

Luke 7:1-10

The Compassionate Commander

Good morning, church.

I wanted to start our time together, by giving you some wonderful news.

Last week, God through a couple here, who are faithful church members, decided we should start the New Year with our church mortgage paid off in full.

So we mailed the final check this week, and the church has no debt.

This is an amazing blessing, and now, prayerfully, we can take that \$1100 mortgage payment, which is just a fraction of our monthly budget, and use most of it toward fixing this old building up.

I want to thank all of you who faithfully give to the work of the Lord here, this is the fruit of your faithfulness.

God loves a joyful giver, and He blesses those abundantly who give, and it is exciting to ponder what God will now do in us and through us in the days ahead without any debt hanging over us.

What a joy it is for Pastor Paul and Ruth, who started this ministry so many years ago, who have seen the ups and downs of this ministry, and what an amazing reward for them to see the fruit of their own faithfulness.

Such wonderful news for us in 2019.

So let's bow our heads and thank the Lord, and ask Him to bless our study this morning.

Well, please turn in your Bibles to Luke chapter 7 this morning, as we continue our verse-by-verse study of the Gospel according to Luke.

Remember now, that Jesus has just finished His dynamic sermon on the plain.

He called His Twelve Apostles, and His many disciples to Himself, and taught them the New Way, they were to give of themselves sacrificially, even go without in this life, for the hope of the next life.

They were to love and show mercy, even to their enemies.

They were to be giving and generous.

They were to be wise in their judgments, and not hasty.

And they were to stand out in this world, and bear good fruit, and even through the storms of this life, and they would be established and firm, unmoved, as they obeyed Jesus' way.

Now that Jesus has given them this profound teaching, Jesus will illustrate the sermon, by living it out Himself, and setting forth an example for His followers.

Luke will now record what took place after Jesus preached, and chapter 7 will give us a deep insight to the ministry of Jesus.

Jesus was not just a philosopher or a guru; He was a Doer of the Words He preached.

He stood in stark contrast of the religious leaders of His day.

Jesus lived out His message, and He demonstrated how effective it is to live by this New Code He has just put forth.

So let us read now, in Luke chapter 7, as an enemy of the Jewish people, and an oppressor of Jesus' brethren comes and seeks Jesus for help...

Let us read the full account, and then we will come back and break it up.

We will be in the first 10 verses of chapter 7 this morning,

Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant

(Matt 8:5-13)

7:1 Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. 2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. 3 So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. 4 And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one

for whom He should do this was deserving, 5 "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue."

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. 7 Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. 8 For I also am a man placed under authority, having 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 turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" 10 And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.

This is such a moving story for so many reasons...

Let us look at verse 1 again....

7:1 Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum.

Luke, connects this next section chronologically, and even geographically with the previous section.

The next thing that happened in Jesus ministry after His sermon, was He went into Capernaum, which does

not seem to be too far from the plain He just preached on.

Now Capernaum has become Jesus' headquarters for ministry.

Remember His hometown rejected Him, and His message, even Jesus' own family has forsaken Him.

He has worked in Capernaum, where Peter was called into leadership, and Matthew the Tax Collector was also called from his tables.

Jesus has done miracles in both the synagogues and in His friend's home.

This town is a town full of faith, and Jesus can work wonderfully there.

Jesus centers His earthly ministry out of Capernaum.

Now next we will see Jesus' ministry has gain notoriety and is becoming renowned.

Now understand this about Israel's occupiers, the Romans, they knew everything that was taking place within their provinces.

If there was commotion anywhere, or multitudes gathering, Rome knew and watched very closely.

Jesus' fame would have alerted the Roman intelligence and they would be monitoring this Carpenter from Nazareth.

And we can come to this conclusion by what takes place in the next verses.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. 3 So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. 4 And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, 5 "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue."

Now all throughout the scriptures, centurions are mentioned favorably.

Understand during Jesus' day, in the Roman Empire, there was little trace of Rome's former morals and code of honor, and perhaps only in the military were there traces of this honor left.

Centurions are seen as men of great integrity and principle.

A centurion would be very similar to a captain in today's military rankings.

We can see the name centurion implies that it has to do with 100, and a centurion could be over 100 men, but in Rome it was a flexible term.

Their rank and authority would be between that of a Decurion or an officer in command of 10 soldiers, and between that of a chiliarch or a commander of 1000 men.

So you see a centurion could have start out with even two hundred men, and by the end of their career, and after battles, they could have only 80.

But non-the-less they were men of great respect and authority.

They were men of good reputation.

Now out of all the centurions mentioned in scripture, this one, found here in Capernaum deserves the highest praise.

Perhaps the reports of this miracle worker going throughout Galilee had come across his ear many times.

This particular centurion was in Herod Antipas' region, and Antipas if you remember heard of Jesus, and wanted Him to perform miracles for his entertainment.

So there is no doubt that this soldier was aware of Jesus' ministry.

Now, another very interesting point about this centurion, is the Jewish elders explain that this man loves Israel, and has used his own wealth to build the synagogue for the Jews.

So once, again, Jesus did many notable miracles in the synagogue there in Capernaum, and was even a regular teacher.

Surely, the financier of the synagogue knew of the great Teacher working within the synagogue.

Now, perhaps while this soldier's days were sunny and prosperous, He had no interest in Jesus.

When the days were good and life was smooth, the news of Jesus was perhaps only entertaining and vaguely interesting.

But we see crisis has come to this centurion, tragedy has struck his life.

He has a slave, who has fallen sick, the word for servant is *doulos* here, or someone enslaved.

But this slave owner is not like other masters, he has compassion for this slave, and he sees him as more than property.

The servant was sick and ready to die.

Verse 3 tells us he heard about Jesus, and Jesus perhaps being close now, this man, asked the Jewish elders to go and plead with Jesus, that He might come and heal his servant, *doulos*.

Now, the Jewish elders were grateful to this Gentile for his generosity to build their synagogue.

Maybe they felt like they owed it to him to fulfill his request.

After all, they might need his generosity in the future, and they did not want to stifle their future support.

They seek Jesus, and notice in verse four the earnest in their request.

If Jesus would perform a miracle like this for their financial sponsor, perhaps the commander would be so grateful, that he would open his purse again.

And they come to Jesus lifting up the reputation of the centurion, trying to present the man as worthy, to Jesus.

Now, it is obvious these men are men pleasers, the elders like the support from this man.

But, understand coming to Jesus on the merits and worth of a man is not the way to come to Jesus.

Jesus abhors the proud and self-confident.

Prov. 16:5 Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord.

The Jews perspective of the man was way off.

And usually, these Jews would have despised this Gentile soldier, he was an occupier, he was an enemy, and the Jews were really racist toward non-Jews.

But nothing causes a man to overlook his own prejudices more than money.

This man was not just a simple giver to the Jews, he built their whole synagogue.

And Rome was known for supporting the local religions as a tactic, it would win the hearts and support of the people.

And maybe this man was pacifying the Jews, but it definitely seems like more is going on in this centurion.

Perhaps his pagan heart has been pierced by the God of these people.

As he has lived in the Holy Land, and learned the customs, and heard and maybe even read about Yahweh, perhaps God was pulling on the heart strings of this man succumbed to polytheism.

And in his heart being touched by the One True Living God, he was moved to renounce his false religious beliefs for the monotheistic belief in the Jewish God.

He was a centurion, not a governor or a king, and his wealth would not be as opulent as those would have been who over him.

This more likely seems to be a move of God's Spirit on this man's soul, and at this point he is incomplete in his search for truth, yet his generosity to the Jews was where he started in his search.

God knows this man's heart and his searching, and it is about to bring him to an encounter with Truth personified.

The Jews come to Jesus trying to get Him to act on behalf of this man, because of his merits, but as this encounter continues on, we will see the Jews were deceitful in their approach, and this centurion will have the correct posture and assessment of himself to approach the Savior.

Now, the compassion of this commander, over his servant, now moves the Commander of Heavens Army to show compassion as well.

Remember Jesus just taught, the measure a man gives out would be measured back to him.

That is a universal law, that goes beyond the Jews and into even the Gentile world.

This man's compassion will be met with compassion from Jesus.

Look now as Jesus does the unthinkable next...

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. 7 Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. 8 For I also am a man placed under authority, having 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."

Jesus went with the Jewish elders to the man.

Jesus agrees to go to a Roman's home, the enemy of their people.

Jesus did not refuse this fervent request, and was going where the greatest need was.

He could have easily refused this man's request, as this man is contributing the misery of Jesus' people, he is a Gentile oppressor.

Jesus could have thought, "this is what this man gets, this man is reaping what he has sown."

"This centurion has sown into war, death, and fear, and he is now reaping his due."

Jesus could have used the man's desperation, and gave him conditions, "If you do this or do that, then I will heal your servant."

But Jesus does none of this, He moves forward without hesitation to this man that is full of sorrow and worry.

Many people wonder what God is like today, they want to know His methods, His ways.

Now Jesus was God, and when we look to Jesus, we see God, and understand this...

Jesus has not changed over the centuries, when we cry out in desperation to Him, He acts, and moves toward us.

But understand, it is not because we deserve it, it is not because we are worthy, it is not because as the Jewish elders put it in verse 4, we are deserving.

Jesus is not moved by any merit of ours, He is moved by His own compassion and love for us.

He comes to us, because of who He is.

Warren Wiersbe, says, compassion can be defined as
“Your pain in my heart.”

Jesus’ compassion moves Him toward your pain.

Now, something very important to note here, the Elder’s assessment of this man, was he was worthy, but look at the centurion’s assessment of himself.

He must see Jesus coming toward him with the delegation that he sent, with a curious multitude following behind.

And the centurion immediately begins to look within, and as he sees Jesus.... this rich, powerful man reduces himself to being unworthy.

Well, remember the teaching on the plain Jesus just gave, it is those who are poor in spirit, hungering for righteousness, full of sorrow that are in Jesus sight.

This man is all of those things, as he sees his earthly riches and his earthly authority as having no value, as God in the flesh approaches.

His open heart to monotheism is about to be rewarded, because of his realistic view of himself.

The centurion quickly sends friends to Jesus with a humble message.

“I am not worthy!”

Who is he compared to Christ the King, the One with all Authority?

Who is he to force this mighty Jewish Rabbi to break the custom of the day, to commit an act that would put Jesus in direct opposition of so many of His countrymen?

Remember what Peter said of this custom, when God asked him to break the tradition and bring the gospel to Cornelius another Gentile?

Acts 10:28 Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

This centurion was not willing to shame Jesus among His brethren.

And we see great humility in this man of great authority.

This man is filled with this sense of unworthiness, he tries to halt Jesus' advance.

He begins to reason in his heart, "I am an officer with limited authority, I have many men under my command, but I also have those I am accountable too."

"When I give a command to my subordinates, they immediately obey."

He understand that it does not matter where he is when he gives his orders to those servants and soldiers that are under him, that they obey right where they are.

He tells one man to come, and another to go, and they do it.

As he ponders his own earthly authority, and how it operates, he clearly understands, that this Great One, with all authority, will be able to command this sickness to go, and it will obey.

You see this centurion has heard and maybe even seen Jesus' power over human infirmities, and this man knows Jesus has this authority.

And he trusts that his beloved servant can be healed from afar, without causing the customs of the day to be broken.

Obviously, this centurion has a special connection with the traditions of the Jews.

Now something really interesting to point out that we miss in the plain English reading of these verses.

When others talk about this servant, they use the word *Doulos*, or slave.

But in verse 7, when the centurion speaks about the dying young man, he uses a different word, he calls him *pais* (*paheece*), which can be used as a softer term for servant, but also means child, or son.

Now when we consider the compassion of this commander, it would not be unlike a Roman to sleep with a slave girl.

And perhaps this attachment is one from a heart of a father looking at his young boy sick and dying.

Now, the story does not lose its impact, if this was only his servant.

Now in the words of others, this young boy, was only property, but we see this centurion sees him as a human.

He refers to him as my boy.

It is very obvious that this man's heart is a changed heart in his searching for truth.

Not only do we see his love for the Jewish people, not only do we see this man's humility, we also see his own compassion.

This is not normal for a Roman soldier, who would usually never humble himself below a poor carpenter, or Jewish subject, Romans were not known for displaying meekness or concern in such a manner as this man.

Ezekiel the prophet spoke of the kind of transformation this centurion was going through as he encountered God in...

Ezek. 36:26-27 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My

statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

As we draw near to God, and the truth of who He is, is revealed to our hearts, our lives can no longer be lived as they used to be lived.

When our searching hearts lead us to Jesus, our hearts of stone are removed from our flesh, and we are given a new heart, we are given a new life.

It is strange at first, in our heathen state, our thinking is constantly consumed with ourselves, our own well-being, we want our name to be known, we want people to serve us, we desire a life that has us in the center.

The Apostle Paul tells us however, **2 Cor. 5:17**

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

How many of you after coming to Christ, noticed this change in your heart?

I was the most selfish, arrogant, proud man that walked this earth.

After Christ came in to my life, I found it strange that almost immediately I was concerned for others.

I had never considered other people's needs as important as my own.

I remember Jessica and me in our first year of being saved, we were in the Children's Ministry teaching the 3-5 year olds, and just loving it.

Now, there is a great secret heritage in my family, that not many know about, that I might get in trouble for mentioning.

But my grandfather Ed started it, he was the very first Word Man in our family.

Word man was a super hero that flew into each of the Sunday school classes with candy, and if a child memorized their weekly memory verse, the mighty masked Word Man would give them candy.

My grandfather was Word Man in the 80's and had these striped tube socks up to his knees, with the shortest running shorts a man could get away with, and a cape and mask.

Now, interestingly enough my father, also became Word Man, and with his mullet flowing in the back with cape he ministered to those kids to memorize their verses.

So, when I was teaching those kids in Havasu, I felt it was my Malkus duty to bring about my version of Word Man.

Jess and I were so dirt poor then, that we had to make a costume out of some red bed sheets, and I put a tank top over a t-shirt with a big W cut out in the chest, and I even had a mask.

And every week, I would sneak out of the classroom, and I would go throw on my hero costume, and fly in to hear the memory verse.

And those kids loved it, you know every week they had their memory verse down pat, and I found so much joy in humiliating myself for the sake of these kids.

I remember thinking one night, how much Christ had changed my heart.

A year earlier, I would have never even thought about working with little children, it would have been so ridiculous to me to be dressing up and flying into a classroom full of kids.

But I loved it, and I loved those kids, and this was huge moment for me, in understanding the change taking place in my life.

The closer I grew in my relationship with Jesus, the more I was concerned for others.

Now, the interesting thing is, every week, those kids were trying to figure out Word Man's secret identity.

And we had a little blind boy in the class, named Johnny, and after about six weeks of Word Man mysteriously flying in, that little boy was able to identify me by my voice.

Johnny shouted, "I know Word Man's secret identity, it is Gary!"

Jess and I were found out, so the next week, there was an assistant pastor who looked like me a little, so we asked him to do it.

And so there I was standing in the room with these children, and Word Man came flying in.

They were speechless.

But you see, Christ changes our hearts, and we no longer live for ourselves.

So we are taking applications for the next Word Man for the children's ministry, if you are feeling called this morning.

Okay, so let us get back into the study, so far we have seen the Jewish Elder's valuation of this man, whom they declared is deserving.

We have seen this man's assessment of himself, that he is unworthy.

And we have seen that in his searching for God, his heart is changing and growing in godly characteristics.

Now we will see Jesus' perspective of this man...

After the centurion revealed he has faith enough to send a delegation to go get Jesus, and as Jesus approached the man's home, he had faith enough to send another delegation, that brought word of his faith that Jesus can heal from near or afar, we read now in verse 9... Jesus' response...

9 When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" 10 And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.

Jesus marveled at this man's faith.

Understand only twice in scripture do we ever see Jesus marvel or stand amazed at something.

Only here, and when he was back home in Nazareth.

Where it is said in... **Mark 6:6 And He marveled because of their unbelief.**

How horrible and frightening to astonish the Son of God with disbelief.

Yet how wonderful it is to amaze the Son of God with one's faith.

This centurion here has given an example of amazing faith.

This outsider, this uncircumcised pagan, raised without the knowledge of scripture, and outside of the Mosaic Covenant, this man having no upbringing in the Jewish customs, or the synagogue ritual.

If he knew any scripture, it would be little, and vague.

Yet he is found with great faith.

This man was a faithful soldier of Rome, oppressing other lands, and yet he humbles himself before Christ. And by the mercy of God, his riches were not a barrier that were blocking his sight to Jesus.

Understand usually wealth is a hindrance to spiritual matters, as they attach a person's heart to this world.

Jesus said in... **Luke 18:24**

"How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!

Yet this man is able to see Christ through every obstacle in his life.

And he shows such great confidence in Jesus, he knows Jesus is his only hope.

He declares that Jesus "only has to say the word and his boy will be healed."

The writer of Hebrews defines the faith this man demonstrates for us.

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

And here through this Gentile Soldier we have a picture of the kind of faith that pleases God.

This is a faith that sees himself as he truly is, and sees God for who He is.

And Jesus declared He has not found any faith greater than this man's in all of Israel.

And the man's faith is rewarded.

Now, there is something so important to point out in this example of a faith that pleases God.

You see, it must be a faith that is based in reality.

Now that seems simple enough, but understand this faith based in reality, is hard to see today, especially in our very proud American culture.

The American Christian comes to God oftentimes, with the same words as the Jewish Elders, "I am so deserving, God I am worthy."

While putting this message together this week, I was sent a video from a young pastor I love dearly, and it caused me to do some searching in the scriptures.

The video was a very prominent pastor, who was making the case that we should not live in guilt over our sins and failures, that God will lavish His love on our lives regardless of the choices we make in our lives.

He was making the case that we should not live in guilt or shame over our choices.

And the young man shared how the message felt so good to hear, but he wanted to know if it was Biblical.

And we searched the scriptures, and I found something really interesting.

When you study those who encounter God, who have a revelation of God, when they see themselves in light

of who God is, there is something strikingly similar to this centurion's posture.

Now, here are only a few examples, Isaiah the prophet received a vision of the Lord, and he declared **Isa 6:5**

"Woe is me, for I am undone!

Because I am a man of unclean lips,

And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;

For my eyes have seen the King,

The Lord of hosts."

Or if remember Peter when he was called into ministry, and Jesus showed him His authority over his livelihood on the fishing boat.

Luke 5:8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

Or even the Apostle Paul as he worked out an argument for salvation, and he looks within himself and declares.

Rom. 7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

You see this is the true reality that exists within the heart of man, we are wretched and unworthy.

I remember in Biology class in High School, we did an experiment.

We were told to swipe a clean swab somewhere, and to rub it in the Petri dish, and close it up, and let it sit airtight for a few days.

Well, I ran to the bathroom, for some, I told the girl that was my partner that I was going to swab the toilet.

However, when I seen that public school toilet, I was too grouched out, and I swabbed the sink, on some clear water, it looked pretty clean, and I dabbed the clear water into the dish and closed it up.

I thought surely there would be nothing that grew in that clean water, and I wondered if I would be found out, and they would know I did not swab the toilet.

Now, the water looked clean, but if your put that drop of water under the microscope, there you would see little microbes, little tiny worm like life forms, that you could not see with the naked eye.

It looked like clear water, but when you looked at it through a lens that looked deeper, it was filthy.

And over the course of a few days, inside that Petri dish those lifeforms grew and the bacteria multiplied and the evidence was undeniable, that the water that looked clean coming out of the sink, was actually not so clean.

Nobody even knew that I did not get my specimen from the toilet.

The reality is, that even though my eye saw clear water, a closer look showed a different reality that was no different from the feces on the toilet.

This is reality, now many today choose not to live in any kind of reality, they choose to believe their lives are clear and pure.

They like to create their own reality, and yet the Bible clearly lays out for us the truth of man's heart, and when we let the magnifying lens of God's Word penetrate inside us, we should have no problem seeing all the squirming little worms of filth.

We are unworthy, this is reality, and it is offensive to many today to hear this.

A prophet 600 years before Jesus said in...

Jer. 17:9-10 "The heart is deceitful above all things,
And desperately wicked;

Who can know it?

10 I, the Lord, search the heart,

I test the mind,

Even to give every man according to his ways,

According to the fruit of his doings.

This is true reality, but in our culture people believe the lie, even people within the church.

They are strangers to themselves. Kent Hughes

They look at the errors of others through the lens of a powerful microscope, but when they look within, they look through the wrong end of a telescope.

They are not honest with their sin, and preacher's today play into the cultures ideas.

They avoid sin, they avoid talking of things that might challenge the sheep, and they keep their churchgoers comfortable and happy.

Today people believe they are somewhat good, and they have such healthy views of themselves.

That young pastor that I was chatting with, was listening to this post-modern preaching and felt like something was wrong with the way he was feeling, because he felt unworthy and disgusting.

But as he and I reasoned through the scriptures we concluded that he was walking in reality.

He was seeing clearly, who he was in light of a Holy and righteous God.

Maybe you are thinking, "Well when you mature in Christ that should go away."

Paul was no baby Christian when he wrote he was a wretched man in Romans chapter 7.

Paul carried that wretched man everywhere he went, and all throughout his epistles you see his agony over that wretched man that he was.

In fact, if you study church history, and you study biographies of the great saints, you will find a common thread in all of them.

They were plagued with this sense of unworthiness.

Listen, it might be offensive this morning, to hear you that you are not worthy to come to Christ, you are too filthy, and sin has infected you all too much.

But understand faith is an exercise in reality, and the one who can see themselves clearly, not how you want to be seen, but honest with how you are truly seen by God, that person living in that reality is on solid ground.

We have to approach Jesus in humility and see that we are undeserving.

Perhaps this morning your prayers and petitions to God, are like the Jewish Elders, you are praying to Him and demanding of Him because you think you are deserving of your requests.

Maybe you think because you attend church, or you give money in the offering you are worthy of God's attention?

Maybe you ignore the realities of God's Word, and choose to believe man's assessments and accolades of your life?

Maybe you think you will make into heaven because of the virtues you live by.

If this is you this morning, you are not living in reality. You must understand first, that apart from God's Grace you are an evil person, desperately wicked.

Without God's Grace, we live with Self at the center of our universe, we believe the planets are in orbit around our life.

If you are man, you leave the toilet seat up, kind of attitude, it is all about you.

We must conclude that like the centurion we are unworthy.

C.S. Lewis once said, "the one essential symptom of the regenerated life is a permanent horrified perception of one's natural and unalterable corruption. The true Christian's nostril is to be continually attentive to their inner cesspool."

No one is worthy...

And when you are willing to accept this truth first, then you will be able to see God clearly.

You can see Jesus for who He is, you can see Jesus as God, your God, when you see yourself for who you are.

When you understand the universe and everything within is for Him, and you are just a little speck in and flash in the scope of His Story being told, then you are in a place to be used by God.

The scriptures declare in... **Col 1:15-18 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16**

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

You see Jesus is at the center of this universe, He needs to be on the throne of your heart.

When you see yourself with true sight, then you can exercise Biblical Faith.

This is what makes the Grace of God so wonderful, in our humiliation, while we are in this unworthy state, the Bible says...

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

If you believe you are worthy this morning, this verse will have little impact in your life.

But if you came here this morning, defeated by your sin, you might even be depressed in your self-defeat, and hopelessness is overwhelming your life.

Please know this is the kind of heart Jesus is moved to meet.

Jesus comes to this person, who is empty and desperate, and pours out His Love and Grace.

When we see ourselves for who we are, then we can fully understand what is offered to us through Christ's sacrifice, we are never the same.

Eph. 1:7-8 says in the NLT...

7 He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. 8 He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

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So to you, who see yourself honestly this morning, God is so rich in kindness and grace, that He purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave our sins.

Then Paul says he has showered us with his kindness and with His wisdom and understanding.

Such wonderful gifts, next time you are in your shower, and that water is flowing over your head, picture your unworthy heart being showered with God's kindness and His wisdom and understanding.

It is ever flowing, His love for you this morning, for those who understand who they are in reality, His love is overwhelming.

If that is you this morning, God's Word this morning has laid out Truth, and you are willing to see yourself in the light of scripture, and come to Jesus undeserving, if

you are willing to come to Jesus honestly, and bring your sins to Him, and in faith, you can turn on His shower of love and grace, it will flow out into your life.

You will never be the same again, the decision to come to Jesus this way will change your life forever.

Come and be cleansed of your sin this morning.

The elders and pastors will be up front if you need prayer this morning.

Let us pray together.