**Great Faith According to Jesus**

*Matthew 8:5-13*

**Introduction**

1. ***“When Jesus heard it, He marveled…” (Matthew 8:10)*** – the Son of God, the eternal Word incarnate, what could make Him marvel?
2. **Matthew 8 (and Luke 7)** records the incredible faith of a Gentile that made Jesus marvel.
3. **What about his faith was so impressive? If something impresses Jesus, and leads to a commendation by Him, it is something we need to value, and pursue!**
4. Context
5. The Initial Plea **(vv. 5-6)**
   1. Centurion – captain of 100
   2. Gentile (context) – **Luke 7:5** – a pious Gentile, worshipper of God. (like Cornelius)
   3. Servant’s condition **(v. 6)** – ***“was sick and ready to die” (Luke 7:2).***
   4. ***“pleading with Him” (v. 5)*** – ***“to come and heal his servant” (Luke 7:3).***
   5. Why would he think Jesus capable of such a thing? – ***“he heard about Jesus” (Luke 7:3)***.
      1. Heard about Jesus entering Capernaum.
      2. Previously, no doubt heard about Jesus’ teachings and miracles – **cf. John 4:46-54** – earlier in the same city Jesus healed a nobleman’s son without going to his location.
         1. ***“Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe” (John 4:48).***
         2. **Even the testimony of this seems to have given the Centurion enough evidence.**
6. The Startling Objection **(vv. 7-9)**
   1. **Jesus’ reply (v. 7)** – what an exhilarating response this must have been to hear! – the reaction of the Centurion is even more startling.
   2. Now he says, “No! Don’t come under my roof!” **(vv. 8-9):**
      1. **I’m not worthy (v. 8a)** – “The centurion showed his great faith…chiefly in his lofty conception of Jesus as compared with himself. The less faith we have, the less we esteem Jesus, and the more faith we have, the less we esteem ourselves. As Jesus rises, we sink in the scale of our estimation.” (McGarvey, J. W.. The FourFold Gospel or A Harmony of the Four Gospels)
         1. Luke records that this humble disposition was of such a great degree that he had sent servants to react with Jesus – ***“Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You” (Luke 7:7a).***
         2. A military man of authority said he was not worthy.
         3. This was due to contrast with real authority and power 🡪
      2. **Only speak a word (vv. 8b-9)** – “The centurion showed his great faith partly by believing that Jesus could heal by a word” (ibid.)
         1. **(v. 9)** – he, being a captain of 100 men, understands authority.
         2. Jesus had healed, and the centurion made the connection that His authority was even over nature!
         3. Not only through touch, or physical presence, but THROUGH A WORD! (As the centurion – “go and do,” and one under another’s authority goes and does.)
7. The Divine Reaction **(vv. 10-13)**
   1. Jesus is struck with wonder and admiration for this man’s GREAT faith **(v. 10).**
      1. ***“not even in Israel!”*** – the nation to whom the Lord committed the oracles of God, and did great things for (**cf. Romans 3:2; 9:3-5).**
      2. **This man displayed greater faith than they! – REMEMBER THE NATURE OF HIS FAITH – HUMBLE RECOGNITION AND FULL CONVICTION IN JESUS’ AUTHORITY.**
   2. **(vv. 11-12)** – a prediction of Gentile conversion by Jesus, and the spiritual demise of unbelieving Jews (**cf. Romans 10:18-21**).
   3. Jesus rewards faith **(v. 13**) – the Centurion was healed the very moment.
8. Great Faith:
9. Reveres the Authority of Jesus
   1. **The Centurion sent to Jesus because he knew He had the authority to heal, but was very cautious and reverent in encounter with Him.**
   2. Just before in context – **Matthew 7:24-29** – sermon on the mount concluded.
      1. **(vv. 24-27)** – Jesus boldly asserts great weight and significance to His teaching – a matter of life and death, stability and instability, of wisdom and folly.
      2. **(vv. 28-29)** – the people were astonished, in large part because of the contrast of His teaching with the spiritual leaders.
      3. ***“He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes”***
         1. **The Scribe** – the Law of Moses says… (it is written, Psalms, Prophets, etc.)
         2. **Jesus** – ***“But I say to you…”*** – **Matthew 5:20, 21-22, 27-28, 31-32, 33-34, 38-39, 43-44**
            1. **Matthew 7:21-27** – then He concludes with the implicit claim of authority as Divine Judge!
   3. Jesus has been given all authority and judgment from the Father – **John 5:22, 27; 12:48; Matthew 28:18**
      1. Great faith does not simply accept that Jesus is a wise man by diligent study – **John 7:15**
      2. Great faith is convicted in the fact that Jesus is eternal truth, and came to bear witness of it as King – **John 14:6; 18:36-37**
      3. **If Jesus says, then it is so, and it must be submitted to.**
10. Trusts Jesus’ Authority is Exercised for Our Good
    1. **The Centurion did not avoid Jesus because of His authority to destroy but sent for Jesus because of His authority to save!**
    2. Jesus clearly taught that His authority would bring judgment, and punishment – **John 12:48; Luke 12:4-5, 8-9**
    3. However, He came to save! – **Luke 9:54-56; 19:10; John 6:68-69**
    4. The authority with which He speaks means we are to fear His words (what disobeying them will accomplish), but trust that they are meant for our good – **Matthew 7:24-27**
    5. Hiss commandments are not burdensome, but for our good – **1 John 5:3; Matthew 11:25-30** (humility yields and submits to Jesus’ authority, knowing it is a light burden of rest)
11. Adheres to the Pattern of Authority Revealed by Jesus
    1. **The Centurion understood authority through experience. He communicated everyday with soldiers and servants through his word, and they always knew what to do after saying it. (cf. Matthew 8:9)**
       1. Did he always give directives, or reveal his desire to them in the exact way?
       2. Did his communication as a man of authority differ at all from how he was taught to communicate in the first place?
    2. Great faith hears Jesus’ authorized word, and reacts as Peter – **Luke 5:5**
       1. What does that word look like, sound like?
    3. How did Jesus communicate His authority?
       1. Direct Statement – **John 4:21-24;** Command – **John 15:14**
          1. Appealed to those of God – **Matthew 22:36-40**
       2. Approved Example – **John 13:12-17**
          1. Appealed to divinely approved example of others – **Matthew 12:1-2, 5**
       3. Necessary Inference (inescapable conclusion) – **John 12:32-33** (meant Gentiles too, but didn’t explicitly say so)
          1. Appealed to necessary inference – **Luke 20:37-38**
          2. Deducing necessary inference is a part of ***“knowing the Scriptures” (Matthew 22:29).***
    4. **Many have, and continue to reject this pattern, but if we have the faith Jesus desires and is pleased with, we will hold fast to the pattern – 2 Timothy 1:13**
       1. **Jesus must only say a word, and whatever it is, even by implication, bears the weight of Divine authority.**

**Conclusion**

1. ***“When Jesus heard it, He marveled…” (Matthew 8:10)*** – Jesus was amazed, impressed, and filled with admiration for the centurion’s faith – a faith that understood authority, and that Jesus had great authority.
2. ***Mark 6:1-6 – “And He marveled because of their unbelief.”*** – The only other time Jesus marveled, He did so for the opposite reason – we know what kind of faith Jesus is pleased with. Do we have it?