

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (May 1, 2022)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

Our sermons now return to the Pre-Easter stories about Jesus found in Luke's book. For Christians every Sunday is Easter Sunday. When we gather together to worship God we do so with Easter on our minds and in our hearts. In the Sundays ahead we will jump back to the teachings and miracles of Jesus when the Cross, and the Empty Grave, were still in front of Him. As we do, we will discover that every miracle provides a glimpse of the Easter miracle. And, all of Jesus' teachings reveal Truth, with Easter as the exclamation point! Our two stories this morning reveal God's compassion. First, for an outsider, someone the religious leaders of Jesus' day would have thought unworthy of God's time and attention. Second, a widow grieving the death of her only son. As we explore these brief encounters we find Jesus' miraculous power offered when asked, and when not asked, to both an outsider and an insider. God's compassion reminds us not to put limits on who we think should, or will, receive God's attention. We often find outsiders in, and insiders out. May God help us increase our compassion and our faith.

COMPASSION FOR SOLIDERS & WIDOWS (Luke 7:1-17)

"7:1 After He (Jesus) had finished all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. 2 Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. 3 When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to Him elders of the Jews, asking Him to come and heal his servant. 4 And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with Him earnestly, saying, 'He is worthy to have you do this for him, 5 for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue.' 6 And Jesus went with them. When He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, 'Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. 7 Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. 8 For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, "Go," and he goes; and to another, "Come," and he comes; and to my servant, "Do this," and he does it.' 9 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.' 10 And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well. 11 Soon afterward He went to a town called Nain, and His disciples and a great crowd went with Him. 12 As He drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only

son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. 13 And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' 14 Then He came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And He said, 'Young man, I say to you, arise.' 15 And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. 16 Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has arisen among us!' and 'God has visited His people!' 17 And this report about Him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country."

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. What do we know about the Centurion from this passage? What do we know about Jesus? About the widow?
2. Why did the Centurion ask Jesus to heal his servant?
3. Why were the Jewish elders willing to speak to Jesus on behalf of the Centurion?
4. Why did Jesus raise to life the widow's dead son?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

5. What does the Centurion's illustration about authority mean?
6. What does "He is worthy" (verse 4) mean?
7. What did Jesus mean (verse 9) "not even in Israel"?
8. What does it mean, "Fear seized them all ..." (verse 16)?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

9. The centurion served in the Roman occupation army. He was hated, not worthy of God's attention. Who is like that today?
10. Who is someone you know who has deep faith in Jesus? How does their faith affect their life? How does it affect you?
11. How does the Centurion's claim, "I am not worthy" impact you?
12. Why did Jesus touch the funeral bier? Why did Jesus not touch the Centurion's servant?
13. How do Jesus' miracles change how you view the world, your faith, problems you encounter? Do miracles happen today?

As you spend time praying remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural, easy, and empowering part of your day. Prayer is talking to God, knowing that He hears you, and that He loves you. In your prayers ask God to help you see the miracles He provides for you each day. Ask God to help you be more compassionate to those you meet. Ask God to help you understand His compassion and your unworthiness. Ask God to help you trust Him more. God will help us because He is ALIVE and He loves us.