

# The Man with Such Great Faith

## Introduction

**Luke 7:1-10** Found also in Matthew 8.

**CENTURION:** Captain of 100 men in the Roman Army.  
Carried a staff of vine wood as his badge of office.

1. **This is one of the four centurions in the New Testament.**
  - A. **There was one at the cross.**

Matt 27:54 So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

- B. **There was Cornelius.**

Acts 10:1-2 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.

Acts 10:22 And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."

- C. **There was Julius, who took Paul to Rome.**

Acts 27:1 And when it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to one named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment.

Acts 27:42-43 And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land,

2. All seem to be men of noble qualities.
3. Someone once said that every man is really 3 men.
  - A. The man his enemies think he is.
  - B. The man his friends think he is.
  - C. The man he thinks he is.
4. I would add a fourth man: The man he **REALLY** is.
5. In this particular case we have what:
  - A. His Neighbors think of him
  - B. His own estimation of himself
  - C. The Lord thinks of him - What he really is.

### **What the Neighbors Thought**

1. Based upon what they had seen.
  - A. He was a public man subject to daily inspection.  
(Being in charge of many men)
  - B. An alien, representing a hated, foreign power (verse 9). "Not in Israel". (Probably born a Pagan)
2. They approved of him.
  - A. "He is worthy". (verse 4)
    - 1) They thought highly of him; unlike Jesus' charge in Matthew 7:6.

Matt 7:6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

- B. "He loves our nation". (verse 5)
  - C. "He has built us a synagogue". (Verse 5)
3. What would our neighbors say about us?
- A. It matters what others think.

1 Peter 2:11-12 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that **when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.**

- 1) **(verse 12 explained:)** In respect to the very matters for which they reproach you, they may see by your meek and upright conduct that there is really no ground for reproach!

- B. We are to be lights.

Phil 2:15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

- C. Be a good neighbor.  
**Matthew 5:16**

## What He Thought

- 1. Based on the examination of his own heart.
  - A. This is a sincere self estimate.
  - B. He says, "I am not worthy". (Verses 6-7)
    - 1) "To come under my roof."
  - C. Just the opposite to what they said. **(they said "is worthy" - verse 4)**

**2. Why did he say this?**

**A. He knew himself better than they.**

**1) Expression of great humility**

Matt 23:12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

1 Cor 2:11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

**B. He was judging himself by a higher standard than they were.**

2 Cor 10:12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

**1) He was not comparing himself with men but rather counted his unworthiness to be in the presence of the almighty Lord.**

**C. It is possible that he alone recognized who was about to come under his roof.**

**3. A thorough self examination will profit all of us.**

**A. "Examine yourselves".**

2 Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you are disqualified.

**B. "Let a man examine himself".**

1 Cor 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

## What Jesus Knew about Him

### 1. The Lord "Marveled". (Verse 9)

#### A. Jesus admires his faith.

- 1) Verse 8 - He **KNEW** what Jesus could do. He was under authority and knew how to obey and likewise he had authority to command and all would obey him as he did with his superiors.

#### B. Only one other instance recorded in which Jesus "marveled".

- 1) And then it was at unbelief!  
**Mark 6:4-6**
- 2) Miracles would not even cause these to believe in Him - because they knew him as a "relative"

### 2. This man's "great" faith. (Verse 9)

#### A. "Not even in Israel" (Jesus meant - I have not found such an instance of confidence among the Jews.)

- 1) There is also "little" faith.

☛ The disciples had "little" faith when the storm came up and covered the boat in waves.

Matt 8:26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

- 2) There is also "dead" faith.

James 2:17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

3) How did this man get his faith?

- a) He no doubt got his faith as we do today - in that we have heard the gospel and believed.

**Romans 10:17**

3. What about your faith?

- A. Would the Lord marvel at how great it is?
- B. Or at the lack of it?
- C. All of us must have faith in God our father.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Heb 10:39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Gal 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

## Conclusion

1. Each estimate of the centurion was true from each person's viewpoint.
2. However, it is the Lord's approval that counts - that is what we **REALLY** are!

