

The Faith of the Roman Centurian

Sermon Topic: The Faith of the Roman Centurian

Bible Verse: Luke 7

Sermon Theme: In the 7th chapter of Luke, Jesus describes the faith of the centurian as great: "...so great a faith, I have not found in Israel..." In this sermon we will examine those aspects of the centurian's faith that made his faith outstanding.

Main idea: There is only one instance recorded in the New Testament when Jesus showed surprise or amazement. That is in Luke 7:9. "When Jesus heard these things he was amazed at him." The King James Version says that Jesus "marveled." What was it that could make the Son of God marvel? It was the simple faith of the Roman centurian.

As the story unfolds, we see that the Roman centurian has a Hebrew servant whom "he values highly" (Luke 7:2). The centurian has heard of Jesus and sends the elders of the Jews to seek Jesus out, in order that his servant may be healed. The elders testify earnestly to the centurian's integrity. They tell Jesus, "This man deserves to have you do this because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." Clearly this centurian is no ordinary Roman soldier. Jesus consents to the task. As Jesus makes his way to the house of the centurian, the centurian sends some of his friends to convey a message to Jesus: "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy that you should come under my roof" (Luke 7:6). For a Roman to demonstrate such humility to a Hebrew was truly amazing, even more so in that the centurian was a military officer of rank and prestige (centurian means having 100 soldiers in his command). He continues: "But say in a word and my servant will be healed" (Luke 7:7). "For I am a man myself under authority (that is, I understand your authority, because I also exert a certain authority) with soldiers under me. I tell this one 'Go' and he goes; and that one 'come' and he comes. I say to my servant 'do this' and he

does it” (Luke 7:8). At this, Jesus was amazed! “Faith so great I have not found even in Israel.”

Reason why Jesus was moved by the centurian’s faith:

1. His humility. He approached Jesus in such a humble manner. “I am not worthy to have you enter my home...that is why I did not consider myself even worthy to approach you.”
2. The centurian fully accepted the authority of Jesus. He recognized and understood the authority of Jesus. “Just say in a word and I know my servant will be healed.” It is clear that the centurian viewed the authority of Jesus as the determining factor in what would take place as opposed to his own concepts or the practical reality.
3. Jesus’ direction became the centurian’s immediate expectation. This always is the mark of great faith. It is clear that the centurian was fully expecting the healing of his servant based on the word of Jesus. “...say in a word AND I KNOW my servant will be healed.”

Summary: Do we have the same humble attitude of the centurian in our life of faith? Jesus directed us to “think first of the Kingdom of God and all things will be added unto you.” Do we expect that our faith will be realized in the same way? Or do we still worry about what to eat, what to wear, before we think of the will of God? This is the true test of our faith. (You can expand on this theme and include some good testimony.)