THEME: Jesus heals the centurion's servant; Jesus restores to life the son of the widow of Nain; Jesus commends John the Baptist; Jesus goes to dinner at a Pharisee's house; Jesus gives parable of two debtors.

This chapter opens with another meticulous record of healing. In this case it is the centurion's servant. Although Jesus had no personal contact with the servant, he was made well.

Dr. Luke alone records the raising from the dead of the son of the widow of Nain. He is the only Gospel writer who records Jesus raising from the dead two persons (the other was Jairus' daughter, Luk\_8:54-55).

Also in this chapter is the first of eighteen parables that Luke alone records. It grew out of Jesus' visit to the home of a Pharisee where a woman anointed His feet with ointment. The simple parable of the two debtors revealed that this woman of the street was better than Simon, the Pharisee.

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

At the conclusion of His discourse, Jesus left the multitude and entered Capernaum. There He was besieged by the elders of the Jews, who had come to ask help for a Gentile centurion's servant. It seems that this centurion was especially kind to the Jewish people, even going so far as to build a synagogue for them. Like all the other centurions in the NT, he is presented in a good light (Luk\_23:47; Act\_10:1-48).

It is rather unusual for a master to be so kindly disposed toward a slave as this centurion was. When the servant took sick, the centurion asked the elders of the Jews to implore Jesus to heal him. This Roman officer is the only one who sought blessing from Jesus for a servant, as far as we know. – Believers Bible Commentary

***Luk 7:4-7  And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue." 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.  Therefore, I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed.***

It was a strange position for the elders of the people to be in. They did not believe in Jesus, yet their friendship for the centurion forced them to go to Jesus in a time of need. They said concerning the centurion that he was worthy. But when the centurion met Jesus, he said, “I am not worthy,” meaning “I am not important enough.”

According to Matthew, the centurion went directly to Jesus. Here in Luke, he sent the elders. Both are correct. First, he sent the elders, then he himself went out to Jesus.

The humility and faith of the centurion are remarkable. He did not consider himself worthy that Jesus should enter his house. Neither did he consider himself worthy to come to Jesus in person. But he had faith to believe that Jesus could heal without being bodily present. A word from Him would drive out the sickness. – Believers Bible Commentary

***Luk 7:8-10 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." 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!" And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.***

The centurion went on to explain that he knew something about authority and responsibility. He had considerable experience in this realm. He himself was under the authority of the Roman government and was responsible to carry out its orders. In addition, he had soldiers under him who were instantly obedient to his orders. He recognized that Jesus had the same kind of authority over diseases that the Roman government had over him, and that he had over his subordinates.

No wonder that Jesus marveled at the faith of this Gentile centurion. No one in Israel had made such a bold confession of Jesus' absolute authority. Such great faith could never go unrewarded. When they got back to the centurion's house, they found that the servant was completely well.

This is one of two times in the Gospels when we read that Jesus marveled. He marveled at the faith of this Gentile centurion, and He marveled at the unbelief of Israel (Mar\_6:6). – Believers Bible Commentary

**Application: This Centurion approached him in humility and faith understanding Jesus’s authority. How do you approach God? Which of these three do you struggle with?**

***Jesus Raises a Widow's Son***

***Luk 7:11-17 Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd.   And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her.   When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep."  Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."  So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother.  Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people." And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.***

Only Dr. Luke records this incident. It concerns a restoration to life or, as some would call it, a resurrection. The instances recorded of Jesus raising people from the dead technically are not resurrections as we think of them. All the Lord did was restore life back into old bodies. Tradition says that after the Lord raised Lazarus from the dead, Lazarus asked Him if he would have to die again. Our Lord told him he would have to die again, and Lazarus never smiled from that day on. Whether or not that tradition is accurate, I can imagine that going through the doorway of death once would be enough!

Up to this day only one Person has been raised from the dead in resurrection, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the first fruits of them that sleep. He is the only one raised from the dead in a glorified body. One of these days, in the event we call the Rapture, the dead in Christ and the living believers will be changed into resurrected and glorified bodies, and will be caught up to be with the Lord. That resurrected body will never die.

The account of the dead son of the widow of Nain is indeed sad. He was the only son of a widowed mother which made his death twice as tragic. While passing through the village of Nain, the Lord met the funeral procession. Someone has said that He broke up every funeral He met. I am of the opinion that He raised from the dead more than the three people who are recorded in the Bible. These three instances are examples, probably from three age groups: a child, a young man, and an adult man.

Jesus raised this young man from the dead for the sake of this lonely mother. He had compassion for this woman and her situation. He touched the casket in which the young man lay and spoke to him. He always used the same method in raising people from the dead. He spoke directly to them. Also at the Rapture, it will be His voice. Scripture tells us, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1Th\_4:16-17). He is coming for us with a shout. His voice will be like the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. His one solo voice will call His own back from the dead. He always used the same method in restoring life. He did not, however, use the same method in other miracles. But to raise the dead He always spoke directly to them. – McGee

***Hebrews 9:27-28 Amplified ….. And just as it is appointed and destined for all men to die once and after this [comes certain] judgment, so Christ, having been offered once and once for all to bear [as a burden] [e]the sins of many, will appear a second time [when he returns to earth], not to deal with sin, but to bring salvation to those who are eagerly and confidently waiting for Him.***

**Application: So Lazarus and others were over achievers dying more than once, but how do we reconcile those in the bible that did not die, like Enoch and Elijah? More importantly, what is the implication for us and our loved ones?**

***Messengers from John the Baptist***

***Luk 7:18-20 Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things.   And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"  When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' "***

News of the miracles of Jesus filtered back to John the Baptist in prison in the castle of Machaerus, on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea. If Jesus was truly the Messiah, why didn't He exercise His power in freeing John from Herod's hands? So John sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus if He were really the Messiah, or if the Christ was still to come. It may seem strange to us that John should ever question Jesus' Messiahship. But we must remember that the best of men suffer brief lapses of faith. Also, physical distress can lead to severe mental depression. – Believers Bible Commentary

***Luk 7:21-23  And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.  Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.  And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."***

Jesus kept John's disciples waiting while He performed many miracles so that they could go back to tell John that they had seen the fulfillment of prophecy concerning the Messiah. Isa\_35:5-6 predicts His first coming: “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing….” Jesus told John's disciples to tell him that they had seen the credentials of the Messiah. Actually John had fulfilled his mission. And Jesus realized that He was not moving as fast as John wanted Him to, but in the presence of intellectual difficulties, He is asking John to trust Him.

He is asking the same thing of you and me. He asks for our faith when we cannot understand. “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God” (1Co\_1:18). Doubts are not a sign that you are smart. On the contrary, they are a sign that you are very foolish and do not know everything. They signal the fact that you belong to a group which is perishing. Many learned professors sit in swivel chairs in dusty, musty libraries, far removed from life and human need, and write about the intellectual difficulties of accepting the Bible, the deity of Jesus Christ, and redemption by the blood of Christ. I believe the Word of God, friend, and I hope you do. – McGee

**Application: How do you react when the Lord answers your requests differently than you wish? John the Baptist says his prayer from prison, send his disciples, and he is the greatest profit, yet this answer does not fit with our modern day prosperity gospel.**

***Luk 7:24-27  When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?   But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts.  But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet.   This is he of whom it is written: 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.'***

7:24 Whatever Jesus might say to John in private, He had nothing but praise for him in public. When the people had flocked out to the desert near Jordan, what had they expected to find? A fickle, spineless, wavering opportunist? No one could ever accuse John of being a reed shaken by the wind.

7:25 Had they then expected to find a Hollywood-style playboy, fashionably dressed, and wallowing in luxury and ease? No, that is the type of person who hangs around king's courts, seeking to enjoy all the pleasures of the palace and to make endless contacts for his own profit and gratification.

7:26 It was a prophet they went out to see—an embodied conscience who declared the word of the living God no matter what the cost to him might be. Indeed, he was more than a prophet.

7:27 He himself was the subject of prophecy, and he had the unique privilege of introducing the King. Jesus quoted from Mal\_3:1 to show that John had been promised in the OT, but in so doing, He made a very interesting change in the pronouns. In Mal\_3:1, we read, “Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me.” But Jesus quoted it, “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.” The pronoun Me is changed to You. – Believers Bible Commentary

***Luk 7:28-29  For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."  And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John.***

7:28 Jesus continued to praise John by asserting that among those born of women, there was not a greater prophet than John. This superiority did not refer to his personal character but to his position as forerunner of the Messiah. There were other men who were as great as he in zeal, honor, and devotion. But no one else had the privilege of announcing the coming of the King. In this, John was unique. Yet, the Lord added, the least one in the kingdom of God is greater than John. To enjoy the blessings of the kingdom is greater than to be the forerunner of the King.

7:29 Jesus is probably still speaking in verse 29, and thus the (supplied) word Him should be him. He is recalling the reception given to John's preaching. The common people and the avowed sinners, like the tax collectors, repented and were baptized in the Jordan. In believing John's message and acting upon it, they justified God, that is, they reckoned God to be righteous in demanding that the people of Israel should first repent before Christ could reign over them. This use of the word justify clearly shows that it cannot mean to make righteous; no one could make God righteous. Rather it means to account God as being right in His decrees and requirements. Believers Bible Commentary

***Luk 7:30-32  But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.   And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like?  They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: 'We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not weep.'***

In other words, they were like a bunch of spoiled brats. A lot of folks are that way. I was a pastor for almost forty years, and a great deal of that time was spent as a wet nurse, burping spiritual babies—which is what these religious rulers were in Christ's day. The Lord said they were like children playing in a marketplace. One of the children says, “Let's play wedding.” The others say, “No, that's too jolly.” “Then let's play funeral.” No, they don't want to play funeral because it is too sad. Our Lord said these petulant children were exactly like that religious generation. And I wonder if this is an accurate picture of the average church today. – McGee

**Application: Are you a spiritual baby? What are the implications of having spiritual babies in the congregation? What is our responsibility as His church to spiritual babies?**

***Luk 7:33-35  For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.'  The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'  But wisdom is justified by all her children."***

I hear people say, “I do not like that preacher because he is too intellectual, and his tone is monotonous.” And the same folk say, “I do not like that preacher because he pounds the pulpit and yells at the top of his voice.” The problem is not with these two types of preachers. The problem is with the spoiled baby who complains. That is what the Lord said in His day, and it is still applicable today. – McGee

Ryle admonishes:

*We must give up the idea of trying to please everyone. The thing is impossible, and the attempt is mere waste of time. We must be content to walk in Christ's steps, and let the world say what it likes. Do what we will, we shall never satisfy it, or silence its ill-natured remarks. It first found fault with John the Baptist and then with his blessed Master. And it will go on cavilling and finding fault with that Master's disciples so long as one of them is left upon earth.* - Believers Bible Commentary

***A Sinful Woman Forgiven***

***Luk 7:36  Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat.  And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil,  and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.  Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."***

7:36 In the incident which follows, we have an illustration of wisdom being justified by one of her children, namely the sinful woman. As Dr. H. C. Woodèring said so pointedly, “When God cannot get religious leaders to appreciate Christ, He will get harlots to do so.” Simon, the Pharisee, had asked Jesus home to eat with him, perhaps through curiosity or perhaps through hostility.

7:37, 38 A sinful woman appeared in the room at the same time. We do not know who she was; the tradition that she was Mary Magdalene lacks scriptural support. This woman brought a white translucent flask of perfume. As Jesus reclined on a couch while eating, with His head near the table, she stood at His feet. She washed His feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, and kissed them repeatedly. Then she anointèed them with the costly perfume. Such worship and sacrifice revealed her conviction that there was nothing too good for Jesus.

7:39 Simon's attitude was quite different. He felt that prophets, like Pharisees, should be separate from sinners. If Jesus were truly a prophet, he concluded, He would not let a sinner bestow such affection on Him. - Believers Bible Commentary

***Luk 7:40-43  And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it."  "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.  And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"  Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."***

Jesus read his mind, and courteously asked Simon permission to say something to him. With consummate skill, the Lord told the story of the creditor and the two debtors. One owed fifty dollars, the other five. When neither of them could repay at all, he cancelled both debts. At this point Jesus asked Simon which borrower would love the lender more. The Pharisee correctly answered, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” In admitting this, he condemned himself, as Jesus proceeded to show him. - Believers Bible Commentary

***Luk 7:44-47  Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head.  You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.  You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.  Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."***

From the time the Lord had entered the house, the woman had lavished affection upon Him. The Pharisee, by contrast, had given Him a very cool reception, not even attending to the usual courtesies, such as washing the guest's feet, kissing His cheek and giving Him oil for His head. Why was this? The reason was that the woman had the consciousness of having been forgiven much, whereas Simon did not feel he had been a great sinner at all. “But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.”

Jesus did not suggest that the Pharisee was not a great sinner. Rather He emphasized that Simon had never truly acknowledged his vast guilt and been forgiven. If he had, he would have loved the Lord as deeply as the harlot. We are all great sinners. We can all know great forgiveness. We can all love the Lord greatly. - Believers Bible Commentary

***Luk 7:48-50  Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."   And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"  Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."***

7:48 Jesus then publicly announced to the woman that her sins had been forgiven. She had not been forgiven because of her love to Christ, but her love was a result of her forgiveness. She loved much because she had been forgiven much. Jesus took this occasion to announce publicly the forgiveness of her sins.

7:49, 50 The other guests inwardly questioned Jesus' right to forgive sins. The natural heart hates grace. But Jesus again assured the woman that her faith had saved her and that she should go in peace. This is something psychiatrists cannot do. They may try to explain away guilt complexes, but they can never give the joy and peace that Jesus gives. - Believers Bible Commentary

This is very pertinent for our day. If you are a church member and have never asked the Lord Jesus for forgiveness, you are lost. This woman did not have any good works to her credit, but she believed in the Lord, she trusted Christ, she asked for forgiveness. – McGee

**Application: Have you asked for forgiveness and come as you are to the Lord? Are you willing to meet people where they in order to reach them like Jesus did?**