to live a new life, a life filled with true humility, great thankfulness, and sacrificial love for the One who forgave us. - P G Matthew

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**Have been forgiven** (863)(**aphiemi** from apo = prefix speaks of separation, putting some distance between + hiemi = put in motion, send) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation. 1. let go, send away Mk 4:36; give up Mt 27:50; utter Mk 15:37 ; divorce 1 Cor 7:11ff. Cancel, pardon Mt 18:27, 32; remit, forgive sins, etc. Mt 6:12, 14f; Mk 3:28; Lk 12:10; Ro 4:7; 1 J 1:9; 2:12.—2. leave lit. Mt 4:11; 19:27; Mk 13:34; Lk 10:30; abandon Mk 14:50. Let someone have something Mt 5:40; give peace Jn 14:27. Fig. give up, abandon Ro 1:27; Heb 6:1; Rev 2:4; neglect Mt 23:23.—3. let, let go, permit, tolerate Mk 5:19; Acts 5:38; Rev 2:20; 11:9. Let someone go on Jn 11:48. The imperatives are used with the subjunctive, esp. in the first person - let me take out the speck Mt 7:4; let us see Mt 27:49; also with hina and the third person - let her keep it Jn 12:7. Friberg - (1) send off or away, let go (Mt 27.50); (2) as a legal technical term divorce (1Co 7.11); (3) abandon, leave behind (Mt 26.56 ); (4) of duty and obligation reject, set aside, neglect (Mk 7.8); (5) of toleration let go, leave in peace, allow (Mk 11.6); (6) of sins or debts forgive, pardon, cancel (Lk 7.47); (7)

give or utter a loud cry (Mk 15:37) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Aphiemi in Luke** - Lk. 4:39; Lk. 5:11; Lk. 5:20; Lk. 5:21; Lk. 5:23; Lk. 5:24; Lk. 6:42; Lk. 7:47; Lk. 7:48; Lk. 7:49; Lk. 8:51; Lk. 9:60; Lk. 10:30; Lk. 11:4; Lk. 12:10; Lk. 12:39; Lk. 13:8; Lk. 13:35; Lk. 17:3; Lk. 17:4; Lk. 17:34; Lk. 17:35; Lk. 17:36; Lk. 18:16; Lk. 18:28; Lk. 18:29; Lk. 19:44; Lk. 21:6; Lk. 23:34;

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**Rod Mattoon** - The Lord basically points out that Simon was the failure, not the woman. Simon was the one who gave Jesus the cold shoulder, not this woman. Why was he the failure? Let me explain. In the Middle East, the host would provide several services for his guest.

1. The host placed his hand on the guest's shoulder and gave him the kiss of peace. That was a mark of respect which was never omitted in the case of a distinguished Rabbi. It was a common form of welcome and kindness.
2. Cool water was poured over the guest's feet to cleanse the dust and dirt and comfort them.
3. A pinch of sweet-smelling incense was burned or a drop of rose oil or olive oil was placed on the guest's head.

These kindnesses, good manners demanded, and in this case, not one of them were done by Simon. He was the host, yet, she behaved as the real hostess. He gave the Lord the cold shoulder, but the woman didn't. He is the one that failed, not she.

What made the difference in the attitude of these two folks? This woman found forgiveness from the Lord and expressed her gratefulness to Christ. Simon did not seek God's forgiveness and his actions demonstrated that his life was not changed or touched by Jesus. Simon was focused on this woman's depth of depravity, but Jesus was focused on her magnitude of love and gratefulness.

Let me ask right here, "Are you so focused on the faults of others that you fail to see your own failures? Do you fail to express your gratefulness to Christ day by day because you are bitter or worried about what everyone else is doing?" Get a life and flush that kind of thinking from your mind! Life is too short for such a waste of time and energy. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Dave Roper** - Sin can make us more appreciative of God's forgiveness and can lead us to a deeper, more extravagant love for Him than we could otherwise attain. Once we know how much we've been forgiven, we love Him all the more.<sup>38</sup> Thus "broken pinions" heal fully and we can fly.

Another poet has amended Butterworth's lines:

The soul that comes to Jesus  
Is cleansed from every stain;  
And by grace that is freely given,  
We can soar higher again.

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**A Fresh Start** "Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."—Luke 7:47

Harry Monroe was in a Detroit courtroom. The charge was counterfeiting. He was guilty. But he was also remorseful and told the judge that, if given a chance, he would turn his life around. The judge told the young man, "I trust God and I trust you to carry on."

Harry left Detroit. In Chicago he went into a bar, ordered a drink, and was lifting the glass to his lips when he realized, "If I drink this I'm right back where I was."

Out on the busy sidewalk he heard music. It was coming from the Pacific Garden Mission. Harry went in, sat down, and for the first time heard the gospel. But when asked to believe he responded, "You stick to your business and I'll stick to mine."

But the preacher was patient and led Harry to the Savior. Harry couldn't sleep that night. He had a new life in Christ! The following Sunday he shared his testimony at the mission. For the next thirty-five years Harry Monroe ministered with a grateful heart at the mission and in 1892 became its superintendent.

Do you appreciate the forgiveness you have received from Christ? Today in prayer tell God how much you love Him and how much you are thankful for the fresh start He has given you.

"But still it is proper that our love should be increased by a consideration of his goodness; and they who feel—as Christians do—that they are the chief of sinners, will feel under infinite obligation to love God and their Redeemer, and that no expression of attachment to him can be beyond what is due."—Albert Barnes (Peter Kennedy - From Generation to Generation)

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**LUKE 7:47 Luke 7:36-50**

MAN returned to his wife whom he had left years before for a life of sin. He came to Christ in a rescue mission while living as a derelict on skid row. Now when he talks about God's mercy, he is overwhelmed with emotion.

People may say, "That man's wife could never love the Lord as much as he does, because she was forgiven far less than he." But they are wrong. Because she views herself as hopelessly lost apart from Christ, she can love as much as he.

Our Lord's statement to Simon that the sinful woman loved much because she had been forgiven much is often misunderstood. Jesus wasn't saying that some people need less forgiveness and are therefore not able to love as much as others. Rather, He was saying that the more we realize the depth of our sinfulness and the extent of God's forgiveness, the greater will be our love. Simon had shown no evidence of love for Christ. His self-righteousness was just as evil as that woman's immorality, and if he would turn to Jesus, his love for Him could be just as great.

Even those who were converted as children and never sank deep into sin can appreciate the Lord's mercy. When we ponder our own unworthiness and reflect on God's forgiveness, our love for Christ will grow.—HVL ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, I know that my forgiveness cost You just as much as that of any murderer, adulterer, glutton, gossip, or child molester, for in my heart, if not in my behavior. I am as wicked as any of them. May I never take pride in my goodness, because I have none of my own; it all belongs to You.

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**Vance Havner - "For She Loved Much" Luke 7:36-50**

LUKE alone records the anointing of our Lord in the house of a Pharisee. This man had perhaps invited Jesus out of curiosity or admiration, and our Lord, who received sinners and ate with them, being a friend of publicans and sinners, accepted the invitation. As He ate, a woman who had been a sinner, doubtless a harlot in the city, came to Him and anointed His feet. She had likely heard Him teach and came in a state of genuine contrition, godly sorrow and repentance. Such a state manifests itself in brokenness. There is much shallow repentance today because men have such a shallow sense of sin.

The Pharisee reasoned within himself that if Jesus were a prophet He would not have allowed such a contact and defilement. But our Lord, reading his thoughts, gave him the parable of the two debtors, one owing five hundred pence and the other fifty. Both were forgiven: now which loved his creditor most? The plain application, as He Himself gave it, was that those who are forgiven most love most; and this woman, being a grievous sinner and realizing it, was full of gratitude because much was forgiven. While all are sinners—and it is not the amount of sins committed that condemns the sinner—yet those who have offended most grievously in degree, though all offend in kind, usually are most grateful. That explains why men converted from terrible careers of vicious sin often are most exuberant in their testimony, and why those saved early and not conscious of years of vile transgression do not generally manifest the same sense of deliverance.

"Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little" is not to be taken to mean that the woman was forgiven because she loved. She loved much because she was forgiven much. Her love was the expression of gratitude for sins already forgiven. Some think she had already been forgiven before this incident; others, that Jesus, perceiving in her genuine repentance, forgave her at the outset and announced it at the close of the incident.

Our smug and pale Christianity today shows little of that broken and humble gratitude for sins forgiven that marked this woman. Few alabaster boxes are broken in tearful joy over forgiveness. Sin has been glossed over; men do not regard themselves sinners and consequently feel no burden of guilt and, of course, no relief in His pardon. We bring Him verbal tribute, wordy compliments on Sunday, but few kneel weeping at His feet.

"Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." It is faith that saves, so far as our part goes. Of course, Christ the object of our faith, saves us, but faith looks unto Him and appropriates His pardon. And because we are forgiven and saved, we may go in peace—peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

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**Ian Paisley - Much Love "She loved much." Luke 7:47**

Is it not a wonder that all who know the Saviour do not love Him much?

Here is a glorious instance of one who loved the Saviour much. Remember this is the measurement which the Lord Jesus made of her love. This is no self-made measurement.

## I. The Person "she was a woman"

The woman who had been great in lust was now great in love.

She had been a degraded, disreputable woman but God's great love had reached her and God's great grace had redeemed her.

## II. The Passion "she loved"

Ah, this redeemed soul loved Him because He first loved her.

She spared no expense; she made the greatest sacrifice; she feared no opposition to demonstrate her love to Him.

She had no strength to anoint His head, she simply poured the rich ointment onto His feet.

## III. The Power "much"

She did not love a little or with an average love. She loved much.

With all her soul, her mind, her heart and strength she loved her Lord.

Forgiven much she loved much.

Forgiven powerfully, she loved powerfully. Forgiven eternally, she loved eternally.

Oh that the testimony of our Lord about her could be true of me!

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### **Rob Morgan - Luke 7:47 - A Hundred Pounds**

Lorenzo Dow was an eccentric Methodist whose long hair, peculiar clothing, and sharp manner caused him to be called "Crazy Dow." But as he traveled thousands of miles on foot and horseback, he won multitudes to Christ.

As a teenager, Dow had been greatly troubled over the doctrine of predestination, and at one point became so convinced that he was among the condemned that he nearly took his own life with a pistol. But about that time, Methodist evangelist Hope Hull came through Connecticut, and his message pierced the youth. Lorenzo was so overcome with conviction that he had to hold to his cousin to keep from falling off his seat. People were being converted all around him, and Lorenzo was almost beside himself with a desire for peace with God. On his way home, he fell down on the road several times and hardly knew where he was. Reaching home at last, he prayed till exhausted, then fell into a slumber in which he experienced a nightmare of being in hell. He awoke in terror, and, oh! how glad I was to find it was only a dream.

He resumed his earnest prayers. "Lord! I give up; I submit; I yield; if there be mercy in heaven for me, let me know it; and if not, let me go down to hell and know the worst of my case." As these words flowed from my heart, I saw the Mediator step in, as it were, between the Father's justice and my soul, and these words were applied to my mind with great power: "Son, thy sins which are many are forgiven thee; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

The burden of sin and guilt and the fear of hell vanished from my mind as perceptibly as a hundred pounds falling from a man's shoulder. My soul was so happy that I could scarcely settle to work; and I spent the greatest part of the day in going from house to house through the neighborhood, to tell the people what God had done for me. (From This Verse)

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### **Beautiful Scars Read: Luke 7:36-49**

Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. —Luke 7:47

A number of years ago I was hiking along the Salmon River and came across a grove of pine trees that had been partially stripped of their bark. I knew from a friend who is a forester that the Native Americans who hunted this area long ago had peeled the outer bark and harvested the underlying layer for chewing gum. Some of the scars were disfiguring, but others, filled with crystallized sap and burnished by wind and weather, had been transformed into patterns of rare beauty.

So it is with our transgressions. We may be scarred by the sins of the past. But those sins, repented of and brought to Jesus for His forgiveness, can leave behind marks of beauty.

Some people, having tasted the bitterness of sin, now loathe it. They hate evil and love righteousness. Theirs is the beauty of holiness.

Others, knowing how far they fall short (Rom. 3:23), have tender hearts toward others. They rise up with understanding, compassion, and kindness when others fail. Theirs is the beauty of humility.

Finally, when acts of sin are freely and thoroughly forgiven it leads to intimacy with the One who has shown mercy. Such sinners

love much for much has been forgiven (Luke 7:47). Theirs is the beauty of love. By David H. Roper [Used by permission from Our Daily Bread](#)

Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me—  
All His wonderful passion and purity!  
O Thou Spirit divine, all my nature refine,  
Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.  
—Orsborn

A forgiven heart is the fountain of beauty.

#### Luke 7:48 Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven."

**KJV** And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

- **Thy** Matthew 9:2; Mark 2:5
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

**Then He said to her, "Your sins ([hamartia](#)) have been forgiven ([aphiemi](#))** - As in the previous verse again **Forgiven** is in the [perfect tense](#) which means her sins had already been forgiven in the past and this forgiveness is permanent!

**Ryle on Your sins have been forgiven** - We are not, of course, to suppose that these words mean that the woman's sins were now forgiven for the first time. Such an interpretation would overthrow again all the doctrine of the story of the two debtors. The woman was **really forgiven before she came to Christ**. But she now received a public and authoritative declaration of it before many witnesses, as a reward for her open expression of love and gratitude. Before, she had hope through grace. Now, she received the assurance of hope. (Luke 7)

**Spurgeon** - What music that sentence "Thy sins are forgiven," must have been to her! 'Ah!' says one, "I also should like to hear that sentence. Beyond everything else in the whole world would I desire to hear Jesus say to me, 'Thy sins are forgiven.' Then put yourself in the place that this woman occupied. When Joab clung to the horns of the altar, he had to die there, but this woman had fled to the feet of Jesus, and she did not die there; nor shall you, but at those blessed feet, weeping for sin, and trusting the great Sin-bearer, you shall receive assurance of pardon: "Thy sins are forgiven."....There I see the clear run of the argument, — that she is a woman who has had much forgiven by Christ, and that is the reason why she loves him so much. But, often, when an inference is very natural and plain, the Saviour leaves men to draw that one for themselves, while he draws another. He puts the same truth in another shape: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." I am afraid that there are many professed Christians, who must have had very little forgiven them, for they love Christ very little. This seems to be the age of little love to Christ. There are some few who love the Master intensely, but, oh, how few they are! Some persons think they are only very little sincere; and we are told, nowadays, what a little thing sin is, and what a little place hell is, and what a very short time the punishment of sin will last. Everything is according to scale, and it must be so in religion; as you diminish the guilt of sin, and the punishment of sin, you also diminish the sense of obligation in being saved from sin. Consequently, you diminish our love to Christ, and we shall gradually get less and less, I fear, unto the old scale, the old balance, the old shekel of the sanctuary, shall once again be used by us.

**NET Note** - Jesus showed his authority to forgive sins, something that was quite controversial. See Luke 5:17–26 and the next verse.

**IVP Background Commentary** - Although the priests could pronounce God's forgiveness after a sin offering, Jesus pronounces forgiveness without the clear restitution of a sacrifice to God in the temple. This pronouncement contradicted Pharisaic ethics, and most of early Judaism would have seen it at best as marginal behavior.

**J C Ryle** - We see, lastly, in this passage, that a sense of **having our sins forgiven** is the mainspring and life-blood of love to Christ. This, beyond doubt, was the lesson which our Lord wished Simon the Pharisee to learn, when He told him the story of the two debtors. "One owed his creditor five hundred pence, and the other fifty." Both had "nothing to pay," and both were forgiven freely. And then came the searching question: "Which of them will love him most?" Here was the true explanation, our Lord told Simon, of the deep love which the penitent woman before Him had displayed. Her many tears, her deep affection, her public reverence, her action in anointing His feet, were all traceable to one cause. She had been much forgiven, and so she loved much. Her love was the



effect of her forgiveness,—not the cause,—the consequence of her forgiveness, not the condition,—the result of her forgiveness, not the reason,—the fruit of her forgiveness, not the root. Would the Pharisee know why this woman showed so much love? It was because she felt much forgiven. Would he know why he himself had shown his guest so little love? It was because he felt under no obligation,—had no consciousness of having obtained forgiveness,—had no sense of debt to Christ.

Forever let the mighty principle laid down by our Lord in this passage, abide in our memories, and sink down into our hearts. It is one of the great corner-stones of the whole Gospel. It is one of the master-keys to unlock the secrets of the kingdom of God. The only way to make men holy, is to teach and preach free and full forgiveness through Jesus Christ. The secret of being holy ourselves, is to know and feel that Christ has pardoned our sins. Peace with God is the only root that will bear the fruit of holiness. Forgiveness must go before sanctification. We shall do nothing till we are reconciled to God. This is the first step in religion. We must work from life, and not for life. Our best works before we are justified are little better than splendid sins. We must live by faith in the Son of God, and then, and not till then, we shall walk in His ways. The heart which has experienced the pardoning love of Christ, is the heart which loves Christ, and strives to glorify Him.

Let us leave the passage with a deep sense of our Lord Jesus Christ's amazing mercy and compassion to the chief of sinners. Let us see in his kindness to the woman, of whom we have been reading, an encouragement to any one, however bad he may be, to come to Him for pardon and forgiveness. That word of His shall never be broken, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Never, never need any one despair of salvation, if he will only come to Christ.

Let us ask ourselves, in conclusion, What we are doing for Christ's glory? What kind of lives are we living? What proof are we making of our love to Him who loved us, and died for our sins? These are serious questions. If we cannot answer them satisfactorily, we may well doubt whether we are forgiven. The hope of forgiveness which is not accompanied by love in the life is no hope at all. The man whose sins are really cleansed away will always show by his ways that he loves the Saviour who cleansed them. (Luke 7)

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**Sins** (266)(**hamartia**) literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later hamartia came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. Hamartia in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). It pictures the idea of missing His appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, sin is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As Martin Luther put it "*Sin is essentially a departure from God.*"

**Forgiven** (863)(**aphiemi** from apo = prefix implies separation + hiemi = put in motion, send; See noun **aphesis**) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and means to send from one's self, to forsake, to hurl away, to put away, let alone, disregard, put off. It conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and refers to total detachment, total separation, from a previous location or condition. It means to send forth or away from one's self. It refers to the act of putting something away or of laying it aside. In secular Greek aphiemi initially conveyed the sense of to throw and in one secular writing we read "let the pot drop" (aphiemi). From this early literal use the word came to mean leave or let go.

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### Hopeful Derelicts Read: Luke 7:36-50

[Jesus] said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." —Luke 7:48

Most of the men at the rescue mission service were unkempt. Some were only half awake. Not one face indicated eager anticipation as I began to speak. I thought to myself, What can you expect? These men are skidrow alcoholics.

But then the attitude of Jesus came to my mind, and I said, "Men, people sometimes refer to you as hopeless derelicts, but they are wrong. God sees each of you as a worthwhile person with awesome potential. He is eager to forgive you, accept you, change you, and give you eternal life."

I know an inner-city pastor who says that his people are bringing prostitutes to Christ. They have come to view these women as fellow sinners for whom Jesus died on the cross. By treating them respectfully, they are showing them that through faith in Jesus they can be forgiven, accepted, and changed.

The Pharisee in Luke 7:36-39 had a loveless attitude toward sinners that said, in essence, "Hopeless derelicts." But mature believers "regard no one according to the flesh" (2 Cor. 5:16). They view everyone who is in Christ as completely clean. To them, even the worst sinner is a potential disciple of the Lord. They haven't forgotten that without Christ we would all be "hopeless derelicts." Herbert Vander Lugt [Used by permission from Our Daily Bread](#)

Thinking It Through

In Luke 18:10-14, who appeared to be righteous?

Which man did Jesus say was justified? (Lk 18:14).

Which of the two men are you more like?

In Christ, the hopeless find hope.

**Luke 7:49 Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?"**

**KJV** And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

- **Who** Lk 5:20,21; Matthew 9:3; Mark 2:7
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Luke 5:20,21+ Seeing their faith, He said, "Friend (PARALYZED MAN), **your sins are forgiven you.**" The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies (YES IF HE WERE NOT GOD! BUT HE IS GOD!)? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"

### THE DINNER GUESTS SPEAK UP

**Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?"**

- Their reaction seems similar to the scribes and Pharisees in Luke 5:20-21 (above). There is a major difference that is easy to miss (I missed it). In Luke the Pharisees say "Who can forgive (aorist tense) sins." But here it says **who even forgives sins** where **forgives** is in the present tense, who continually forgives sins. They were saying Jesus forgives sins, but it was in the form of a question.

**Pate** writes "Even the guests began to realize that Jesus was more than a prophet; He was divinely able to forgive an unclean woman."

On what basis could they make this statement? On the basis of her transformed life which gave powerful testimony to her having received forgiveness which was dramatically manifested by her incredible acts of love and gratitude to Jesus for so great a salvation. She was like a "finger" pointing the dinner guest to Jesus, saying He is the One to Whom I owe all my thanks for this remarkable change that has occurred in my life.

**John MacArthur** says it this way - "That transformation was evident to those who were reclining at the table with Christ and they began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?" That Jesus took it upon Himself to forgive her sins, instead of saying God had forgiven her, was not lost on them. ([The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

Sadly the dinner guests could not go the full distance and seek forgiveness of their sins from Him by believing in Him as their Savior just as the sinful woman had done, because their hearts were hard, their eyes were blind and their ears were dull and they could not hear the message of salvation Jesus preached, the very message that saved this sinful woman. One is reminded of Jesus' words in Luke 6:20+ "And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, "Blessed are you who are **poor**, for yours is the kingdom of God." This woman was **poor** in spirit and the Spirit enabled her to enter the Kingdom of God when she believed in Jesus as her Savior. Jesus words of warning in Luke 6 would have been appropriate for these unbelieving guests who likely had experienced a lavish meal, for He declared "**Woe to you who are well-fed now**, for you shall be hungry." (Lk 6:25+).

**Luke 7:50 And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."**

**KJV** And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

- **Thy** Lk 8:18,42,48; 18:42; Habakkuk 2:4; Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:34; 10:52; Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:14-26
- **go** Ecclesiastes 9:7; Romans 5:1,2

- [Luke 7:50 Forgiveness](#) (See Topic "[Forgiveness](#)") - James Hastings (Great Texts of the Bible)
- Luke 7 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 7:36-50 How to Love Jesus Fervently](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 7:36-50 The Transformed Sinner](#) - John MacArthur

**And He said to the woman, "Your faith ([pistis](#)) has saved ([sozo](#)) you; go in peace - Go** - command in the [present imperative](#). Continually go in peace, something she could now do because she had **Peace WITH God**, something every believer has gloriously experienced! Our daily desire now should be to live with the **Peace OF God** (Php 4:6-7)

**MacArthur on Your faith ([pistis](#)) has saved you** - Not all whom Jesus healed were saved, but those who exhibited true faith were (cf. Lk 17:19; 18:42; Mt 9:22; see note on Mk 5:34).

**Ryle on your faith has saved you** - Let it be observed that it is not said, "thy love hath saved thee." Here, as in every other part of the New Testament, faith is put forward as the key to salvation. By faith, the woman received our Lord's invitation, "come unto me and I will give you rest." By faith, she embraced that invitation and embracing it, cast off the sins under which she had been so long laboring and heavy-laden. By faith, she boldly came to the Pharisee's house, and confessed by her conduct that she had found rest in Christ. Her faith worked by love, and bore precious fruit. But it was not love but faith that saved her soul. (Luke 7)

**Spurgeon** - He did not want this young convert, this beginner in the Christian life to hear the bickerings and controversies of these coarse spirits, so he said to her, "Go in peace; and, dear soul, if you have begun to find out that, even in the Christian Church there are many opinions concerning many things, do not trouble yourself about those things. This is enough for thee: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." There may be some who are called to contend for this or that point of the faith; but, as for thee, poor child, if, with thy broken heart, thou hast found the Saviour, and if thou lovest him with an inward, warm, and hearty love, do not spoil that love by getting into a controversial spirit: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."...."Go home, good woman, do not stop here and be bothered by these people." And oftentimes, that is the best advice that we can give to new converts. There is a theological controversy raging, and the jargon of the different schools of thought is being used by one and another; but, do you go home, good soul. You need not trouble about controversial matters. Your sins are forgiven you; your faith has saved you; if you know that, you know as much as you need to know just now. Go home, and be quiet and happy: "Go in peace."

**Spurgeon** - She was best out of the way of all controversy; she would honour him most by going home, and there sweetly singing to his praise, and drinking deep draughts of his love. If any of you converts are meeting with those who cavil at you, do not stop where they are, but go about your business with these sweet words of your Master ringing in your ears: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

**Ryle on go in peace** - This was a phrase which was a common valediction among the Jews, like our "goodbye" or "God be with you." Pool thinks that our Lord specially referred to that "peace" which is the fruit of faith, described in Rom. 5:1. He paraphrases the expression thus: "Go thy way, a blessed and happy woman, and in the view and sense of thine own blessedness, be not troubled at the censures and reflections of supercilious persons, who may despise and overlook thee because thou hast been a great sinner." (Luke 7)

**T Adams** - Whosoever will go to heaven must have a faith of his own. In Gideon's camp, every soldier had his own pitcher; among Solomon's men of valor, every one wore his own sword: and these were they that got the victories. The five wise virgins had every one oil in her lamp; and only these went in with the bridegroom. Another's eating of dainty meat makes thee none the fatter.

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**Saved** ([4982](#)) ([sozo](#)) has the basic meaning of rescuing one from great peril. It is translated **get well** some 13 times and **save** some 86 times in the NT. Additional nuances of [sozo](#) include to protect, keep alive, preserve life, deliver, heal, be made whole.

**Sozo** in Luke and Acts - Lk. 6:9; Lk. 7:50; Lk. 8:12; Lk. 8:36; Lk. 8:48; Lk. 8:50; Lk. 9:24; Lk. 9:56; Lk. 13:23; Lk. 17:19; Lk. 18:26; Lk. 18:42; Lk. 19:10; Lk. 23:35; Lk. 23:37; Lk. 23:39; Acts 2:21; Acts 2:40; Acts 2:47; Acts 4:9; Acts 4:12; Acts 11:14; Acts 14:9; Acts 15:1; Acts 15:11; Acts 16:30; Acts 16:31; Acts 27:20; Acts 27:31

**Peace** ([1515](#))([eirene](#) from verb [eiro](#) = to join or bind together that which has been separated) literally pictures the binding or joining together again of that which had been separated or divided and thus setting at one again, a meaning conveyed by the common expression of one "having it all together". It follows that peace is the opposite of division or dissension. Peace as a state of concord and harmony is the opposite of war. Peace was used as a greeting or farewell corresponding to the Hebrew word [shalom](#) - "peace to you".

**Eirene** in Luke and Acts - Lk. 1:79; Lk. 2:14; Lk. 2:29; Lk. 7:50; Lk. 8:48; Lk. 10:5; Lk. 10:6; Lk. 11:21; Lk. 12:51; Lk. 14:32; Lk. 19:38; Lk. 19:42; Lk. 24:36; Acts 7:26; Acts 9:31; Acts 10:36; Acts 12:20; Acts 15:33; Acts 16:36; Acts 24:2;

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**ILLUSTRATION** - During the Spanish-American War, Clara Barton was overseeing the work of the Red Cross in Cuba. One day Colonel Theodore Roosevelt came to her. He wanted to buy food for his sick and wounded Rough Riders, but she refused to sell him any. Roosevelt was perplexed. His men needed the help and he was prepared to pay out of his own funds. When he asked someone why he could not buy the supplies, he was told, "Colonel, just ask for it!" A smile broke over Roosevelt's face. Now he understood. The provisions were not for sale. All he had to do was simply ask and they would be given freely. The same is true for salvation in Jesus Christ. Trust in Him today!