

Apr 14, 2024



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

The Lord Jesus still responds to desperate faith

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Father, thank You for Your power to rescue me. Help me to trust You to meet all my needs

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction"

(Mark 5:34 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Dec 10, 2019)

Series: Examining Our Faith

UNIT 2: The Measure of Faith

NEXT WEEK

Faith of an Anointer
(Luke 7:36-39, 44-50)

Faith of a Centurion Luke 7:1-10

Lesson Background and Introduction

The physical context of today's lesson is the village of Capernaum (see also the parallel account in Matthew 8:5-13). It was located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, a freshwater lake in northern Palestine. Bible students are accustomed to thinking of Jesus as being from Bethlehem (John 7:42; etc.) or from Nazareth (Matthew 2:23; etc.). But a case can also be made for the claim that he [Jesus] was from Capernaum because the village became something of a headquarters or base of operations for his preaching and teaching tours of Galilee (4:13; Mark 2:1); notice that Matthew 9:1 refers to Capernaum as Jesus' "own town." Capernaum was important enough to have had some Roman soldiers stationed there, as today's lesson reveals (compare Acts 10:1). The need to safeguard the tax money collected may have been the reason. It is possible they were under the authority of Herod Antipas, the Roman client "tetrarch" of the Galilee region from 4 BC to AD 39 (Luke 3:1). Capernaum has been the site of some remarkable archaeological discoveries over the last hundred years. A lavish synagogue dating from the fourth century AD likely sat on a foundation floor from the time of Jesus. This place could be the location of the synagogue of Capernaum where Jesus taught (Mark 1:21). Also uncovered nearby is a large house that has become a Christian pilgrimage site. Evidence suggests this was the actual house of Simon Peter, a place where Jesus resided while in town (Luke 4:38).

When we offer up intercessory prayer for the healing of a friend or family member, are we exercising the faith of the centurion? Without a doubt, any forthcoming healing will be a "remote healing" since Jesus is not here in the flesh, so that is not the issue. The issue, instead, is one of believing in Jesus' authority. That's the essence of what we might call "Centurion Faith." Our intercessory prayers must have more than a "maybe" or "hope so" tone. When we fix our eyes on Jesus, we demonstrate "Centurion Faith" that God will answer our prayers. When we are distracted from him and wring our hands in despair, nothing good happens (Matthew 14:25-31). Jesus taught, "If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer" (21:22). The centurion's background speaks loudly. He had cultivated friendships within his community for years. He had treated his neighbors with respect and honor, not pulling his rank as a Roman officer to get his way. In many ways, the significant gap between the Jews and Gentiles of Jesus' day was bridged on that day in Capernaum. The centurion had used his wealth and influence to protect the Jews and provide a gathering place for their study of Scripture. He played "the long game" in the most sincere and authentic manner possible. When his household was in need, his character and actions were remembered. Can the same be said of ours?

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Plea of Faith (Luke 7:1-3)

A critical need (1-2)

A critical need that seeks the pity of God (Mark 9:21-24)

A critical need that seeks God to be willing to help (Luke 5:12-13)

A critical need that seeks the One who is the only way into Heaven (Luke 13:23-25)

Hearing about Jesus (3)

Hearing about Jesus through preaching (Rom 10:14)

Hearing about Jesus through the Word of God (John 20:31)

Hearing about Jesus through witnesses (Acts 26:17-18)

Hearing about Jesus through the gospel (Rom 16:25)

Requesting Jesus' healing (3)

Requesting Jesus' willingness to heal (Matt 8:2-3)

Requesting Jesus' healing through touching (Matt 9:20-22)

Requesting Jesus' healing through His mercy (Matt 9:27-29)

Works of Faith (Luke 7:4-5)

Works of worthiness (4)

Works of worthiness through doing good works (Col 1:10)

Works of worthiness through God's calling (Eph 4:1-2)

Works of worthiness through godly conduct (Phil 1:27)

Works of good deeds (5)

Works of good deeds through living a good life (1 Peter 2:12)

Works of good deeds done in humility and wisdom (James 3:13)

Works of good deeds in family life (1 Tim 5:10)

Works of good deeds through the encouragement of God (2 Thess 2:16-17)

Wisdom of Faith (Luke 7:6-8)

Wisdom of humility (6)

Humility through grace (James 4:6)

Humility before God (James 4:10)

Humility by considering others interest before ours (Phil 2:2-4)

Humility that is not false (Col 2:17-19)

Wisdom of acknowledging Jesus' authority (7-8)

Authority because God put all things under Jesus' power (John 13:3)

Authority because Jesus has all authority (Matt 28:18)

Authority because God exalted Jesus above all powers (Eph 1:20-21)

Authority Jesus is Lord of all (Phil 2:9-11)

God's Response to Faith (Luke 7:9-10)

Recognition and commendation of faith (9)

Faith beyond cultural boundaries (Matt 15:25-28)

Faith without wavering that God has the power (Rom 4:19-22)

Faith combined with love that is growing (2 Thess 1:3-4)

Faith that starts with giving of ourselves (2 Cor 8:1-5)

Response of healing (10)

Response of healing because Jesus is the only power that heals (Acts 4:7-10)

Response of healing because of humble prayer and repentance (2 Chron 7:14-15)

Response of healing through faith (Acts 3:16)