

Understanding Jesus: Authority

Most of us enjoy gaining understanding in various areas of our lives. Home improvement skills. Cooking. Investing. Parenting. Exercise. The list goes on! New understandings in such areas are beneficial to our lives. There is probably no quest for knowledge and understanding, however, more important than understanding Jesus. More than any other area, this knowledge can change our lives for good. This past Sunday we started a new sermon series from Luke 7 and 8 entitled: "Understanding Jesus." May God use this sermon series to grow our faith. Today, we begin by considering Jesus' authority.

Opening Discussion: What is an area of knowledge that you've been seeking to grow in recently?

Read Luke 7:1-10

1. Who was the centurion? What do we know about him generally? specifically?
2. What request does the centurion make? Why do you think he made his request by sending some Jewish elders?
3. How do the Jewish elders speak of the centurion to Jesus?
4. Consider the centurion's request in verse 3. Then look at his request in verses 6 and 7. What is the difference in the two requests? Why do you think he changes what he asks?
5. How is he expressing faith in Jesus in verse 7? What is it that he believes about Jesus?
6. Verse 9 says that Jesus marveled at the centurion's faith. Why?

Steve said:

If we want to understand Jesus, ***we have to understand his authority***. In other words, we have to have faith, believing that he has authority to act. He has “say” over every circumstance we face.

7. Do you genuinely believe that Jesus has a say over every circumstance you face? Why or why not?

Steve said:

To those of us who are spiritual insiders, there is an implicit warning in this passage. Jesus said that he hadn't found faith like the centurion's in all of Israel. The people of Israel were spiritual insiders - they read the Scriptures, they went to church every week, they had a rich spiritual heritage - but the vast majority of them didn't have a simple, childlike faith. Something similar can happen to us: we can lose the childlike faith that we had when we first came to Christ; we can develop a rather sophisticated faith that doesn't really believe that Jesus has authority over the circumstances we face. We can forget what it's like to live by faith.

8. What's your response to what Steve says here? Do you sense that this warning is important for you at this time of your life?
9. Where in your life right now do you need to trust that Jesus has all authority and that he is radically for you?

Practicing the Rhythms of Rooted this Week

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Daily Devotion: Read Luke 7 and 8 several times this week.



Prayer: Spend time praying about the questions, “*Am I relating to Jesus as someone who has all authority? Am I living by faith?*” Ask God to show you what is true of your heart.



Repentance: If you find that you do not always relate to Jesus as someone who has all authority in your life and therefore you don't always trust him, confess this to God.