



## Lenten Reflection for Friday, February 24, 2023

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Matthew 8: 5-13

When Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress.' And he said to him, 'I will come and cure him.' The centurion answered, 'Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, "Go", and he goes, and to another, "Come", and he comes, and to my slave, "Do this", and the slave does it.' When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, 'Truly I tell you, in no one\* in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' And to the centurion Jesus said, 'Go; let it be done for you according to your faith.' And the servant was healed in that hour.

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Today's reflection is by Matthew Siegel.

The passage about Jesus and the centurion immediately makes me think of being a parent. It took me a bit more time to wonder what it means for experiencing God in my life.

As for parenting, I'm always asking my son and daughter to do x, y, and z and with a variety of results. Although I aim for compliance, I don't exactly get that all of the time. "Doing what you're told," in my household has become something of a big idea, but I haven't really thought about the phrase in terms of faith – like in terms of the passage's meaning. In considering the passage some

more, I can see that I'm really asking my children to rely on their trust in me as their loving father to know what is good for them. I feel happy when they carry out my request, versus frustrated when they do not. That my kids do what I ask makes me awed that that they put such faith in me, whereas I'm humbled when they won't do as I say.

I know that my whole hearted trust in God is uneven, not unlike in how my children follow my commands. And, I think, this is what it means for me to feel God's presence in my life. There is tension involved in trying to feel more belief and more love and trying to act more thoughtfully and lovingly. That striving toward a more perfect-like loving relationship is my goal in my family and with the divine.

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Matthew Siegel lives in Windsor Terrace with his amazing wife, Cindy, and their beautiful, smart children, Penelope and Benjamin. Matt works as a psychologist in private practice. He enjoys cycling, snowboarding, and being in the outdoors.



