



Shall We Look for Another?

Text: Luke 7

Tony Chute, Interim Pastor

Overview: The powerful teaching ministry of Jesus was complemented by his extraordinary power to heal, both of which were signs of his messianic identity. Luke highlights two miracles in particular—one that demonstrates Jesus’s ability to heal others when He is not present; another that proves Jesus is even able to raise the dead. Although these miracles brought relief to the hurting and provoked amazement among bystanders, they also caused John the Baptist to question Jesus’s role in ushering in the kingdom. Rather than rebuke John for his temporary lack of faith, Jesus assured him that his miraculous works bore witness to his messianic claim. Jesus then used this occasion to compliment John’s faithfulness over the long run and to criticize the faithlessness of those who still refused to recognize Him as the promised Messiah.

01. Faith affirms that God can do the impossible; unbelief denies that God can do the impossible; doubt wonders why God hasn’t done the impossible.

02. Discouragement sets in when our faith is tested and our doubts are unresolved. Even the best Christians can get discouraged.

03. Discouragement can be alleviated when we cast our cares upon Jesus; remember his mercy towards us; and recognize that God’s heart is not always determined by God’s hand towards us.

04. Faith returns in full strength when we recognize ourselves as followers, not directors, of the Lord Almighty.

1. In what way does the centurion’s statement regarding authority magnify the power of Jesus even beyond the ability to heal? How do you think the centurion reached this conclusion when no one else had (see 7:9)? What accounts for the fact that others who witnessed Jesus’s miracles had no faith at all?

2. The Old Testament stipulated that touching a dead body made a person “unclean for seven days” (Numbers 19:11, 16), a situation that required a person to keep away from the sanctuary and undergo ritual cleansing. What is the significance of Jesus touching the funeral bier and giving the man back to his mother (vv. 14-15)? See Mark 1:40-42 for a similar incident, and note how his pity and compassion are mentioned in both texts. What do these texts suggest about Jesus’s perfection and purity?

3. Do you doubt God’s goodness or his power when you suffer? Does it become more difficult for you to rejoice in the Lord when others are healthy, happy, or healed when you are not? What is the central importance of faith in God when our circumstances suggest that we abandon God? Are you able to see yourself in light of God’s promises rather than the situations you are facing? See Psalm 71 for insight.

4. What did Jesus mean by the statement, “Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than [John]”? What advantages or privileges do Christians have that John did not have? How can you best treasure the truths you know of Christ which John and those before him did not fully know?

5. Jesus criticizes the fickleness of the crowds who refused to believe in Him, likening them to children who demanded that others dance to their selected tune. What safeguards do you have in your life to ensure that you are following the Lord, rather than wanting Him to follow you?

For Further Reading: Christopher Morgan and Robert Peterson, eds. *Suffering and the Goodness of God* (Crossway, 2008).