

Faith and Authority

Have you ever thought it was possible for Jesus to be amazed at **your** faith – that Jesus might notice your thoughts, prayers, or actions and say, “There is a person with great faith!”? Today’s passage suggests that it is possible and that having such great faith is rather simple. Great faith is really about who Jesus is, not who you are. And so today, let’s continue to consider who Jesus is and trust God to give us great faith!

Opening Discussion: What is a faith situation that you are currently facing?

Read Luke 7:1-10

1. What do we know about centurions? Who were they?
2. How does the centurion express faith? What does he believe about Jesus?
3. Jesus commends the centurion for his faith. Why?
4. How does it affect your thinking about the possibility of you having “great faith” (v. 9) knowing that it is a Roman (i.e. gentile) occupier of Judea that Jesus commends?
5. What would it be like to have Jesus “marvel” at your faith (v. 9)? Do you think it is possible for you to exercise the kind of faith that Jesus marvels at? Why or why not?

Steve said:

Today's passage would have us ask ourselves, "Do I believe that Jesus has authority over _____?" In other words, does He have legitimate power to intervene in my situation, or is it beyond His reach? If you don't believe Jesus has authority in your situation, you won't exercise faith. If you don't have faith, God is limited in what He will do. I am not implying that **all** of our trials can be traced back to a lack of faith . . . The whole of Scripture suggests that we should be very cautious in making such pronouncements . . . Nevertheless Scripture is very clear that **sometimes** a lack of faith is what does keep God from working in specific places and situations.

6. What does it mean to believe that Jesus has authority over your faith situation? And how does believing this help you come to God in faith?

7. Do you ever find it difficult to believe that your faith matters (i.e. that God responds to people who have faith)?

Steve said:

The application is really quite simple. **First**, identify a situation in which you need God to work, a situation that really matters, a situation that's beyond your control. **Second**, go to the Scriptures and become convinced that Jesus has authority over the situation that concerns you. **Third**, exercise faith by praying in faith, believing that Jesus has authority.

8. Regarding your faith situation, what are Scripture that can help you become convinced that Jesus has authority over that area?

9. What do you sense is the main action that God is asking of you in light of this study?