

worthy" - The word worthy in this case means sufficient, and he was declaring that he did not feel that he could offer to Jesus the hospitality that was due to him. His home was not a worthy home for Jesus to enter. It is almost certain that the Centurian knew a great deal about Jesus, for he had heard him say "foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head". He was familiar and he realized that his home was not good enough for Jesus. We also connect with his opinion of himself that he was not worthy himself to come into the presence of the Lord.

The third and final opinion that we discover here is that of our Lord. And he will declare that he was a man of great faith.

Let us now come and look at the matter of the Centurians and the opinion of himself. He said, "I am unworthy". He spoke of himself in a self effacing faith. He first sent the Elders to the Synagogue, which he himself had given to the people. It may be on the human level, he imagined they would have more influence with Jesus that he personally would have had. Then when he found the Lord was approaching his dwelling he sent some of his friends, most probably of his own kin, with the request that he would speak the word of healing. All this was faith in action.

JESUS SURPRISED

We consider the story of the Centurian, which is also recorded in Matthew 8:5-13. There seems to be some (discrepancies) between the two, but they disappear when you carefully consider these two. They talk about the Lord dealing with a (sick slave) of the Centurians. In Matthew it does appear as though the Centurian came to Jesus himself, and presented his request, and received the answer. However, in Luke, it distinctly said that he sent the elders. We know that there is an old latin saying, "What one does through others, one does himself". There can be no reasonable doubt that that is the explanation of these two accounts. Luke claims in his preface that he traced the course of all things accurately, which means that he sifted his materials.

In all liklihood this man did not even meet Jesus at all, but reached him through others. We see this scene in the New Testament which reveals the atmosphere of the Roman Government. The early stories are connected with Roman taxation, and down through the latest glimpse of history in the New Testament is that of a house in Rome, <sup>in</sup> which there was a prisoner named Paul. So we are conscious of the Roman Empire all the way through.

We constantly come in contact with the Roman armys. We read of Legions, of Bands, of Officers, of Centurians, and

soldiers, and in the N. T., we are brought into contact with seven Centurians, and the remarkable thing is that everyone of them presented seems to have been of a fine type. They were all men living under discipline, and that in itself is a valuable thing.

I. The Slave - This story is peculiar in that this slave did not come to Jesus in his own behalf, but rather there was another who interceded for him, and who had great convictions about it. This man was paralyzed, accompanied by greivous pain, and from the account of Matthew, we discover this, and from the account of Luke, we discover that the man was really considered ready to die. The he had this paralysis, palsy, and that it had been a long time, and a dangerous illness, and we probably have here a case of progressive paralysis that was attended by muscular spasms that perhaps affected the respiratory system, and where death was manifestively immanent and inevitable. In such a case there would be symptoms indicative of great distress as well as immediate danger to life.

An instant cure, and certainly one that was perfected at distance from the patient was something that was never dreamed of.

We know that most of his cures were done in the presence of the patient, where their friends were present, but this healing of this slave was done at a distance, and here was

power that could arrest disease of a mortal soul, and recall life by a word spoken at distance.

II. The Centurian - The character of the Centurian may be brought out under many, many points. We shall consider some of them. There was great concern he had natural affection and care for his servant, a slave that was especially valuable and dear to him, just as a son.

He was a man of reverence, for such religious light as he had already obtained. He loved the nation. He had built a synagogue for them, so the testimony says.

He thought of himself in a modest way, as a gentile and a soldier, unworthy personally to go to Jesus or to have Jesus come to him.

As we think about this Centurian, we are going to discover that there were three opinions expressed here. First, the opinions of the rulers of the Synagogue. They said he was worthy. It is good to remember here that he was not a Hebrew but a gentile, and that he had proven himself to these elders. He has built us our Synagogue, showing that he was an outsider. This was further proof that of the fact that when our Lord spoke of him, he mentioned his faith. The Elders said that he was worthy.

The second opinion that we shall discover as we think about this man is the opinion of himself. He said, "I am not

He was a Commander in command of certain troops. He was a superior commander, perhaps at Caesarea, and the word of his command was sure of obedience.

You remember the song - Onward comes our great commander, cheer, my comrades cheer. Now this is the idea of the commander as in our English language, in usage of the word, its a strong one. We speak of a commanding mind, a commanding will, a commanding presence, a commanding voice - it means exceptional power, it suggests authority and power. We know that at the command, of for example, a train, the power to stop it. He can stop and at a certain signal, he must stop. As the Pilot of a steamer has authority, those under him have the power, but he needs to know the course and decisions to follow it. Therefore a real commander will have authority, power, knowledge, skill and moral force.

For example, Napoleon was reviewing his troops in Paris he let fall the reins of his horse upon the animal's neck, and the proud charger galloped away before the rider could recover the bridle. A common soldier ran out from the ranks, caught the reins and stopped the horse, and placed the bridle again in the hands of the Emperor. "Much obliged to you Captain", said Napoleon. The man immediately believed what the Chief of the forces had said. "Of what Regiment, Sir?",

5. We think about the work of humility. We look at the tops of mountains, they represent pride - nothing grows there. See how bare and barren they are, and then look at the quiet low lying valleys. They represent humility. You see how beautiful they are in their greenness and fertility. A farmer went with his son out to the wheat fields to see if it was ready for the harvest. "See Father", said the boy, "how straight those stems hold up their head. They must be the best ones. Those that hang down their heads as if they were ashamed cannot be good for much, I'm sure." The farmer plucked a stalk of each kind, and said "Look here my boy - this stalk that stood up so straight is light-headed, and almost good for nothing, while this that hung its head so modestly if full of the most beautiful grain."

Jesus must have been awful busy, but he was never to busy to hear the response of a man's need or call. This man sent, he felt himself unworthy. He said, "I am not worthy". He felt that it was unnecessary for Christ to come in person, that Jesus could speak and say the words.

A man said "After what I have done, I have no right to pray or expect God's help". And we might certainly say that is true, and it's wonderful that he realizes that, but no person is worthy of the goodness of God. The most hopeless person is the one who feels he can buy the favor of God.

through good works. The Bible tells us by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God not of works, less any man should boast.

(None of us are deserving) <sup>Prophet</sup> all of us are in the position of the son who said, "I am no more worthy to be called thy Son".

We all need to stand beside the (penitant publican) in the temple who prayed, "God be merciful unto me a sinner".

We need to say with the (Psalmist), "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart-Psalm 51:17".

Another thing that impressed me with this Centurian was that (he believed) that Jesus could heal this sick slave without being present. We remember how James said, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick". - James 5:15. There the faith required was not in the sick, but rather in the person praying.

Of course if the sick person also expressed the faith along with the one praying for him, that is all the better. But it is not always essential. The same is true in reference in praying for any need of another, if we pray with proper faith.

Have you ever had anyone to request you to pray for them? These I take very seriously, and over a period of time I have seen so many results from prayer. When we pray for a person, we ought to first try to fix clearly in mind that person. Then we need to seek and get clearly in mind, the true Christ, concentrating on just those two together. Then we can see

that there is some reason why that person does not take hold of the healing hand of Christ. If that person had the faith he should have, he would probably not need my prayers or your prayers. So we add to our faith, and we lift him or her up actually into contact with Christ.

We do not know all about how this law operates - neither can I explain the laws about how a television works, but I can sit in your home by the television and watch a program in New York. Because I do not understand television, is no reason why I cannot use it. And here is the great power of prayer - we have seen prayer answered, and we have prayed for people who have been sick, or who have been spiritually undernourished, and we have witnessed God's healing.

This man believed that (just a word) would do it. One word from Jesus. For he himself, he said "I also am a man set under authority". Being a trained officer in the army, he recognized the meaning of power and authority, and he realized that Christ was a man of authority and power in the realm of the spiritual. The Centurian could (issue a command) and set in motion the operation of certain laws of the government, so he felt that Christ could speak the word and move certain spiritual laws into activity.

strong convictions or extraordinary sensations, and they are not willing to accept the bare word of God in Christ Jesus as the basis of faith.

He was convicted that Christ could cure his servant (at once) and that Christ could heal him from (a distance). When we consider this man when he heard of Jesus - perhaps he had heard of the numerous healings - how favorably does he contrast with those who saw many miracles yet did (not believe). He makes (no claim) to his own right to the ministry and the mercy of Jesus. Jesus uses this for a warning - reminds his hearers that their national privileges would not secure salvation. His faith in itself was so great that the Lord had not found the like. It was so prompt, it was so profound, it so honored the grace of God, and when we consider that this man was a Roman soldier, and as Matthew tells us he was the Morning Star of western faith. That he was the first among many who would come from the west and sit down in the Kingdom of God - and they have come.

This man was consecrated, wrapped up in faith, for he was a man of authority and he knew how to obey, he knew how to carry out a command, and he did not come half-heartedly or grudgingly, in a timid way that trusts a little, and then have some misgivings, but he was in total belief. He

And Napoleon delighted in the confidence and belief of this common soldier, that his word counted, and he replied, "Of my guard, of my guard," - and he rode away. As soon as the Emperor left, the soldier laid down his gun and said, "anyone who likes may take it over." And he left and headed for the company of staff officers. And so the soldier became the Captain of Napoleon's Guards - at his word, at his command.

William Prince of Orange was invited to come to England and be King. He promised certain offices to his friends. He gave them written pledges, but when he offered such a pledge to the man who was to be his Lord Chamberlain, that nobleman replied, "Your Majesty, your word is sufficient. I would not serve a King, if I could not trust him, and in his word." That saying pleased the King, and he who showed such faith in him became his favorite minister. Should we not be willing to take the word of the King of Kings? The Centurian knew that he could (say go) and that it would be done. And he knew also that Jesus had the power and the authority. The name of this man does not even appear, but he knew that there was authority, and that back of the throne there was power.

III. Jesus is surprised. We come now to look just for a moment at the surprise of Jesus. He was surprised at the (faith of this man). We know that he recognized his faith, he

understood it, he appraised it for its full worth.

Of course, we know that Jesus knew all things, but we read into this an element of surprise. We are told that he marvelled. He wondered - he marvelled at this faith.

There are two things here that create a marvel in the mind of our Lord. the faith of this Centurian, and the unbelief of his fellowmen in Nazareth. He recognized the greatness of this mans faith, and He drew attention to it, and he spoke of it. He appreciated the value of this mans faith. For Jesus had recognized this Centurian, one who had 100 soldiers under him in the court of King Herod, and who was a superior officer; And over him was the Emperor himself with the final authority, with their system as they had it. And under him a slave, and a soldier was not permitted to say he had a will of his own, his time was not his own, his dress was chosen for him, his food was chosen for him. Under the laws of Rome no soldier could hold any possessions, indeed he could have said he had no will of his own. This Centurian was one under authority - he revealed it in the life he was living, he showed it in his submission to authority, which fit him for the kind of work he was doing, and every march he took and every action he performed he did under authority.

We must not forget that he had soldiers under him, that he exercised authority - that he said to one go, to another

come, to another do this, and no question could be asked.

His was 100 men, and he had the same obedience from the 100 men as he yielded to the Emperor himself, being under authority

of And this is the man whom Jesus said, "I have not found so great a faith in all Israel." This man did not say to Jesus, "I am a man under authority, but rather I also am a man under authority. The importance of that little word also is of supreme importance in order to understand what he said to Christ. It recognized the fact that Christ was under authority and therefore was in authority.

We must not forget that Jesus in his earlier ministry at Capernaum has healed many, he had healed the nobleman's son by a spoken word. At any rate this man shows a remarkable apprehension of the truth concerning all that Jesus was doing. He ever acted and spoke in the consciousness of the throne of God, and of his relationship thereto.

Christ knew all the man had gone through to arrive at faith. A man who is not a real christian sometimes shows a trust that might well put to shame some christians.

This man had had few advantages, but he seized the first opportunity with earnest, sincere faith. This man was not a Jew, but he was a gentile, a Roman, a soldier.

This man did not ask for a sign. Some want to feel some

brought even <sup>A</sup> the small things to the knowledge of Jesus.

Little faith never carries any trouble to God, but great faith will carry every trouble.

It was great because of the need mentioned - his servant was sick of the palsy, grievously tormented, afflicted in body and soul, a helpless incurable, as far as human skill is concerned. I picture him as something like one of our janitors was telling us about his own experience some years ago, that he was down in bed and sick, ill, not expected to live, and for two years stayed in bed, and lost weight - nothing but bones. He said that God healed him. Now there's nothing too hard for God. Great faith lays hold on the greatness of Christ.

It was great when I think of the request he made - speak the word only, no visit was asked, there was no veritable things or means to be trusted, only his word - his great faith asked for no signs - promises alone. It was great when we think of the argument used - "I am not worthy, I am under authority" - and he was not proud or boastful, but he was humble, he was childlike.

It was great because of the results that followed - As thou has believed, so be it done unto thee. Christ answered in full - nothing was left to be desired.

It was great because of its commendation. "I have not found so great a faith." Jesus knows exactly the measure of our

allowed for nothing. It was no half-way trust with him.

This was sole dependence upon Christ and his will. He came to Jesus for a cure that was needful for his slave. Their faith was real, and many people would have thought that they needed some external or personal contact. But this man's faith rose above all these restrictions. He needed no help of sight to encourage him, but believing that this disease would depart at the word of Jesus.

How slow we often are to trust the Lord until we can see how and by what means He can deliver us. If we trusted Him whole-heartedly and thoroughly, willing to leave all in His mighty and gracious hands, we would never perscribe to Him how we would have deliverance come.

And Jesus will never forget this man's humility - his humble heart. He was worthy, they said that he was fit to make a personal application to Jesus. The rulers and Jews thought highly of him and they thought that he was a great man, but he said that he was not even worthy to have Jesus come under his roof. And Jesus was mindful of this man and Jesus had never seen such great faith.

How did this man get this faith? Where did it come from?

He was not born into a home with christian training in early childhood, as with many of us - perhaps, he knew nothing of

godly teaching and godly parents. How did he get this faith, what were the steps?

First - He became acquainted - heard about Jesus. We are not told so in the story, but it must have been true or else he would not have sought Jesus' help. Maybe he met Jesus personally on one of his tours, or maybe he had heard about him, or he went to hear him preach, or he had witnessed some miracle that Jesus had performed. Yet he got acquainted somehow with the power and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. That was the first step.

Second - We read about another thing that helped faith was - He had supported the Church. The Jews said he "Hath built us a Synagogue". Now, no doubt if he was interested in building a church, that he perhaps had attended some, and he had put a lot of his money and his effort into the building of a church building - and it not only enlarged their building, but enlarged this man's faith.

The third thing that helped him in his faith was humility.

"I am not worthy to come in your presence - I am not worthy that you should come into my home." Now a conceited person never finds Christ, and what is worse he never even desires to find Him. As long as we feel that we can get along by ourselves, we don't need faith in Christ. Faith is developed out of our realization of our own weakness.

The next step into his faith was this man believed in other people. We see his concern for his sick servant, a slave. We know he was interested in other people because he helped them build a church, and he was unselfish, not thinking about himself. I doubt whether many people have faith who are constantly critical of others, and who hold spirits of envy or ill-will in their hearts. They naturally will not feel the right attitude toward God, and will be unable to walk in faith.

Our Lord was surprised although the most remarkable instance is at the beginning of the chapter - He marvelled at all in the most surprising thing of all. The records shows us that Jesus marvelled at this officers faith, and on another occasion in Mark 6, verse 6, he marvelled at their unbelief. All men do not have faith, some have no faith at all - Mark 4: 40, some have little faith - Mark 6:30, but here is a man who had great faith, and it was great for many reasons.

It was great when we think of who he was a Roman Centurian, a Jew. How would his faith grow so great if he had not believed all that he had heard of truth concerning Jesus. Great faith is often fostered in the midst of greatest difficulties.

When we think of the occasion of it, his slave was sick, he believed that Christ had compassion for the poor and the ailing, and he was not like the Pharisee, but his great faith



faith - what a precious thing it is in his sight. He does  
love to be trusted. He saves all who believe - Acts 13:39.

Without faith it is impossible to please him - Hebrews 11:6

Story in one of our publications about  
a man who was undergoing an operation  
for Tongue Cancer.

Every thing prepared - operating room -  
Dr. talking with just before sent to sleep - you  
may not talk any more, or speak another  
word in any sense word like to say before  
operate?

Sliver - "Thank God for Jesus"

He can still heal  
" . . . " Forgive sin  
" . . . " Bless your life

stata - discipulus - mat - He comes, take - read others  
late saying "What one does through others, one does himself"

He did not visit Jesus.

(Atmosphere) Roman Government, Taxation, paid  
Prisoners. Arms, legions, Bands, officers, Centurians,  
fine Type - disciplinarian.

I. The SLAVE V. 2

another interceded for. Paralyzed, pain, ready to die, long  
time, dangerous illness.

Progressive paralysis - Muscular spasms, great distress, immediate  
danger -

Instant cure never dreamed of -  
Most of cures done in presence of patient, - at distance.

II. The CENTURIAN

Great concern, natural affection  
Man of Reverence, loved nation, Built synagogue.

Three Opinions

(v. 4-5) 1. The Ruler of Synagogue. Said he was Worthy, not a  
Heb. but Gentile. Proven self to the Elders. Built Synagogue.

(v. 6) 2. of Himself "I am not Worthy" - Means "sufficient"  
to give hospitality to Jesus - my home not good enough.

Self effacing faith - Said Jesus & when Lord approaching  
~~to him~~ he said to him saying "Speak the word".

Humility - Mt. Tabor high, Valleys rich.

Farmers & Son Wheat fields "How straight these heads are, must  
be bent, those hang heads down in shame" - right headed -  
hanging full beautiful grain.

man - "after what I have done, I have no right to pray or expect God's help"

no one worthy of goodness of God.

Prodigal - NOT worthy - son.

Parable of the Fig Tree "God be merciful -"

Psalmist "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken & contrite heart"

Believed God could heal Slave - James 5:15

"Prayer of faith shall save the sick"

"Ever have person request you to pray for them"  
Don't take seriously - fix in mind - get power & work with.

Believed one word would do it - "also a man under (V.8)

authority. "Trained officer, recognized power of"

Speak set in motion laws of government  
& Speak " " " " Spiritual.

Commanding mind, will, presence, voice

Napoleon - Troops Paris - horse - common fool - "much obliged to you captain" said Napoleon. Believed "of what Regiment Sir?" of my guard - said yes - take - capt. Saunders.

Wm. Prince of Orange invited King of Eng - gave written Pledge. Pledge told of his. One then told Chamberlain - "your Majesty, your word is sufficient" "I would not sure a King, if I could not trust him, & in his word."

Opinion our Lord - surprised. Faith this man.

understood it - appraised it.

Marveled a Prince: faith, & belief.

Man 100 sol. under - This Slave - no will of own, Dress chosen for, food chosen for, not hold possessions, submission

could say so, to another come. Man had few advantages, Not Jew - a Gentile, Roman, Sol.

Did NOT ask a sign.

convinced Christ could heal his servant at once & at a distance, No external, or personal contact needed.

He made no claims of any rights - Total belief. No half trust. We are slow.

Where did he get this faith? Not born with him.

1. Became Acquainted with Jesus.  
sought Jesus help. May heard preach.

2. Supported Church  
Built Synagogue - interested - money - embraced faith. Stillman - had up to Marcus. His blessing of God than 40 without - but something in ch. - ~~was hard~~

3. Great Humility  
Not worthy - convicted person never finds it, no sail.

4. Believed in Others  
Sick Slave - unselfish - This do away critical, ill willed hearts.

your marvel - all do not have it, some no it at all, some little it.  
Great Because of Good Miracles: palsy, helpless, incurable. Gaius - 2 yrs - Lord healed. Great 7 laps hold equators of

Great Because of Request Made - not ask to visit or sign

Great Because of Results Followed - V.10

Great Because of its Commendation - Precious -

story publications - Tongue operation - "Thank God for Jesus" - still heal, forgive sin, bless your life -