

What Makes God Marvel?

Matthew 8:5-13

Last week we learned about the leper who came to Jesus worshipping him.

Even though this man was considered an outcast and unclean, He didn't let that stop him.

""Matthew 8:2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.""

Not only was this man a great example of someone coming to God in worship during hardship, *(he had faced a challenging life and continued to have the right attitude of worship toward God)*

but he also was great example of faith, Knowing that Jesus was fully able to make him clean.

He said, "Lord if you will, you can make me clean."

He believed with all his heart that God could perform that miracle. What happened?

Jesus did cleanse him immediately because of his faith.

Let's continue to read through Matthew 8 this morning, and we're going to learn more about faith.

And to be more specific, we are going to learn about faith that made Jesus Christ marvel.

I want to build a little bit of context before we read through this passage.

It's important to understand that God chose the children of Israel, to be a special people that was set apart from the rest of the world.

They directly received the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God in the temple, the promises.

Think about how God made promises to Abraham that through his seed all nations of the world would be blessed.

Abraham had Issaac, Isaac had Jacob, and God gave Jacob a new name, Israel. Israel had 12 sons. Those 12 sons became the 12 tribes of Israel. Judah was one of those sons. Later on, a young man named David from the tribe of Judah would become king.

And through the seed of David according to the flesh, Jesus Christ, the Saviour, would come into the world.

Jesus in the flesh was raised up from among his brethren, the Jews. He came to them, the promised Messiah. Telling them to believe on Him for salvation. But the majority of his own people rejected him.

During this time of Jesus' ministry, Israel was under Roman occupation. Rome gained control over the land in 63 B.C., when Pompey the Great captured Jerusalem.

Rome sent their own leaders, like Pontius Pilate, to rule over the people. They also placed Roman soldiers all over the region to keep peace, collect taxes, and stop the Jews from rebelling.

One type of Roman leader or official was a centurion, which was a military officer in charge of a large group of 100 soldiers.

Understand that the Romans were gentiles. They were not Jews, they were not the descendants of Abraham. I want you to keep this in mind as we read this passage:

The Centurion

""Matthew 8:5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, ""

The fact that this centurion was coming to Jesus was unique, because remember that the Romans are gentiles, and they are ruling over the Jews.

There is a difference in status. The romans most likely looked down on the Jews as being inferior.

But this centurion was lowering himself and coming to Jesus Christ, a Jew, and beseeching, or urgently asking for help.

""Matthew 8:6-10 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. **7** And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. **8** The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. **9** For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. ""

The centurion was asking Jesus to heal his servant. But he didn't want Jesus to come to his house because he felt that he was not worthy for Jesus to come under his roof.

He recognized that Jesus was not just an ordinary man. The same way that the centurion had authority to tell people to go, come, and do. He understood that Jesus had all authority and power over sickness and life itself.

He knew that Jesus could simply speak the word, and his servant would be healed.
What was Jesus' response?

""Matthew 8:10 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled..."

This centurion said something that made Jesus marvel. What does it mean when it says he marvelled?

To marvel is when you show great wonder, admiration, or astonishment.

Jesus marvelled at what he heard. That's pretty special to make God in the flesh marvel at something.

We need to look at this very closely because it must be important.

""Matthew 8:10 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

Jesus marvelled at how great this man's faith was. He had greater faith than anyone that Jesus had found in Israel.

Remember that this centurion is not a Jew. The Jews are the ones who directly received the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God in the temple, the promises.

Yet this Roman centurion had greater faith than Jesus Christ's own people according to the flesh. The children of Israel.

I really want you to think about the faith of this man and what Jesus was marveling at.

What was so special about this man's faith?

Did Jesus marvel that because of this man's faith, he performed some great act of obedience?

Did Jesus marvel that because of this man's faith, he lived a Godly life and was keeping the commandments and avoiding sin?

Did Jesus marvel that because of this man's faith he made a treacherous journey over land and sea to reach him?

Let's look at Luke 7. This is the same account of the centurion but we see some more detail in Luke that is not revealed in Matthew.

""Luke 7:1-9 Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. **2** And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and

ready to die. **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. ""

Here we have some new information that this centurion did not physically go himself to see Jesus.

He sent men on his behalf to ask Jesus to heal his servant.

""**4** And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: **5** For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue. **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 shouldest enter under my roof: **7** Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. **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*.""

Not only did this centurion not find himself worthy to meet Jesus face to face, but he didn't even think he was worthy for Jesus to come into his house. He was a very humble man.

He told Jesus to simply say a word, and his servant would be healed.

""**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.""

Understand that the centurion never even left his home. He was with the servant the entire time. His faith was so great, that he simply believed that Jesus was able to heal with just a word.

This is what Jesus marveled at. He marveled at child like faith. Simply believing that he was able. Taking God at His Word.

The Jews were constantly seeking after signs and miracles. Most of the Jews saw great miracles and still did not believe that Jesus was the Christ.

But this man, a Roman, didn't need a single sign. He did not see with his own eyes. He simply heard and believed. That is the type of faith that Jesus marvelled at.

Faith Does Not Equal Obedience

There is false doctrine, damnable heresy that has crept into churches today that says things like

Faith = loyalty. Faith = submission and surrender. Faith = living a godly life.

Those are all lies. People need to stop creating their own definitions of faith, get back to the Bible, and let God's Word define what faith is.

""**Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."
""

Faith is the substance or the confidence that we have in things that we hope for.

Imagine a man who's been renting his whole life. One day, a trustworthy builder tells him:

"I'm going to build you a brand-new home, fully paid for. It'll be ready in one year. All you have to do is trust me, and I'll give it to you."

This man believes the builder's promise. He hasn't seen the house yet. He doesn't have the keys in his hand. But based on the promise, he starts packing his boxes, tells his landlord he's moving out, and even buys furniture for the new house.

Because in his mind and heart, that house is as good as done. It's **not just a wish**—he has full **confidence** in the one who made the promise. His **faith becomes the "substance"** of what he hopes for: the house.

""**2** For by it the elders obtained a good report. **3** Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.""

So when we see the world around us, think about the beautiful creation of God. The mountains, the oceans, the complexity of life, the universe. It's through faith that we understand that all this was made by the Word of God.

The things that are seen were not made by things that do appear.

Faith is the opposite of seeing with your eyes.

""**2 Corinthians 5:7** (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)""

""**Hebrews 11:6** But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*...""

(It doesn't say without loyalty, without your submission and surrender)

""...for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.""

We have not seen God, we have not seen Jesus Christ, but we believe that he is.

""John 20:29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.""

Faith is taking God at His word and believing everything He says even when you can't see it.

Faith is not an outward act of obedience. It's an inward confidence and trust in what God says.

""Romans 4:2-5 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God..."

Let's read this slowly because some people have a hard time understanding this...

We are not justified before God by works. Period.

""3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. **4** Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. **5** But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.""

""Romans 4:20-24 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; **21** And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. **22** And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. **23** Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; **24** But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;""

So the definition of faith has been slowly twisted by false teachers under the influence of the devil. But the centurion reminds us of what true faith looks like.

The faith that Jesus marvelled at was a man taking God at His Word. A man that after hearing, was fully persuaded that God was able to perform. A man that had child like faith that did not require a sign.

A gentile man that had more faith than Jesus had seen throughout all of Israel. He believed that he was able.

Do you believe that Jesus is able to save you on His own without your help? Do you believe Jesus when he says "he that believeth on me hath everlasting life"? Are you taking him at his Word? Or are you trying to add things to faith like many churches are doing today?

Let's go back to Matthew 8

Faith Saves All People

""**Matthew 8:11** And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.""

""**Matthew 8:12** But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.""

Jesus is saying in heaven, many shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

What is he describing?

He's saying that people from all nations of the earth shall come... People who are not the physical descendants of Abraham.

But the children of the Kingdom, the physical descendants (the children of Israel) shall be cast out into outer darkness.

Jesus is saying that salvation is not determined by your bloodline.

He was saying that this Roman gentile man will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven simply because of his faith.

Most of the Jews hated Jesus Christ, they rejected him, they did not believe his words. They did not have faith.

Jesus was letting everyone know that you must be like this centurion in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Just because you are a physical child of Abraham does not give you special privileges.

""**Romans 9:7-8** Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. **8** That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.""

""**Galatians 3:28-29** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. **29** And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.""

Jesus was reminding everyone that the promise that was made to Abraham, that all nations of the earth shall be blessed. That promise was for all those that have faith in Jesus Christ.

""**Zechariah 2:11** And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.""

Going back to Matthew 8

""**Matthew 8:13** And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.""

Jesus made it very clear, as this man believed so it was done unto him. Because of his faith, his servant was healed. But not only was his servant healed. The centurion's soul was saved forever.

Jesus marvelled Twice

We just saw what kind of faith made Jesus marvel—a **humble, childlike trust** in His power and authority.

But I want to show you the **only other time in the entire Bible** when it says that Jesus marvelled.

And this time... He didn't marvel at great faith. He marvelled at something else.

""**Mark 6:2-6** And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? **3** Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. **4** But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. **5** And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*. **6** And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.""

This was in Nazareth, the hometown of Jesus, and he marvelled at the **unbelief of His own people**—He could do no mighty work there.

Even after they saw with their own eyes the things that Jesus did, they still would not believe in Him.

People do the same thing today. They refuse to believe the simple truths in the Bible. People are puffed up with pride and think that salvation is dependent on their actions. They refuse to see the truth.

""**Ezekiel 12:2** Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they *are* a rebellious house.""

Closing Thoughts

We've seen today that **Jesus marvelled only twice** in the entire Bible.

Once at the **great faith** of a humble Roman centurion—
And once at the **shocking unbelief** of His own people in Nazareth.

One man who didn't grow up with the Scriptures, the prophets, the promises—simply believed.
He said, "*Just speak the word, Lord.*"
He didn't need a sign, a miracle, or personal proof.
He just **took God at His Word**.

And Jesus marvelled.

Meanwhile, those who had the **law, the prophets, the covenants**, and even witnessed His miracles—still rejected Him.
They were offended. They doubted.
And Jesus marvelled again—but this time, at their **lack of faith and unbelief**.

So the question for you this morning...

What would Jesus marvel at if He looked at your heart today?

Would He marvel at your **confidence in His Word**?
Or at your **hesitation, your doubt, your need to "see it first"**?

Faith is not performance. It's not proving yourself. It's not surrender, obedience, loyalty, or good works.

Faith is believing God—believing that what He says is true, and that what He will keep his promises.

Romans 4:21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Do you have that kind of faith? Are you trusting Jesus Christ alone—*without your works, without your effort, without your help*—to save you?

Because **that** is the faith that saves. And that is the kind of faith that makes Jesus marvel. Let's Pray.