

BIBLE STORY: JESUS HEALS THE CENTURION'S SERVANT
Matthew 8:5-13

Central Thoughts

- Jesus is the Savior of all people
- No one deserves the gift of salvation; we are all unworthy sinners.
- Jesus' Word alone has the power to save.
- To be a Christian is to trust in Jesus' Word more than anything else.

Discussion Questions

Where is Capernaum?

On the northern coast of the Sea of Galilee.

What is a Centurion?

A Roman Officer in command of 100 troops.

Is the centurion a Jew or a Gentile?

A Gentile

What is the malady of the Centurion's servant?

He is paralyzed and dreadfully tormented.

Why does the Centurion approach Jesus and lay before Him his servant's infirmity?

The Centurion believes in Jesus as the Savior of all people.

How does Jesus confess that He is the Savior of all people, both Jew and Gentile?

He says that He will come and heal the servant and, at the end of the narrative, He says that "many will come from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."

What does it mean that "many will come from the east and the west"?

It means that the Gospel will call many to faith in Jesus and that the gift of salvation is for all people of every race, tribe, nation, and family.

How does the Centurion respond to Jesus' promise to come to his house and heal his servant?

He says that he is unworthy to receive Jesus. This means that he confesses himself to be a sinner who cannot save himself. But if Jesus would simply speak a Word, then his servant would be healed.

What does Jesus' Word give?

Forgiveness, healing, comfort, salvation, and life.

Does anyone deserve Jesus' help and salvation?

No

Why does Jesus die for sinners and save them from their sins?

Because He loves them.

How does the Centurion confess faith in the almighty power of Jesus' Word to give forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation?

He compares the power of Jesus' Word to the power of his commands as a Roman officer to do exactly what Jesus' Word says.

Even though no sinner deserves or has a right to Jesus' help, how did Jesus actually come into the Centurion's home and heal his servant?

By His Word

How does Jesus come to us with forgiveness, life, comfort, peace, healing, and salvation?

By His Word

Who are "the sons of the kingdom" that are cast out into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth?

Those who have known the gift of salvation in Jesus and the power of His Word but have rejected it in unbelief and impenitence.

What is the “outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth?

Hell

After the Centurion confesses his faith in Jesus and in the power of Jesus’ Word, what does Jesus say to him?

“Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.”

Who did the Centurion believe in?

Jesus and the power of His Word to save unworthy sinners.

Meditation on the Bible Story

To believe in Jesus is to trust in His Word above all things. He is the Savior of all people, both Jew and Gentile alike. No one deserves the gift of salvation. We are all unworthy sinners for whom Jesus died upon the cross. Those who reject Jesus and His Word, and who do not believe that they are sinners who need His salvation, are cast off into outer darkness, not because Jesus hasn’t died for them, but because they do not want Him. The Gentile Centurion comes to Jesus because he believes in Him. He confesses his sins and his unworthiness and he clings to Jesus’ Word alone as the source of forgiveness, life, and salvation for himself and for his paralyzed and tormented servant. This is the faith that Jesus commends at the end of the story. As a military commander, the Centurion’s orders had the power to cause his soldiers to do exactly what he said. In the same way, Jesus’ Word has the power to save. By using this example, it is as if the Centurion was confessing, “If my commands have the power to cause my soldiers to act, then how much more does Your Word, O Lord, have the power to heal and save?” To believe in Jesus is to trust in His Word. It is by His Word that He comes to us. It is by His Word that He calls us to faith. It is by His Word that He forgives our sins and gives us every gift of salvation. His Word is a Word of grace and forgiveness. We don’t deserve it, but in love for us He wants us to receive it. This is why Jesus said, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!” Though he was an unworthy Gentile sinner, yet the Centurion, by the grace of God, came to believe that Jesus was His Savior and the Savior of all sinners.

Prayer on the Bible Story

Heavenly Father, we give thanks to You that by His Word Jesus comes to us with the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. As the Centurion believed in Jesus’ Word above all things, give us firm faith in our Savior’s Word, so that we might know the certainty and the comfort of eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



Healing the Centurion's Servant

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