

## The Centurion With Great Faith

Lesson 01 in the series, "I Didn't Catch Your Name"

### I. Jesus was amazed by the great faith of a Roman centurion.

At that time the highly valued slave of a Roman officer was sick and near death. When the officer heard about Jesus, he sent some respected Jewish elders to ask him to come and heal his slave. So they earnestly begged Jesus to help the man. "If anyone deserves your help, he does," they said, "for he loves the Jewish people and even built a synagogue for us." So Jesus went with them. But just before they arrived at the house, the officer sent some friends to say, "Lord, don't trouble yourself by coming to my home, for I am not worthy of such an honor. I am not even worthy to come and meet you. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, 'Go,' and they go, or 'Come,' and they come. And if I say to my slaves, 'Do this,' they do it." **When Jesus heard this, he was amazed.** Turning to the crowd that was following him, he said, "**I tell you, I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel!**" And when the officer's friends returned to his house, they found the slave completely healed. Luke 7:2-10 (NLT)

"Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see." Hebrews 11:1 (NLT)

#### a. The Centurion had faith in Jesus' authority.

"Jesus came and told his disciples, 'I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.'" Matthew 28:18-19 (NLT)

#### b. The Centurion had faith in Jesus' power.

"Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, 'Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?' When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the water, 'Silence! Be still!' Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. Then he asked them, 'Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?' The disciples were absolutely terrified. 'Who is this man?' they asked each other. 'Even the wind and waves obey him!'"

Mark 4:38-41 (NLT)

#### c. The Centurion humbly asked Jesus to help him.

"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." James 4:6 (NIV)

**Life Application:** Living by faith means humbly committing everything we do to Almighty God.

"We live by faith, not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5:7 (NIV)

"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed." Proverbs 16:3 (NIV)

"Commit" = "galal" (Hebrew) = "To roll"

*Note:* The more we surrender to God, the more we will learn to know God's will and become people who make wise plans.

"And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." Romans 12:1-2 (NLT)

### II. Jesus was amazed by the little faith of the people in His hometown.

"Jesus left that part of the country and returned with his disciples to Nazareth, his hometown. The next Sabbath he began teaching in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. They asked, 'Where did he get all this wisdom and the power to perform such miracles?' Then they scoffed, 'He's just a carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. And his sisters live right here among us.' They were deeply offended and refused to believe in him. Then Jesus told them, 'A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and his own family.' And because of their unbelief, he couldn't do any mighty miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them. **And he was amazed at their unbelief.** Then Jesus went from village to village, teaching the people." Mark 6:1-6 (NLT)

- a. The people of Nazareth refused to believe in Jesus.

“And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.” Hebrews 11:6 (NLT)

- b. The people of Nazareth forfeited their chance to have Jesus help them because of unbelief.

“And because of their unbelief, he couldn’t do any mighty miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them.” Mark 6:5 (NLT)

*Life Application:* We must encourage and warn each other so that we don’t become cynical and unbelieving.

“Be careful then, dear brothers and sisters. Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God. You must warn each other every day, while it is still “today,” so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God.” Hebrews 3:12-13 (NLT)

“Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.” 2 Timothy 4:2 (NLT)

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“The more we pay for advice, the more likely we are to listen to it. Advice from a friend, which is free, we may take or leave. Advice from a consultant we have paid much for personally, we are more likely to accept, but it’s still our choice - we can take it or leave it. But the guidance of God is different. First of all, we do not come to God asking for advice, but for God’s will - and that is not optional. And God’s fee is the highest one of all: it costs you everything. To ask for the guidance of God requires abandonment. We no longer say, ‘If I trust you, you will give me such and such.’ Instead we must say, ‘I trust you. Give me, or withhold from me whatever you choose.’”  
- Elisabeth Elliot.

“There is a perfect passivity that is not laziness. It is a living stillness born of trust. Quiet tension is not trust. It is simply compressed anxiety.” - Mary Rowles Jarvis

### **Connect Group Questions:**

1. What does the word “faith” mean to you? (See Hebrews 11:1-6). Why do you think faith is so important in order to have a relationship with God?
2. Discuss the following questions:
  - Do I trust that God desires what is best for me?
  - Do I trust that sometimes suffering (or waiting) is best for my spiritual growth?
  - Do I trust that God is transforming me into a new person?
  - Do I trust that God can transform my (wife/brother/neighbor/boss) into a new person?
  - Do I trust that God will protect me and defend me?
  - Do I trust that God will take me to heaven when I die?
3. Read Luke 8:15-17. What do you think it means to have faith like a child? How do children show that they have faith?
4. Read Luke 7:1-10. Why was the Roman centurion willing to trust Jesus more than others? Why was Jesus amazed at his faith? Would Jesus be impressed by your faith? Why or why not?
5. Read Mark 6:1-6. What hindered Jesus from doing great works in His hometown? Why didn’t the people in Jesus’ hometown believe Him? Why was Jesus amazed at their unbelief?
6. Share with your group one concern for which you are trusting God.
7. Share with your group one concern that is difficult for you to surrender to God.