

JESUS CAN HEAL

Preschool
Week 1

PARENT BIBLE STUDY

Read: Matthew 8:5-13

A powerful officer of the Roman army begged Jesus to heal his sick servant. This was an unlikely scene. As a Roman soldier, this centurion embodied the oppression and suffering of the Jews. Jesus, as well as the crowd following him, must have felt the tension of this moment: the oppressor asking the oppressed for help. But despite what he may have represented, this centurion understood authority. Not only did he recognize Jesus as someone who had great authority, he was willing to trust that Jesus' authority could accomplish the impossible. The Bible tells us that the faith of the centurion actually impressed Jesus.

The centurion showed authentic respect for Jesus as well as sensitivity towards Jewish traditions. He knew he wasn't fit to welcome Jesus, a Jew, into his Gentile home, so he didn't demand that Jesus come to him. Instead, in great faith, he trusted Jesus could heal his servant from a distance. Considering his status in the hierarchy of power within the Roman army, it is amazing that the centurion humbled himself enough not to just ask Jesus for help, but to "beg" him. He also addressed Jesus as "Lord" further showing he understood the magnitude of who Jesus was. The centurion understood that Jesus was powerful and important. He knew he had nothing to prove and everything to gain from trusting Jesus fully.

It probably seemed crazy to the crowd watching Jesus that they should learn something from the faith of a Roman soldier. But that is so consistent with God's character, isn't it? Over and over again God chooses unlikely people to become examples of how to follow Jesus well and with great faith. What can we learn from the centurion?

How does the faith of the centurion encourage your faith?

Get honest with yourself and ask: Do you believe Jesus is who he says he is? Do you believe he can do anything? If yes, do you pray with that faith?