

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Remind yourself of one meaningful concept from last week's sermon, "The Uncommon Community" Luke 6:12-38. Why did this concept capture your attention?

READ Luke 7: 1-10; 36-50

DISCUSS and REFLECT

Faith is the primary concept in this passage. *"The stories of the centurion, the widow of Nain, John the Baptist's perplexity, the sinful woman, the women who minister to the disciples—all have to do with the presence or absence of faith. Faith involves humility, gratitude and service"*¹ Very seldom in the Gospels, does Jesus give an accolade to anyone. It then becomes an occasion for us to ponder this. While the miracle of the healing of the Centurion's servant was a momentous occasion, healing is not actually the focus. The primary lesson was that a Roman soldier had faith. *When the woman came to see Jesus at the home of a Pharisee, she stepped out in faith. Jesus' response to this was "...Your faith has saved you; go in peace" (Luke 7: 50).*ⁱ The attention is given to the response. While Jesus is both a teacher and a healer, he is the foundation of our faith.

Jesus came to Capernaum and was met by a delegation of Jewish elders asking Him to go to a Roman Centurion's house. A beloved servant of the Centurion was gravely ill and these elders were acting on behalf of the Centurion. This was odd because Jewish leaders were not very friendly with Roman soldiers. The hand of God was definitely evident in this situation; consequently, Jesus immediately left with elders traveling to the Centurion's home. As they approached the house, other elders appeared. The Centurion, perhaps having second thoughts about being so presumptuous as to send elders to ask Jesus to come to his house to heal his servant, sent someone with a message for the Savior:

*"Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Therefore, I did not presume to come to you. But say the word and let my servant be healed" (Luke 7:6).*²

These words were a reflection of the Centurion's faith. Ironically, this Centurion's faith is the only incident recorded in gospels where Jesus "marveled." This is because it concerned a Roman soldier and his faith. Jesus was full of amazement that a Gentile soldier would be such a man of faith and who realized Jesus was God's Son. This man had the greatest faith in all of Israel. He believed in Jesus. The words of Jesus: *"I tell you, not even*

*in Israel have I found such faith" (Luke 7:9)*³ Scripture teaches us that our faith is a gift from God. *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word concerning Christ" (Romans 10:17).*⁴

*Why do you think that a Centurion was chosen to exhibit faith in the Savior?

* Do you think this situation made a difference in the lives of those who witnessed the Centurion's affirmation of faith?

* Have you ever been part of an incident such as this? Did it help to affirm your faith?

APPLY

Spreading and sharing this faith in Jesus requires us to be effective servants. In order to be effective servants, it behooves each of us as Christians to help and encourage others to read the Word. Then we need to pray that the concepts read become imbedded in the hearts and souls of those who need the glorious majesty of our Savior. So, how do we accomplish this? Faith is an integral part. Every Christian should have a strong desire to reach others with the Good News. Compassion plays a big role in our spreading the gospel and exhibiting faith, becoming an effective servant of Christ. Jesus had compassion for all. He showed compassion for the Centurion's servant (Luke 7:9,10); for the sinful woman who humbly came to Jesus seeking redemption, (Luke 7: 36-38); the healing of the demon possessed man in Capernaum (Mark 1: 21-28; Luke 4: 33-37); the woman with internal bleeding whose faith led her to Jesus, (Matthew 9: 20-22; Mark 5: 25-34; Luke 8: 43-48); raising his dear friend, Lazarus, from the dead, (Mark: 5: 21-43). These are only a few miracles performed by our compassionate Jesus.

In the book of Hebrews, we find these words:

*"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Luke 11:1)*⁵

*"By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible" (Luke 11:3)*⁶

¹<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IV-P-NT/Luke/Monuments-faith-Christological>

² The Holy Bible, New International Version

³ The Holy Bible, New International Version

⁴ The Holy Bible, New International Version

⁵ The Holy Bible, New International Version

⁶ The Holy Bible, New International Version

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Luke 11: 6)⁷

- What is your definition of faith?
- Has your faith ever been tested? If so, in what way and how did you handle it?
- In what ways do you depend on faith?
- Can one “see” faith?

This concept of faith can be a bit complex and complicated; nevertheless, it remains the cornerstone of our relationship with Jesus Christ. We cannot “hold” faith; we cannot “see” faith, yet belief in God and His Son fills us with this hope and leads us to a personal relationship with the Almighty.

MEMORIZE

Luke 7:50

Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

⁷ The Holy Bible, New International Version