



Sermon Series: Owning a Faith that Matters.

To be used with Session 2: Yielded Faith

Sermon Title Possibilities: So Great a Faith

Scripture: Luke 7:1-10

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study “Yielded Faith” this sermon will explore the components of a great faith as described by Jesus himself. Jesus encounters the faith of a centurion ruler which prompts him to mention to his disciples that this variety of faith has not been witnessed by him in Israel. This sermon will reveal to the listener the characteristics of great faith that receives a special commendation from God in flesh. The centurion utilizes his self-awareness as ruler as a lens into the authority of the divine.

Introduction: According to Josh Packard of Springtide Research Institute, many Gen Z that attend churches largely disagree with institutional organized religion. This would suggest that the dynamics of authority has shifted from current generations, and we have the rise of the none’s and unaffiliated from religion. However, the article highlights a surprising find. Many individuals in Gen Z value mentorship and relationships with adults that care about them. “They also respond to “relational authority,” which means authority that is not based on hierarchy or titles so much as a genuine interest in young people as individuals. Four in 5 Gen Z members surveyed said they were likely to take guidance from adults who care about them. The report pinpoints five values that characterize this relational authority: listening, transparency, integrity, care, and expertise.”¹ Luke 7 reveals a centurion ruler that believed in God but was unaffiliated with Judaism. The relational authority and reputation of Jesus had grown throughout Capernaum. The centurion had great faith that God could heal his sick servant, then as a result he acted on that faith. This sermon serves as a reminder for those discouraged about future generations. The power of God that rests in the gospel narrative will never lose its authority over sin. It is our responsibility to continue to share about the goodness of God.

¹ Jana Riess, “Gen Z is lukewarm about religion, but open to relationships,” *Religious News Service* (12-21-20)

1. A Great Faith exhibits unwavering tenacity (Luke 7:1-3).

Luke introduces the centurion ruler as a man of compassion that had deep concern and care towards the people of God. The reputation of Jesus had spread far and wide, but the centurion viewed Jesus as belonging to the Jewish people. He decided to send his message through Jewish elders. Being a man with authority, he displayed a level of tenacity that assumed the best of Jesus unlike many critical Jewish leaders. The scriptures suggest that the servant was highly valued by the centurion, and he believed that Jesus could heal without having witnessed this power firsthand. This type of faith should be coveted in the life of the church today. Do we believe that God has the power to heal? Why don't we exhibit the characteristics of that belief? Hebrews 11:1 defines faith in this way, "now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen."² The centurion exemplified this description of faith, because his request depended on the execution of others.

2. A Great Faith flows from an upright temperament (Luke 7:4-7).

The equivalent today to the centurion would be an army captain. This would mean that he would be a man of integrity and proven ability. However, he was also highly regarded by the Jewish elders. They pleaded to Jesus on his behalf by expressing his deep commitment to the Jewish people. It seems in scripture that this ruler helped secure a synagogue that the people of God had a place to worship. He displayed a temperament that others around him felt comfortable bringing his case to Jesus. The rulers told Jesus he was worthy, but the centurion was more keenly self-aware of his condition before God. The most fascinating part of this story is that the centurion simply gave an order to request healing for his servant. The elders took it upon themselves to plead his case. Character counts. The Christian's sins are covered by the blood of Christ, but our witness to the world should exemplify a similar ethic like that of the centurion. Would we any leaders that are men or women of the faith plead to God on our behalf?

3. A Great Faith possesses trust in God's ability (Luke 7:8-10).

Proverbs 3:5-6 states, "trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight."³ Luke gives the reader a good indication that the centurion was a man who had a healthy view of God. But even more impressive was that he had a healthy view of himself. As a man not of Jewish heritage, he didn't consider it necessary for Jesus to physically come to heal his servant. He had faith that with just a word from Jesus his servant could be healed. This was a contrast from many of the people of Israel flocking to the teachings of Jesus and looking for signs, healings, and miracles. This seems to be the reason why Jesus commended the

² [*Christian Standard Bible*](#) (Heb 11:1). (2020). Holman Bible Publishers.

³ [*Christian Standard Bible*](#) (Pr 3:5–6). (2020). Holman Bible Publishers.

faith of this centurion. The type of faith that Jesus values is faith that sees him more clearly as Lord of All.

Conclusion: As followers of Jesus Christ, we are transformed by Christ and have access to an unlimited supply of God's grace and mercy. The centurion recognized his own authority and related this attribute towards a higher view of God. We must commit to spend time in God's word that we could know him more fully. As Gentiles, we can rejoice that we have been grafted into the family of God. We also have the spirit of God resting on the inside of us. Let's live our lives in constant gratitude by being obedient to offer Jesus to those in need.

Author Bio

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