

Just Speak the Word

Faith M.B.C., Murray, KY, Sept. 16, 2015

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Mat. 8:5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

Mat. 8:6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

Mat. 8:7 And Jesus saith unto him, **I will come and heal him.**

Mat. 8:8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.

Mat. 8:9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

Mat. 8:10 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, **Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**

Mat. 8:13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, **Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.** And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

For the most part we read about Jesus' miracles and we are amazed and they often set us to thinking about just how powerful the Son of man was in His days in the flesh. Truly, in His miracles, He constantly reminds us that He was indeed Immanuel, God with us, yet I am tempted to think that for most of the time we miss an equally greater message that our Lord must certainly have meant to give us in these miraculous deeds. It is about that lesson I want to try to speak today.

The lesson I think we may often miss is the one we might learn if we simply asked the question, "How far away from this faith have we drifted as we strive to trust on Christ for what we need and hope to accomplish?" Having asked such a question very sincerely, I think we then get into a great place to learn that lesson I mention. That is, a lesson about calling on the Lord and trusting the Lord explicitly.

As I preach this, I want all of you to know that what we can learn from this account today is needed by us all. From the least to the greatest, every child of the Kingdom can think on what Jesus teaches here by this exchange with the centurion and come to a greater understanding of how high a standard of faith we may yet aspire to. Oh, how we need to grow in grace and knowledge of the truth that we may likewise arrive at the plateau to which this centurion had gotten! That we might find in our own selves an abounding faith that enrolls the Lord Jesus Christ, (the great power of God, and giver of all good things) in coming to our help in time of need!

I. Bringing the need to the Lord and presenting a case - v.5

- The centurion **made the effort** to seek out Jesus
 - ▶ Our failure to see the power of Christ displayed may often be in simply not seeking Him

out. “Seek and ye shall find” is not just about “stuff” to be discovered.

▶ We have no doubt the centurion **was being diligent**, and the biblical principle about being able to lay hold on blessings demands it. I want to point us to scripture about that:

Jeremiah 29:11-13

- He **did not go to** Caesar, nor a doctor, nor a priest of the temple
- Last year, I lost my pistol while I was scouting for turkey hunting, so I went back to the woods and I walked over every inch of ground I had ridden on the ATV during that trip, but I never found that gun. Well, several weeks later I was turkey hunting and went down a wagon road I had not been on back when I scouted. When I got to the end of that road and stepped off into the bottom I walked right over the top of that pistol. When that happened, I suddenly was made to realize that I had not searched in the right place for that gun. I had ridden that ATV high up along the edge of the bottom during one pass through but had forgotten that I had been that close to the edge of the bottom. I had been searching in the wrong place to find what I was looking for!
- We are reminded that the woman with the issue of blood had spent everything she had going to doctors, but found no cure until that moment that she touched the hem of Christ’s garment. She went to the right place.
- He that is well does not need a physician, but he that is sick; yet, a physician without the power of the Great Physician commissioning his efforts is, after all, just practicing medicine.
- This same principle applies in every action we take or every source of help we try to access. Without our Lord’s power intervening, our efforts will be futile, but Christ never fails and when our pursuit is according to His will, we won’t either.
- Note that this person with this request was **not a church member**
 - ▶ I bring this out because we have several instances in the N.T. where unchurched people laid hold of the faith in Christ to come to Him with requests for Him to do great things...and their requests were granted.
 - ▶ I point this out because it should be a lesson to us about the graciousness of the Lord in answering the truly believing heart.
 - ▶ I also point this out because it may be a great tool from scripture to cause us to realize that when it comes to praying, it is not something that a church **MUST** do for you, nor is it something that only a church or church member **CAN** do. It is something that those who have faith in Christ can do.
- Now, concerning this thing of **bringing the request to the Lord**: James put it so pointedly, yet so accurately: “Ye have not because ye ask not” (Jas. 4:2)
- In making a case before the Lord, Job gave us an outline for this kind of spiritual work: Job 23:4 I would **order my cause** before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.
 - ▶ Making a case means **identifying the need** and **giving it the priority** it deserves - v.6 - “my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.”
 - A man sinking in quicksand can yell much more loudly than a man who is sitting comfortably in his living room
 - I have happened up on animals like rabbits out the woods being killed by a predator, and they can get serious about screaming.
 - One of the most compelling scenes we may have ever seen is that of a person standing at the window of a burning building calling for help.

II. vv. 7-9- Understanding **His willingness and ability** to answer us, and accurately valuating the far-reaching power the Lord has to do the impossible.

- Our faith needs to believe that Christ has no limitation
 - He answers the skepticism of Sarah about having a child in her old age with a rhetorical question: **Gen. 18:14** “Is any thing too hard for the LORD?”
 - It was a physical impossibility for the Red Sea to part (**Exodus 14**).
 - It was a physical impossibility for water to come out of a desert rock (**Exodus 17**).
 - It was a physical impossibility for a quart or so of oil and a handful of meal to produce barrels of meal and gallons of oil for at least two years (**1Kings 17**) .
 - It was a physical impossibility for fire to burn up water and rocks on the altar set up by Elijah (**1Kings 18**).
 - It was a physical impossibility for Lazarus to come walking out alive from a tomb after being dead 4 days (**John 11**).
 - It was a physical impossibility for Peter to walk on the water (**Mat. 14**).
- **Christ did not give a qualifying answer** (no requirements with the Lord if approach to Him is absent any double standards - obviously the centurion came with an open heart and no reservations)
- **John 14:13** *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*
- Emphasize the **centurions consciousness and belief** about the far-reaching power of the Lord Jesus
 - **Mat. 8:8-9** The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. **9** For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

IV. vv.10 & 13- Having the **faith to have the blessing**

- The Lord exposes the fact that the greatest faith is not necessarily attached to religious circles (“**no not in Israel**”)
- You will want to note that when He said “not in Israel” this had to include His disciples
- **Mark 9:23** “all things are possible to him who believeth.”