



Marveling

By Jeff Bedwell on January 11, 2022

READING: Luke 7

What causes you to marvel? What fills you with wonder or astonishment? It could be a great performance by an athlete or artist. Maybe it is the breathtaking sight of the beauty or the destructive power of nature. Maybe you have found yourself marveling at something someone else has done either good or bad. Hopefully, you have had opportunity to marvel at what God has done over the course of your life.

Have you ever wondered what causes God to marvel? In this passage we are told that Jesus marveled at the faith of the centurion (vs. 9). Likewise, in Mark's gospel account we have a record of Jesus marveling at the unbelief of the Jews: "*And he marveled because of their unbelief*" (Mark 6:6, ESV). It seems that our faith or lack thereof is something that causes God to marvel.

In the opening verses of this chapter, the centurion seems to be a noble man. He was in a respected position of authority within the Roman army. He genuinely cared for both his servant, and it seems the Jewish people. He was generous, even helping to build a synagogue.

What sets this centurion apart is that he recognized something about Jesus that others, including the disciples, had not yet fully grasped – he recognized Jesus is Lord. We are not sure of all the centurion understood by using this term, but using that title shows that he knew at least two things: He knew he was personally not worthy before the Lord, and he knew the power and authority of Jesus' word.

Warren Wiersbe notes, "If this Roman, with very little spiritual instruction, had that kind of faith in God's Word, how much greater *our* faith ought to be! We have an entire Bible to read and study, as well as nearly 2,000 years of church history to encourage us, and yet we are guilty of 'no faith' (Mark 4:40) or 'little faith' (Matthew 14:31). Our prayer ought to be, 'Lord, increase our faith!'" (Luke 17:5).

Maybe you feel like your faith could use a little stretching and growing as we enter this new year. Perhaps we find ourselves like the father pleading on behalf of his child, "*I believe; help my unbelief!*" (Mark 9:24, ESV). Let's resolve to engage in those habits and activities that feed and strengthen our faith and to walk in trusting obedience to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

PRAYER: *Father, too often I have responded to You with weak or no faith, trusting in myself or others more than You. Forgive me for my foolishness. I believe, help my unbelief! Increase my faith so my faith response to You and Your authority might cause You to marvel in the most positive of ways.*

TOMORROW'S READING: Luke 8

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