

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

1ST GRADE

TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 7

Jesus and the Centurion's Servant



Jesus and the Centurion's Servant

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will show the students what faith is and what it looks like through the story of Jesus healing the centurion's servant.

Key Verses

Luke 7:1-10—Main Teaching Passage

Matthew 8:5-13 (Parallel Passage)

Hebrews 11

Hebrews 13:5; 1 Corinthians 10:13

Memory Verse - Hebrews 11:1

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, 1 John 1:9.

Go over to the light switch and ask the class what they think will happen when you flick the switch. Then turn the lights off and on to show them. Ask how they knew the lights would go off and on. Point out that they can't see the wires or have any proof that the switch is connected. However, we are usually willing to believe that if we flick the switch, the light will go out.

This is a good analogy for faith: we might not be able to see God working, but faith knows that He will.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Today's story features a centurion, which is a commander of soldiers in the Roman army. The Romans had conquered the Jewish people, and often the Jews and Romans didn't get along. However, this centurion was different. One day, one of his servants became sick and was close to death, so he sent for Jesus to see if He could come and heal his servant. The Jewish elders who found Jesus spoke highly of the centurion, telling Jesus how he built a synagogue for the Jews, and Jesus agreed to come and help.

However, as Jesus approached the house, the centurion sent friends to stop Jesus and tell Him how unworthy he was to have the Lord come under his roof. Instead, he told Jesus simply to say the word, and his servant would be healed. He explained that he understood Jesus' authority because he also had authority. He could tell his soldiers where to go and what to do, and they would obey. The same way, he believed that all Jesus had to do was say the word, and his servant would recover.

Jesus was amazed when He heard this. He told all those around Him that He hadn't seen this kind of faith from anyone else, not even from His chosen people, the Jews. He then said that because of his faith, the centurion's servant would be healed. The friends returned to the house to discover that the servant was well, just like Jesus said. In fact, Matthew tells us that the servant was healed the moment Jesus said he was.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

The hero in our story today is a surprising one. He was not one of Jesus' disciples, or a faithful Jew, or even a Jew at all. In fact, quite the opposite, he was a hated Roman soldier. When a Jew from Jesus' day had heard this story, they would have expected the centurion to be the villain. However, this was no ordinary centurion. He clearly had a love for God's people, seeing that he funded the building of their synagogue. It is this most unlikely of heroes that Jesus commends for having the most extraordinary faith He had witnessed in His earthly ministry.

This man's faith is stunning for a few reasons. First and most obviously, the very fact that he believed Jesus could heal his dying servant took great faith. However, more than that, he believed that Jesus could heal the servant without even being in the same room as him, simply by speaking. In addition, he believed in Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, even though he was not a Jew. Considering all this, it is no wonder Jesus had such high praise for his faith.

LOOK (Continued)

Hebrews 11:1 tells us that faith is trusting that what God says is true, even if we can't see it (all of Hebrews 11 unpacks the idea of what faith is and what it looks like). The centurion trusted that Jesus could heal his servant even if to man this seemed impossible. This is how faith works for us today as well. We exercise faith when we trust that the things the Bible says are true.

In faith, we believe that Jesus really did die on the cross, that He really did pay for our sins, and that we really can be forgiven. We can trust by faith that everything the Bible says is true and that all the stories in the Scriptures really happened. Our faith also helps us to believe the promises in God's Word. When the Bible says Jesus will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5), faith allows us to trust that promise. When we read in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that God will provide a way of escape from every temptation, our faith enables us to believe that. It may be difficult to believe some of these things are true, but that is when it becomes most important to use our faith. When we trust in God and the promises He gives us in His Word, we will never be let down.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Hebrews 11:1.

Review the lesson by asking the class to describe what made the faith of the centurion so marvelous. Review what faith is and what it looks like in our lives.

Pray: Thank the Lord for all the promises He gives us in Scripture. Ask Him to give us faith to trust in those promises.

Parent Question: What is faith and what does it look like in our lives?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Luke 7:1-10 by David Guzik

THE SICK HEALED, THE DEAD RAISED, THE SINNER FORGIVEN

A. A centurion's servant is healed.

1. ([Luke 7:1-5](#)) The centurion's request.

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. 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."

a. **He entered Capernaum:** After the Sermon on the Plain ([Luke 6:20-49](#)), Jesus came to his city of residence ([Matthew 4:13](#), *He came and dwelt in Capernaum*). This means that the location of the Sermon on the Plain was likely not far from **Capernaum**.

b. **A certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die:** This centurion appears as a devout, kind, humble man — yet, all the same he was a *centurion* — not only a Gentile, but a Roman soldier, and an instrument of Israel's oppression.

i. The centurion had an unusual attitude towards his slave. Under Roman law, a master had the right to kill his slave, and it was expected that he would do so if the slave became ill or injured to the point where he could not work.

c. **He sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant:** Apparently, the centurion did not think himself worthy of a personal meeting with Jesus, and perhaps thought Jesus would not *want* to meet with a Gentile like himself, so he sent Jewish leaders as his representatives to Jesus.

d. **The one for whom He should do this was deserving:** The Jewish leaders did this for the centurion because he was a worthy man. In contrast, we can come to Jesus directly without a representative even when we are unworthy; He *justifies the ungodly* ([Romans 4:5](#)).

i. "These considerations suggest that the captain was a God-fearer, a Gentile who embraced Israel's God but who did not undergo circumcision." (Pate)

2. ([Luke 7:6-8](#)) The centurion tells Jesus that He need not come, because he knows that Jesus need not be present to do His work.

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. 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."

a. **Then Jesus went with them:** Jesus did not hesitate to go to the centurion's house, and we half wish the centurion would have allowed Him. Would Jesus have entered a Gentile's house? It was completely against Jewish custom, but not against God's law.

i. Pate cites a rabbinic writing known as *m. Obolot* 18:7: "The dwelling-places of Gentiles are unclean."

b. **Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof:** The centurion knew that it might be a problem for this prominent rabbi to come into his home, so he had his friends meet Jesus on the way to say that it was not necessary for Him to come all the way to the home.

i. The centurion was a remarkable man. The elders said he was worthy; he said he was not worthy. They praised him for building a house of worship; he felt unworthy that Jesus would come to his house. They said he was deserving; he felt himself undeserving. Strong faith and great humility are entirely compatible.

ii. “Two features of character blend in him which do not often meet in such graceful harmony. He won the high opinion of others and yet he held a low estimation of himself.” (Spurgeon)

iii. “Your faith will not murder your humility, your humility will not stab at your faith; but the two will go hand in hand to heaven like a brave brother and a fair sister, the one bold as a lion the other meek as a dove, the one rejoicing in Jesus the other blushing at self.” (Spurgeon)

c. **But say the word, and my servant will be healed:** The centurion fully understood that Jesus’ healing power was not a magic trick that required the magician’s presence. Instead he knew Jesus had true *authority* and could command things to be done and see them completed outside His immediate presence.

i. The centurion showed great faith in Jesus’ *word*. He understood that Jesus could heal with His *word* just as easily as with a *touch*.

d. **For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me:** The centurion also knew about the military chain of command, and how the orders of one in authority were unquestioningly obeyed. He saw that Jesus had *at least* that much authority.

i. “He believes that, just as he, a man with authority, is obeyed by his subordinates, just so surely will the authoritative utterance of Christ be fulfilled even though He is not present where the sick person is.” (Geldenhuys)

3. ([Luke 7:9-10](#)) Jesus heals the servant and marvels at the centurion’s faith.

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.

a. **He marveled at him:** The centurion’s understanding of Jesus’ spiritual authority made Jesus marvel. His simple confidence in the ability of Jesus’ mere word to heal showed a faith that was free of superstitious reliance on merely external things. This was **great faith**, worthy of praise.

i. Jesus only **marveled** on a few occasions. He did so here, at the faith of the centurion, and also at the unbelief of His own people ([Mark 6:6](#)). Jesus can be amazed at either our *faith* or our *unbelief*.

b. **I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!** Jesus considered the faith of this Gentile centurion — a living symbol of Jewish oppression — and thought it greater than any faith He had seen among the people of **Israel**.

i. As a political entity, there was no **Israel**; there was only a covenant people descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yet Jesus still called them **Israel**.

c. **Found the servant well who had been sick:** Jesus both answered the centurion’s unselfish request and proved that He really did have the authority the centurion trusted Him to have.