

**Luke 7:1 ¶ Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.**

**Luke 7:2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.**

**Luke 7:3 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.**

**Luke 7:4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:**

**Luke 7:5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.**

We have already noted that Capernaum seemed to serve as the base from which Jesus operated. The mountain teaching from the previous chapter evidently took place near that city.

In Capernaum there lived a centurion who had won the affection of the Jewish people who lived there. He demonstrated his love for the Jewish people by building them a synagogue.

A beloved servant of the centurion became sick to the point of death. The centurion heard about Jesus and the miracles of healing He had performed, so he sent some of the Jewish elders (the Greek indicates they were probably members of the Sanhedrin) to ask Jesus if he would come and heal his servant. They immediately complied and sought the Lord on behalf of the centurion by telling him how the centurion had shown his love for the Jewish people.

It is interesting to me that he sought the favor of Jesus from those who were recognized as spiritual leaders in the community. It was basically the spiritual leaders of the nation who did not like Jesus. It would seem that if these leaders were antagonistic toward Jesus, they were very ready to lay aside those feelings on behalf of a man whose support they treasured.

**Luke 7:6 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 shouldst enter under my roof:**

**Luke 7:7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.**

**Luke 7:8 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*.**

**Luke 7:9 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.**

**Luke 7:10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.**

Jesus didn't have to be begged; He went with them. Evidently, the centurion was watching for Him. When he knew He was getting close to his home, he sent friends out with a personal message for Jesus. He declared himself unworthy of having Jesus even enter his home or of approaching Him on his own. He

declared that He knew all that Jesus had to do was say the word and his servant would be healed. He explained that his belief was based in his understanding of authority. As a centurion, he commanded a division of the Roman army; when he gave his soldiers orders, they obeyed.

Luke tells us that Jesus greatly admired the man upon hearing his message. He turned and declared to those that were following him that He had not found faith as great as this Gentile's among the Jewish people.

When the centurion's messengers returned to his home, they found that the servant had been completely healed.

(12/13) I feel a strong connection with this centurion. His faith was that Jesus could if He so will to. He expressed that faith when He saw it was Jesus' will to heal his servant just by the act of responding to his request. I know without a doubt that Jesus can answer my every prayer—the problem is in discernment as to His will. I want His best! Sometimes that comes through testing and/or suffering in ways that I would not desire.

**Luke 7:11 ¶ 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.**

**Luke 7:12 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.**

**Luke 7:13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.**

**Luke 7:14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.**

**Luke 7:15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.**

Luke specifies that the very next day Jesus traveled to the city of Nain (about 12 miles from Capernaum) with many of his disciples, and a large group of people decided to follow them. When they came to the gate of the city, they encountered a funeral procession. A widow had lost her only son. He and/or she must have been well liked since comment was made that *many* people were with her. When Jesus saw her, He had compassion on her; His heart went out to her. A widow with no children to support her would be dependent upon charity. He told her to stop crying; then He touched the coffin and told the young man to get up. Immediately the "dead" man sat up and began to talk. Jesus gave the widow her son back to her.

Of note is the fact that Jesus acted as prompted by His compassion—not because He was asked. I think this miracle was another in the progression of miracles He performed to get the people to recognize Him as their Messiah.

Don't you imagine the woman was confused to say the least when Jesus told her to stop crying? I don't think she had much time to process her thoughts since Jesus immediately brought her son back to life.

Isn't it interesting that a "dead" man heard and obeyed Jesus, while so many of us who claim Jesus as Lord and "hear" His words through scripture choose to disobey Him?

**Luke 7:16 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.**  
**Luke 7:17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.**

This display of Jesus' power over death put a holy fear into many of the people who witnessed this miracle. To their credit, they recognized the miracle as an act of God and declared Jesus to be a great prophet. Until John the Baptist came on the scene, Israel had been without a prophet since the days of Malachi; that is the significance of the phrase "God has visited His people."

It didn't take long for news of this miracle to spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding region. Today, news of such a miracle would be able to travel around the whole world in hours or even minutes.

**Luke 7:18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.**  
**Luke 7:19 ¶ 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?**  
**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?**

Reminder—We learned that John the Baptist had been thrown into prison by Herod in chapter 3. We know that John was eventually murdered while still in prison, and it is only human that he would get discouraged. Some of his disciples had evidently been following Jesus and decided to report to him what Jesus was doing. John then sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus to affirm whether or not He was Messiah.

**Luke 7:21 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.**  
**Luke 7:22 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.**  
**Luke 7:23 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.**

It seems that Jesus did not answer them right away. Instead, He began doing miracles to establish the foundation for His answer. He healed many; He delivered some from evil spirits and He caused the blind to see. Then He turned to John's disciples and told them to go and tell John what they had seen and heard. I think He itemized the list for them because they were things that were prophesied as actions of the Messiah. They were to tell John that the blind were made to see, the lame to walk, the lepers made clean, the deaf made to hear, the

dead raised and the gospel preached. (In context, all of the following passages are referencing the coming of the Messiah.)

*Isaiah 29:18–19 “And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”*

*Isaiah 35:5–6 “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing....”*

*Isaiah 61:1 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives....”*

What was the gospel Jesus referred to? Luke told us in chapter 4.

*Luke 4:43 “And he [Jesus] said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.”*

The kingdom of God would be in reference to the establishment of the Messiah’s kingdom. He was declaring the message that He had come to deliver them. The problem was that (as we often do) they listened through the filter of their own expectations.

The words “entrap” and “stumble” stood out when I looked at the word “offended.” This thought flows from the idea of expectations. I know from experience that our faith sometimes begins to waiver during the hard times. Jesus is telling John not to be stumbled or trapped in his faith because of his expectations. Look at the evidence and have faith. Stop focusing on your circumstances and cling to the word of God.

**Luke 7:24 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?**

**Luke 7:25 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.**

**Luke 7:26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.**

**Luke 7:27 This is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.**

**Luke 7:28 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.**

John’s disciples left to go and tell him what Jesus had said. Jesus then talks to the people about John. I think this implies that the people had heard the conversation between John’s disciples and Jesus. His first question reminds them to think about why they had gone to listen to John to begin with. The

following questions were more rhetorical. They certainly hadn't been drawn by a man with a weak message. They had gone to see a man with a bold message and who didn't conform to the norm in the way he dressed and lived. They went to hear him because they recognized he was a prophet. Jesus affirms that to be true, but then declares that John was not just another prophet. He was the prophet spoken of by the prophet Malachi that would prepare the way for the Messiah.

*Malachi 3:1 "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts."*

Jesus then declares that there is (nor has there been seems to be implied) no greater prophet than John the Baptist. Then He makes a very thought-provoking statement—"He that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." What does that mean? (12/12) I was listening to this section again and I realized that to be born again in the Spirit is a greater birth than our physical birth. It's a birth to a sinless, incorruptible immortal life.

The first conclusion is that the kingdom of God had not yet been established. In fact, the good news Jesus was preaching was that He had come to establish the kingdom. Jesus understood John's human weakness; He understood how expectations could undermine one's faith. Those who would become part of the kingdom of God in response to Jesus' message would be able to declare the identity of the Messiah and His salvation as proven by His death, burial and resurrection. John did not yet understand that truth.

Jesus' response to John is of great comfort to me. As with John He understands all my weaknesses and how the circumstances and my expectations can get me down. He understands when I come to Him with wavering faith but with a heart that yearns to be strong. He doesn't respond in anger or frustration; He always encourages me through the ministry of His word through His Spirit. I am such a slow learner, but I am truly striving to focus on His promises and not the circumstances. It's easiest regarding my own troubles, but gets ever harder when it touches those I love.

**Luke 7:29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.**

**Luke 7:30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.**

I think the NLT clarifies the KJV in verse 29: *"When they heard this, all the people, including the unjust tax collectors, agreed that God's plan was right, for they had been baptized by John."*

My first thought was that those who have truly repented of their sin find that a changed heart results in an ability to understand spiritual truth. These people had responded to John's message with repentance. John had pointed them to Jesus. They understood the message that Jesus was sending to John was based in

the scripture and that He was declaring the truth about who He was. The Pharisees and so-called experts of the law, the Jewish Old Testament scriptures, however, had no spiritual discernment. They were not ready to admit that they were sinners or that Jesus could be possibly be the Messiah. That is why they had refused to be baptized by John.

When we refuse to admit our sin, it is always rooted in pride and a love for the things of this world. The Pharisees took great pride in obeying the law as it had been interpreted according to men. They enjoyed their positions of leadership and the influence it gave them. So too, the lawyers; they prided themselves on providing expert understanding of the law and the influence they wielded in light of that position. To accept the message of Jesus would require humbling oneself to admit his sin and in essence abdicating his power base.

Though we all don't possess the same power and influence of these spiritual leaders of Israel, we all have to deal with the issue of pride in admitting our sin. You will find, however, that once you truly humble yourself to admit your sin and submit to Jesus as Lord, your spiritual ears will be opened to learning spiritual truth and learning about the power you possess in the Holy Spirit. You actually trade the weakness of the flesh for the power of the Spirit.

**Luke 7:31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?**

**Luke 7:32 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.**

**Luke 7:33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.**

**Luke 7:34 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!**

**Luke 7:35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.**

Jesus declares that it is impossible to please these leaders. He compares them to spoiled children who can't be satisfied. They criticized John the Baptist because he didn't join the people in normal fellowship, then turned around and criticized Jesus because He did fellowship with the people. Why? Because He chose to fellowship with all people—even those of bad repute. His conclusion—(NLT) “Wisdom is shown to be right by the lives of those who follow it.” JFB expressed it beautifully: “But the children of Wisdom recognize and honor her, whether in the austere garb of the Baptist or in the more attractive style of his Master, whether in the Law or in the Gospel, whether in rags or in royalty....”

JFB shares an important insight—wisdom isn't a respecter of persons. Wisdom is within the grasp of every Christian. You can be a source of wisdom to others if you will humble yourself before God and strive to obey Him in word and deed while continuing to spend time in His word. Some of those with the greatest spiritual wisdom are those considered least in this world, while some of those thought to possess great wisdom are actually spiritual paupers if spiritual at all.

John and Jesus provide interesting contrasts. John's ministry was narrow and specific. He was focused on declaring the truth in the power of the Spirit to bring people to repentance in preparation to receive Jesus. Jesus' ministry was focused on declaring the truth not only in word but through the miraculous empowerment of the Spirit in proof of Who He was.

**Luke 7:36 ¶ 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.**

**Luke 7:37 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,**

**Luke 7:38 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 7:39 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.**

One of the Pharisees decided to invite Jesus to his home for dinner. A woman of bad repute found out that He was there and took an expensive container of perfume with her to see Him. According to the NIV Commentary, the customs of the day would have allowed her access to the house to wait for leftovers. She positioned herself at His feet (They ate reclining at a table.) and was evidently weeping so greatly that she felt the need to dry His feet with her hair. She then kissed His feet (over and over again) and anointed them with the perfume.

The Pharisee was horrified. He "thought" to himself that Jesus would have known better than to allow her actions if He were truly a prophet. A true prophet surely would not have allowed such a woman to touch him.

**Luke 7:40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.**

**Luke 7:41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.**

**Luke 7:42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?**

**Luke 7:43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.**

**Luke 7:44 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.**

**Luke 7:45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.**

**Luke 7:46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.**

**Luke 7:47 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.**

Without betraying that He knew what the man was thinking, Jesus proceeds to answer the man's thoughts. As He often did, He told a story. In this story a creditor forgave two men their debt to him; one owed him ten times more than the other. Jesus then asked Simon which one loved the creditor most, and the Pharisee gave the obvious answer—the one whom he forgave most. Jesus now applies that principle to the present situation. This woman came to Jesus in obvious grief and repentance because of her sin. She had obviously previously heard His teaching and/or witnessed His miracles. She knew that Jesus could save her; she believed that He was the Messiah. She showed the sincerity of her faith by how she chose to show her love to the Savior; she wasn't worried about what anyone else thought of her actions. Her focus was on showing her love to her Savior.

Jesus pointed out the obvious. She was known as a great sinner, so it was to be expected that her response to the One who would forgive her sin would be with great love. Those who didn't admit to any great sin would not be expected to show much love.

Did the Pharisee understand that Jesus had read his thoughts? I don't know. Did he understand that Jesus was comparing him to the woman? Again, I don't know. If he didn't, it was because his heart was hard. Jesus specifically contrasted the woman's actions with Simon's. You and I, however, have no excuse; we need to examine our own lives in light of this teaching.

**Luke 7:48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.**

**Luke 7:49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?**

**Luke 7:50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.**

Jesus then turns to the woman and affirms that her sins are forgiven.

Again, those at the dinner (friends of the Pharisee that probably included other Pharisees) began to think about why Jesus thought He had the authority to forgive sins. If only they had spiritual understanding, they would have known it was because He was the Messiah as John had declared and He had testified to by His miracles. Their thoughts betrayed their hard hearts.

Jesus tells the woman that she can leave now; she can go in the knowledge that her faith has saved her. She can go in peace—knowing that she is in right relationship with God. I couldn't help but think of Paul's beautiful quote in Ephesians.

*Ephesians 2:8–9 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

And to the Romans.

*Romans 5:1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...."*