

Luke 7:1-10 – The Faith of the Centurion

Many people say “I have faith”. But what is faith? In Israel the people had God's law. They were God's chosen nation. They had the temple and the worship. They prayed each day. They went to the synagogue and listened to preaching. But in this part of Luke, Jesus says that none of them had faith like the Roman soldier had. Jesus told the crowd to look at this man's faith (v9). They would see something that they had not known in Israel. So let us look at it too!

1. A kind and generous faith (v2-5)

Jesus returned to Capernaum – the town in Galilee, near Lake Galilee, where he stayed. When he arrived, some people came to see him, sent by a Roman centurion. (A centurion commands 100 soldiers). The centurion had a dying servant. He did not send him away, but cared for him as his own family. His faith showed itself in love (Galatians 5:6). Those who love God must also love God's creation – men and women, boys and girls. He loved his neighbour. He also loved God's people. He had built a synagogue for the nation (v4-5). His faith made him to become generous. He knew that the unseen God saw him. Those who love the unseen God must love God's people – the church. If God has chosen them, how can we not be kind and generous to them?

2. A faith that overcame (v3)

Many things challenge faith. This centurion was a Roman – part of a powerful empire. The Jews were weak and conquered. The Jews were often also troublesome. Could they really be God's chosen people? It was also hard for the man to meet Jesus; as Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews) did not mix. But the centurion's faith overcame these challenges. He had probably read the Scriptures. The Spirit showed him the truth. He heard of Jesus and his teachings and miracles, and believed that this was the power and truth of the true God.

3. A bold faith (v3)

After he had heard and believed, the man then acted. There are many people who know the truth, but they do not respond to it. This centurion did not remain home in laziness. He did not despair and give up. He believed and therefore he moved to action. He believed that if he got through to Jesus, then there was hope – do you? Have you been to him?

4. A humble faith (v4-7)

True faith is both bold and humble. We can be confident because God is full of mercy. He loves to save sinners. But we must be humble, because we are sinners and he is holy and awesome. He hates sin. The Jews said that this man was worthy – but he said he was not. He saw that Jesus is the truly worthy one. He was not worthy to have Jesus come to him at all. We have lost all our worthiness because of sin. We cannot demand or claim from God as if he owed us. We must come before him as empty, helpless beggars (Revelation 3:17), pleading for mercy. Have you come as a sinner to Jesus?

5. A great faith (v8-10)

The centurion believed that Jesus could do what he asked. He believed Jesus did not need to come, but simply to speak. Jesus' word can do all things! He saw that Jesus has all power over creation. Do you believe that? Have you asked Jesus to save you?