

Matt. 8:5-13, "Never Too Far" by Rev. Paul Hudson

The Miracles of Jesus in Matthew Summary, Sermon Notes Handout, Daily Devotional, Study Questions, & Crossword, 9/13/26

Summary

Big Idea

Jesus, the compassionate King whose authoritative word reaches the distant and paralyzed, welcomes all who come in humble faith rather than relying on status, heritage, or worthiness.

Matthew 8:5–13 is not chiefly about the servant, but about a Gentile centurion and Jesus. The miracle is a springboard for deeper truths about the kingdom. Burdened by love for his suffering servant, the centurion comes with humility, confessing he is unworthy. His concern for another shows that great faith is not self-focused; it is driven to Christ by deep love and concern for those carrying burdens too heavy to bear.

The centurion recognizes Jesus' kingly authority: the King need only speak, and healing comes immediately across distance. Jesus marvels because this outsider sees him more clearly than many in Israel. The coming feast will gather people from east and west through faith, while heritage and religious identity cannot substitute for personally bowing before Christ in humility, trust, and faith.

Keys and Themes

1. A Burden for Another

The centurion's paralysis was a burden of love for his servant. Great faith is driven to Christ by deep concern for others, not merely by concern for oneself.

2. Humble, Not Entitled

Though powerful in Rome and a Gentile outsider, the centurion says he is unworthy. Jesus embraces those who come in humility and trust, irrespective of background.

3. The Authority of His Word

The centurion understands that a commander's authority works across distance. Jesus' word heals immediately without physical presence, revealing that he is not merely empowered but divine.

4. Wholeness for the Stuck

Christ's word reaches bodily dysfunction, emotional numbness, anger, sorrow, and spiritual distance. No perceived distance or paralysis can limit the King's power to find and free us.

5. Faith, Not Heritage

Many from east and west will join Abraham's feast because they trust the King. Church background, Christian values, and religious identity cannot replace living faith in Jesus.

Sermon Notes Handout

Sermon Title: Never Too Far | **Scripture:** Matt. 8:5-13

Point 1: A Burden of Love

Fill in the blank: “The burden of love and concern for others is a mark of great ____.”

Question: Whose burden are you carrying?

Notes:

Point 2: Humble Trust

Fill in the blank: “He saw his unworthiness in the presence of the ____.”

Question: Will you come without entitlement?

Notes:

Point 3: The King’s Word

Fill in the blank: “His word commands ____.”

Question: What limits have you placed on Jesus?

Notes:

Point 4: Wholeness for the Stuck

Fill in the blank: “Christ’s word has the power to completely ____.”

Question: Where do you feel paralyzed?

Notes:

Point 5: Welcomed by Faith

Fill in the blank: “The Lord looks for faith not ____.”

Question: Are you trusting Christ personally?

Notes:

Reflection Question: Will you bring your burdens and the burdens of others to Jesus with the centurion’s humble trust?

Next Step: Pray this week for one distant or hurting person, trusting Christ’s authoritative word.

Family Discussion Question: How does the centurion show us what it means to trust Jesus?

Daily Devotional

Sunday — A Burden That Drives Us

Scripture: Matthew 8:5–7

The centurion came to Jesus because his beloved servant lay paralyzed and suffering terribly. He carried a burden too heavy to bear, yet it was not primarily about himself. The sermon calls this the beginning of great faith: deep love and concern for another person drives us to Christ. The kingdom of heaven is not about ourselves only. Bring the people you love before Jesus, especially where you feel helpless. A burden of love can become prayer that refuses to leave them alone in their suffering.

Reflect Questions:

1. *Who needs you to bring their burden to Jesus?*
 2. *Is your faith mostly focused on your own needs?*
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Monday — No Entitlement Before the King

Scripture: Matthew 8:8; Isaiah 42:3; Psalm 103:8–14

The centurion had authority, standing, and every reason to act entitled. Instead, before Jesus he said, “I do not deserve to have you come under my roof.” He knew he was a Gentile and far outside God’s chosen people, but that knowledge did not stop his approach. He came with humble trust in Jesus’ mercy. This is the King’s nature: he does not break the bruised reed, and he remembers that we are dust. Honest unworthiness is not a reason to stay away; it is the place from which we humbly come.

Reflect Questions:

1. *Where has entitlement shaped your approach to Christ?*
 2. *Will you bring your need with humble trust?*
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Tuesday — Just Say the Word

Scripture: Matthew 8:8–9

The centurion understood authority because he lived under it and exercised it. A commander gives an order, and distance does not weaken that command. So he saw that Jesus did not need to enter his house or stand beside the servant: “Just say the word.” His faith recognized Jesus as the divine King whose authority is greater than any earthly commander’s. Jesus is not simply a healer endowed with power. His authoritative word heals immediately, even from a distance. Do not measure his help by what you can see or control.

Reflect Questions:

1. *What does “just say the word” reveal about Jesus?*
2. *Where are you limiting Christ’s authority?*

Wednesday — His Word Reaches the Numb

Scripture: Matthew 8:13; Psalm 107:19–20

The servant was healed at that moment, but the sermon presses deeper into the wholeness Christ brings. His word can reach those who are spiritually or emotionally paralyzed. It can bring feeling to numbness, soothe the soul stuck in anger, and penetrate sorrow that has settled deep inside. Even when you feel as far away from God as possible, his word is able to find you and free you from paralysis. Psalm 107 says he sent out his word and healed them. Open your heart to that word and trust his authority.

Reflect Questions:

1. *Where do you feel numb, angry, or locked up?*
 2. *Will you open your heart to Christ's word?*
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Thursday — A Place at the Feast

Scripture: Matthew 8:10–12; Isaiah 25:6–9

Jesus was amazed that this far-off Gentile saw him with such great faith. Then he looked ahead to the kingdom feast, where many from east and west will sit with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Isaiah saw that same feast: death swallowed up, tears wiped away, and people rejoicing, “We trusted in him.” The invitation is wide, but entry is not secured by heritage, cultural background, church attendance, or Christian values. The Lord looks for personal faith in King Jesus. Bow the knee to him in humility, trust, and faith.

Reflect Questions:

1. *What cannot take the place of personal trust?*
 2. *Are you resting in heritage or in Christ?*
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Friday — No One Is Too Far

Scripture: Matthew 8:5–13; Romans 10:12–13

The centurion was a Roman officer, a Gentile, and someone who knew he stood far outside God's chosen people. Yet Jesus did not treat his distance, background, or unworthiness as a barrier to mercy. Jesus sent his healing word into the centurion's house. Romans says there is no difference between Jew and Gentile: the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him. This passage challenges the thought that anyone should be considered beyond the Lord's presence. Faith and trust invite the mercy of Christ.

Reflect Questions:

1. *Who have you treated as too far from Christ?*
2. *How does Jesus challenge that judgment?*

Saturday — Standing in the Gap

Scripture: Matthew 8:5–6, 13

The centurion did not only recognize Jesus' authority; he used his access to Jesus for the sake of a suffering servant. That is the sermon's missional response: stand in the gap for those distant from Christ, broken, or paralyzed. A missional Christian has a heart that breaks for the lost. We bring burdens in prayer and invite all people into the peace and wholeness of Christ's kingdom. We also teach and exemplify Christ's authority in our own lives. His word is as powerful as his presence, so pray and speak of him with confidence.

Reflect Questions:

- 1. For whom can you stand in the gap?*
- 2. How can you display Christ's authority this week?*

Study Questions

Read Matt. 8:5-13 and listen to the sermon "Never Too Far" (9/13/26)

Observation

- 1) What burden brought the centurion to Jesus in Capernaum?
- 2) How did the centurion describe his servant's condition?
- 3) What did the centurion ask Jesus to do instead of coming home?
- 4) What future gathering did Jesus describe for people from east and west?

Interpretation

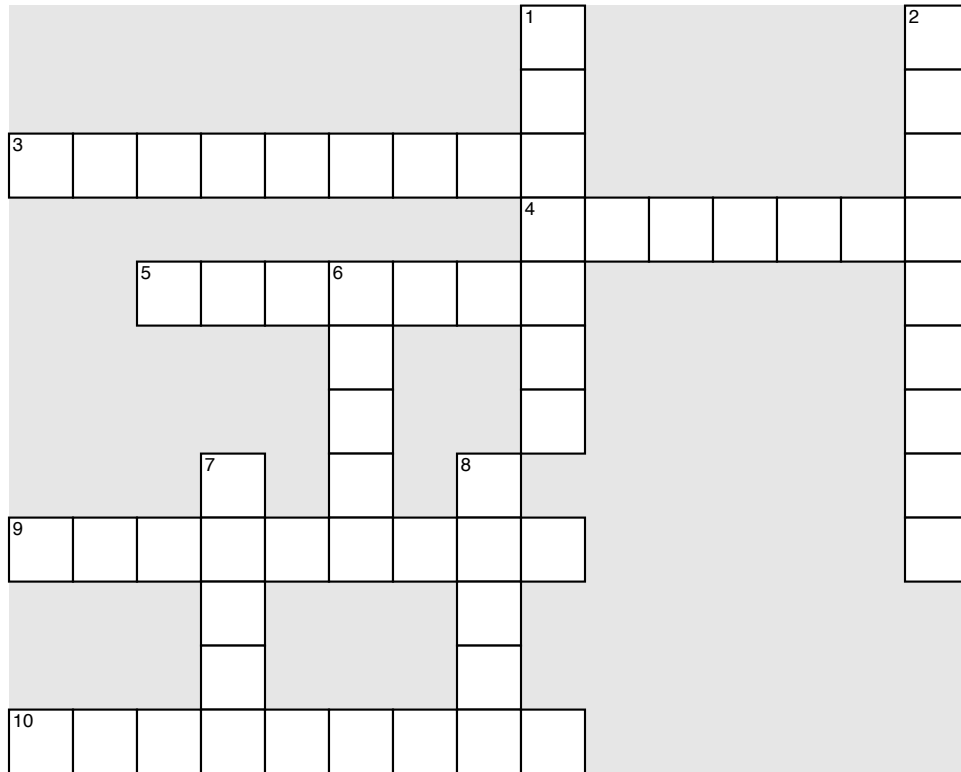
- 1) Why does the sermon say the servant's healing is not the story's main focus?
- 2) How does the centurion's military authority illuminate Jesus' authority?
- 3) Why does Jesus praise this Gentile's faith over faith found in Israel?
- 4) What warning does Jesus give to those relying on kingdom status?

Application

- 1) Whose paralyzing burden can you bring to Jesus in prayer?
- 2) Where might entitlement keep you from approaching Christ with humility?
- 3) What limitation on Jesus' authority do you need to drop?
- 4) How can you welcome outsiders into Christ's peace and wholeness?

Crossword Puzzle

Never Too Far | Matt. 8:5-13 | 9/13/26



Across

3. Roman officer who sought help for his servant
4. Outsider background of the Roman officer
5. An order that works despite battlefield distance
9. Condition causing terrible suffering in the household
10. The Kingly power the officer recognized in Jesus

Down

1. Heavenly reign revealed through Jesus' miracles
2. Town Jesus entered when the officer approached
6. What humble faith invites from Christ
7. What Jesus praised above heritage or status
8. Future gathering for trusting people from every direction

Crossword Answer Key

Never Too Far | Matt. 8:5-13 | 9/13/26

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³ C	E	N	T	U	R	I	O	N											P		
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⁹ P	A	R	A	L	Y	Z	E	D											M		
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Across Answers

- 3. CENTURION
- 4. GENTILE
- 5. COMMAND
- 9. PARALYZED
- 10. AUTHORITY

Down Answers

- 1. KINGDOM
- 2. CAPERNAUM
- 6. MERCY
- 7. FAITH
- 8. FEAST