



**CAPITOL[®]
COMMISSION**

Gospel Hope & Spiritual Strength for Government Leaders



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“But say the word, and let my servant be healed”...when Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.” Luke 7:7b, 9

Luke 7:1-23 – Jesus Exhibits Compassion and Power

Jesus, having finished addressing the crowd in the Sermon on the Plain, goes to His earthly headquarters in the town of Capernaum—which lets us know the sermon was given near Galilee. [Read vv 1-10]. Recall Jesus had just taught the crowds to love their enemies and that good fruit only comes out of good trees, then the first encounter upon returning home is with a Roman centurion. Jesus already established Himself as One who embraces the outcast and hated (sinners and tax collectors), but no one was more disdained by the Jews of that time than the occupying Roman army. Jesus must also be aware He will later be mocked, scourged, and crucified under Rome’s legal authority, yet He shows this man compassion.

This centurion has a special need, a favored servant is dying, and having heard about a miracle-working healer in his very location sends the Jewish elders of the town to Jesus. His reluctance to approach Jesus in person is actually a mark of humility. Consider the perception of a high-ranking army leader’s approach. It could very easily be seen as a coercive demand rather than a humble (and desperate) request. The elders’ indorsement of this man is also noteworthy: This centurion already set himself apart from the other occupying authorities by showing grace to the point of funding their local worship building (v 5).

A highly valued servant is dying, and the town’s highly favored local Roman leader has expressed a need. Jesus, although certainly weary, cares for these people and heads toward the Roman’s home. Then the centurion sends his own friends to intercept the Lord (even addressing Him as “Lord”) with a message indicating his unworthiness to host this holy man under his roof. This indicates he is sensitive to Jewish customs but also that he understands Jesus is a man of great authority. The centurion’s own experience in command comes out, and he invites Jesus to give the command from afar, knowing it will be done, at which Jesus marvels greatly. Of all the miracles already, no one has

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastor-missionaries who in session teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for all those in our state capitols. The Bible studies are hand distributed to each legislative office, are available online at capitolcom.org, and shared across the Capitol Commission community. This ministry is an extension of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message and help believers mature through Biblical expositional instruction. Prayer is foundational to this ministry, consistent with proper submission to governmental authority (Rom 13:1-7) and obedient to the command to pray for our appointed leaders (1 Tim 2:1-4).

Our desire is to witness God’s work in transforming hearts.

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exhibited the faith this Gentile centurion has. The servant is healed and neither the servant nor the centurion even sees Jesus face-to-face!

The next event shows Jesus and His disciples entering the town of Nain, a nearby Galilean village. [Read 7:11-17]. Upon approach, they encounter a funeral procession going out of the town (cemeteries were always outside Jewish cities). The only son of a lonely widow has just died, which elicits great compassion within Jesus, since she already buried a husband and in that culture she has no protector. Jesus tells her not to cry, a terrible thing to say at a funeral by the way, except He goes further. He interrupts the funeral and simply touches the bier (an open coffin, would defile any other person) then tells the young man to get up. Immediately, the corpse is alive, and speaking! Jesus gives him back to his mother and the onlookers are freaked out with fear. This is the first of three accounts of Jesus raising a dead person but is not the first reanimation of a dead person in the Bible. Elijah (1 Kings 17:22) and Elisha (2 Kings 4:35) both restored life to a dead person, so naturally the response of the crowd is, "We have another Elijah-type prophet among us!" But note they also say, "God has visited his people!" How right they are, He is standing right in front of them.

[Read 7:18-23] Recall that John the Baptist personified Elijah in many ways so this sentiment has already been fermenting in the public's psyche. Now even John's disciples get amped up and report to John in prison (Matt 11:2). Being isolated from events for some time, John seems to doubt whether this relative he baptized is the actual Messiah or not. Jesus does not rebuke John here, knowing his circumstances and destiny, but encourages John by sending the two disciples from John back with an account of all the healings manifested: Blind eyes seeing, lame legs walking, lepers cleansed, deaf ears hearing, dead rising up, and the poor (the needy, all of us) get the good news of the kingdom. The judge John expected is first the savior. And doubting is not a sin; but it is short-sighted. Faith gives us the longer-range view, even into eternity.

Applications

1. Note Jesus heals in response to faith in the first account but purely out of compassion in the second. Faith means we trust what we say we believe. This Roman believed Jesus could heal from afar with a word. Do you? This widow was besieged with grief and Jesus met her need sovereignly. This is still true today.
2. Jesus told John's disciples, "Blessed is the one who is not offended by me." Have you found Jesus' teachings offensive in any way? Being told we need cleansing, healing, and salvation will sometimes offend us when we think we have no needs. Before a Holy God, we are all needy! Pray the Lord will reveal your need of Christ to you, if He has not already!

My desire is to continuously highlight Jesus Christ to you. Toward that end, I am available to discuss any biblical topic or question you may have. I especially want to ensure all who read the studies understand how Jesus Christ is distinctively important to the entire world and to each of us individually. Lastly, all Bible studies are available at Capitol Commission's Alabama page: <https://capitolcom.org/state/alabama>.

I am thankful for the kindness and welcome reception this session from everyone. My first time meeting you has been incredibly encouraging. I pray you have found our initial Bible study offerings helpful in your understanding of the Lord Jesus and His offer of redemption and reconciliation with God the Father. I plan to pick up the study through the Gospel of Luke next year during session but will be providing monthly topical studies to those working in the State House.

****If you wish to receive an emailed copy of my out-of-session studies, please send your desired email address to me at ron.comoglio@capitolcom.org and I will be sure to include you! ****

A key facet empowering our ministry is prayer, especially prayer for our elected leaders. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 commands Christians to obediently pray for all in authority. A tool for America's churches to help consistently pray for you, our elected leaders, is available to all via: www.Pray1Tim2.org - Select Alabama and sign up for daily email reminders, courtesy of Capitol Commission. Share this link with your home church!