

Introduction:

1. One of the most remarkable stories in the Bible is found in Luke 7. It is a story about Jesus—as so many of the remarkable stories are. It is a story about a man with remarkable faith.
 - a. This man understood the power and authority of Jesus in a way that was absolutely correct.
 - b. This actually caused Jesus to marvel—to be amazed.
 - c. Who was this man? A prophet? An apostle? No. This man wasn't even an Israelite!
2. The Roman centurion—whose name is unknown to us—in Luke 7:1-10 is the man of remarkable faith. I say “remarkable faith” because Jesus was amazed at this man's faith—He marveled.
3. Only twice in the gospels is it recorded that Jesus marveled. In this case, and the case in Mark 6:6. We will see that case shortly. First, let us look at...

The Lesson:**I. The Centurion's Character.**

- A. The centurion was a Roman soldier, the commander of a hundred men.
 1. The Romans had occupied all of Palestine (including Capernaum in Galilee). They were despised by nearly all of the Jewish people. They were often harsh and cruel.
 2. Our natural thought about the Roman Centurion might be that he would be like the other Romans. That, he too, would be brutal and merciless. That was not the case.
- B. The centurion was a man of kind and noble character. Look at the evidence from the text.
 1. He had a servant he dearly cared about (2). He was a compassionate man.
 2. He loved the Jewish people (5). It was typical to find tension between Jews and Romans.
 3. He had built the Jews a synagogue in Capernaum (5), the foundation of which is still there today. Implied is that he did this at his own expense.
 4. The Jewish elders trusted him and were willing to take his appeal to Jesus (3).
 5. When begging Jesus to come and heal the Centurion's servant, the elders said he was “deserving” (4). This shows their high esteem for this man.
 6. Yet, when the man spoke concerning himself, he did not use “deserving,” but “not worthy.” In fact, he used this language twice (6-7).
- C. A noble and upright character—not mean-spirited, or evil-hearted—is of great benefit in coming to Jesus. Anyone can be saved, even those with evil hearts, but those with noble hearts who love others, love truth, and love righteousness have an advantage. Their hearts are primed to receive the message of Jesus in faith. What is your heart like? Is it noble like this man's heart?

II. The Centurion's Faith.

- A. This man's faith is such that it causes Jesus to marvel (6-9). “Just say the word.”
 1. He knows Jesus does not have to be at the house to heal. Jesus was impressed by that. It caused Jesus to marvel. To *marvel* is to be struck at the wonder of a thing; amazed.
 2. Typically, it was the other way around; people marveled at Jesus (Luke 8:25; 9:43).

3. Only twice is it recorded that Jesus marveled. The only other incident is in Mark 6:6; He was amazed at their lack of faith! But with the centurion, He was amazed by great faith!
 4. Jesus used this as an example to the crowd (9). Who could Jesus find in this crowd of Jews who had the kind of faith this Gentile soldier had?
 5. When Jesus spoke of His own disciples, and of the crowds that followed Him, He typically spoke of “little faith,” Matthew 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8.
 6. But this was not a man of little faith, He believed Jesus could do anything by just speaking the word. Jesus could just say “Go” to the servant’s illness and it would go!
- B. Do you believe like this man believed? What would Jesus say of your faith and mine? Would He say we have great faith? Or would He say, “O, ye of little faith”? We get to make the choice.

III. The Centurion’s Understanding.

- A. This man shows a rare understanding of authority (8).
1. He first spoke of himself as a man *under* authority. He had those who were over him. He was subject to the commands of others. He, thus, knew what it was like to be submissive to laws, to his superiors. “I know how to obey.” One of the great problems of our day is disrespect for authority—in the home, nation and church.
 2. He next spoke of himself as a man who *possessed* authority. He had 100 Roman soldiers under his command. He had soldiers who were accustomed to obedience. Thus, he spoke of himself as being in both the under and over position with respect to authority.
 3. Then he reveals uncommon wisdom and insight in talking about how authority works. “I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes...”
 4. This man was prepared, therefore, to believe that the command of Jesus would be obeyed. “As my soldiers obey me, so do diseases, storms, and seas obey You. Speak the word.”
- B. If diseases, storms and seas obey Jesus (Luke 8:24) because they are under His authority, how much more should we obey Him when He speaks the word?
1. Seas and diseases have no choice but to obey Him; but, to us, He gives a choice!
 2. What do you do with His word? See Luke 6:46; Acts 6:7; Romans 6:16-17; Hebrews 5:8-9.

Conclusion:

1. Returning to our text in Luke 7, how did this incident turn out? Remember, the centurion did not ask anything for himself personally, but for his servant (2, 3, 10). He was now well. Jesus had said “Go” to the servant’s tormenting disease, and it was gone! This was a miracle.
2. This ought to impress you to be like the centurion—a person of faith. But what kind of faith? Every day we have opportunity to amaze our Savior. We can amaze Him with great faith or lack of faith! Will our faith hold in the midst of the worst of trials, or will it fold? We can have great faith!
3. When Jesus said “Go” to the disease, it was gone. Everything always turns out the way the word of Christ says it will, even what Jesus said in Mark 16:16.