

The Foreigner with Great Faith

- “Every man is three men: the man he thinks he is; the man his friends know; the man his enemies say he is”
- Lk.7 – centurion illustrates concept

NT mentions Centurions favorably

- Lk.23:47, at cross
- Ac.10, Cornelius
- Ac.27, with Paul
- Mt.8; Lk.7, great faith

Matthew 8 – Capernaum, Mt.4:13

5: centurion – Gentile ... yet loved by Jews!

- Galilee ruled by Herod Antipas...
 - Centurion probably not Roman soldier, but after the Roman model
 - He could be Greek, Syrian, or Roman
- Built Jews a synagogue
- Proselyte of the gate?

Matthew 8 – Capernaum, Mt.4:13

6: boy, paralyzed, suffering terribly; dying

- Lk.7:2, slave; servant of servant of Lord
- Most masters viewed slaves as tools...
 - Could mistreat ... kill ...
 - When too old to work, thrown out to die

7: Jesus willing to enter centurion's house – (Gentile). Jn.18:28; Ac.10:28.

Matthew 8 – Capernaum, Mt.4:13

8-9: “I am not worthy” ... “it is not necessary” –
say a word...heal...distance...authority

10: Jesus marveled – had not see this faith in Israel

- Nothing said about sick servant’s faith
- Matthew focuses on centurion’s faith, humility, nationality

11-12: bliss at Messianic banquet; Gentiles!

13: “let it be done...as you have believed...” –
your prayer is granted

Luke 7 summary

1-2: dear to him: valuable, precious

- Talmud forbade Jews to mourn for slaves

3: he sent elders... [Mt.8:5] authorized agents

- 1) Mk.10:35, James/John... Mt.20:20, mother
- 2) Jn.3:22, Jesus baptized; 4:1-2, disciples
- 3) Jn.19:1, Pilate scourged; 2, soldiers . . .

4-7:

he is deserving (worthy)

6: I am not worthy (morally)

6: *Lord* . . . 7: not worthy

Luke 7 summary

7-8: he understood authority . . .

- Knew what Lord could do
- Expected Divine fiat

9: no such faith in Israel

- Mk.6:6, astonished at unbelief

10: faith blesses

I. What His Neighbors Thought

(Jewish elders)

Based on what they saw

- Alien – Gentile – soldier
- 4-5: because of what he did, Jewish elders approved
 - Gentiles and Jews share blessings of kingdom
- What do our neighbors see in us?
- Ph.2:14-15

I. What His neighbors thought

II. What He Thought Of Himself

Examination of his heart (self-estimate)

- “Not worthy” ... – Why?
 - Knew himself better than they?
 - Judged himself by higher standard?
 - Had he been listening to Jesus?
 - Had he been impressed with Jesus’ exalted teaching and example?
 - Focus on power of word of the Lord?
 - Only one who knew WHO Jesus was?
- Produced humility; self-examination,
2 Co.13:5

I. What His Neighbors Thought

II. What He Thought Of Himself

III. Jesus Marveled At His Faith

'I have not found such great faith...'

- Jesus marveled at *his* faith, and at *Jews'* unbelief, Mk.6:6. Lk.7:9, great faith (17:5)
- **Negative** descriptions of faith –
 1. Mt.6:30, little
 2. Mt.17:20, small
 3. Lk.8:13, rootless (Col.2:7)
 4. Ro.4:19, weak
 5. Ja.1:6, doubting
 6. Ja.2:19, demonic

Jesus marveled at his faith

- **Positive** descriptions of faith –
 1. Lk.7:9, Gentile, great
 2. Ac.6:8, Stephen, full
 3. Ro.4:20-21, strong
 4. Col.2:7, rooted and built up; established
 5. Ja.2:5, rich
 6. Ja.2:22, perfected

What is faith?

“Used especially of the faith by which a man embraces Jesus, i.e., a conviction full of joyful trust, that Jesus is the Messiah – the divinely appointed author of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God, conjoined with obedience to Christ” – Thayer

- Faith obeys Christ

- Lk.7:29-30

John: physician

Baptism: prescription

Righteousness: result

Chief priests/elders: dying of sin

Centurion's faith: model to imitate, Lk.7

1. Compassion for slave, 1-2
 - a. 'Dear' to him – valuable, precious
 - b. Proud people care nothing about slave
 - c. Mt.7:12

2. Kind to enemies, 3-5 – the forgotten virtue
 - a. Some think they are right with God if they believe without obeying truth
 - b. Acts 27:3 . . . 43

Centurion's character: model to imitate, Lk.7

3. Lord, 6

- a. Not "Sir" but God in flesh ... almighty
- b. How did Centurion know Jesus' power?
Jn.4:46-52?

Centurion's character: model to imitate, Lk.7

4. Humble, 6-7

- a. Many think they deserve more than they get
- b. Lk.15:19, unworthiness realized
- c. Jn.1:27, unworthiness confessed

The more faith we have, the more we esteem Christ, not ourselves

Centurion's character: model to imitate, Lk.7

5. Believed omnipotence of Lord's words, 7
 - a. Unworthy of His visit
 - b. Visit not necessary; His words can cure
6. Faith believed in power (authority) of Lord over disease, 8-9
 - a. Two reasons to keep his distance:
 - ¹unworthy; ²visit is not necessary
 - b. Gentile's humility and faith surpassed Jews

- Centurion new Jesus could heal at a distance...
- Unseen...
- Without personal faith...
- Complete recovery...
- Without delay...
- Without spoken word of healing...
- Without laying on of hands.

Great faith brought great blessings

- “I have not found such great faith...even in Israel” – Lk.7:9
 - Would Lord marvel at our faith?
- Messengers returned to find servant well – v.10.
- Is it surprising that the two who are most praised for their faith . . . are Gentiles?