

## The Centurion's Servant

The physician was going to operate on a very rich man who always wanted the best of everything. "I don't think there will be any problem," said the doctor, "This operation is routine. We can even use a local anaesthetic." "No," shouted the millionaire. "Don't use a local. Get something imported."

You loved ones that's exactly what Jesus is, He is something imported or Someone imported. And because we all have a sin problem the only physician who can heal us from the disease of sin is the Lord Jesus Himself.

Who knows what a cent is? An American coin How many cents are there in a dollar? 100 How many years are there in a century? 100 "Cent" means a hundred. In the Roman army, there were officers called "centurions". Each centurion had command of about a hundred soldiers. An army has a lot more than a hundred men in it.

How many do you think there would be in a whole army? A thousand? Ten thousand? Maybe more. So an army would have lots of centurions in it. The big bosses of the army, like the generals, would have a lot of centurions under them. The centurions had to answer to these bosses, but they also had to tell the soldiers under them what to do.

In an army, everyone has to do what they're told all the time. If you're at war, and someone doesn't do something, people can get hurt. The whole battle can be lost. The commanding officer doesn't always have time to explain his reasons, and he can't do everything himself, so the men under him have to trust him and obey their orders.

When the army trains new soldiers at boot camp, they are trained to do whatever they are told all the time. When the general gives an order, he doesn't have time to watch that it gets done. The orders get passed down the chain of command, and it gets done.

Our lesson today is all about a centurion officer who lived in an area called Capernaum. **Matthew 8:5 "In Capernaum, there lived a centurion -- a Roman army officer who commanded about one hundred men." Matthew 8:5 "The centurion had a servant who was very ill. He was paralyzed and in great pain."**

I remember when I was much younger and I got really ill and ended up in bed for a few days. I had the chicken pox and it was horrible, hot fever and itching all over and just covered in cameline lotion to help take the itchiness away. But I also remember just last week when I ended up in bed for a day or two with a fever and no energy.

You see loved ones even the strongest adults can become very weak when they get sick. And that's because whether we like it or not disease and sickness are very strong. But in our story today we are going to see that Jesus is much greater than any sickness or disease.

**Matthew 8:6 "When Jesus entered Capernaum; the centurion went up to him and said, "Lord, my servant is at home in such pain that he can't even move." Matthew 8:7 "I will go and heal him," Jesus replied.**

Now you would think that the centurion would be grateful for Jesus' offer to go and heal his servant and maybe he is. But loved ones there is a huge lesson we can all learn from what this man says next.

**Matthew 8:8 "But the officer said, "Lord, I am not worthy for you to enter my house. Just give the order and my servant will be made well."**

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Here is a very powerful man who recognises that he is helpless to help his servant. Here is a very powerful man who recognises that he is not even worthy for Jesus to enter his house. And guys we too need to know our limitations. There are some things which we cannot do so we need to let Jesus take care of it for us. [Do you want more children and adults to be a part of this congregation?](#)

Then you we need to allow God to add to his number because we don't have the power to do that. [Are you worried about something and that worry is taking over your life?](#) Then you need to allow Jesus to deal with that worry because we don't have the power to control tomorrow.

The centurion realised that he couldn't do anything to help his servant but notice something else here too. He recognised the power of Jesus; he recognised that Jesus would just have to say the word and his servant would be healed.

Now guys, that's what we call faith. [When was the last time you asked Jesus for something?](#)  
[When was the last time you asked Jesus to help you believe?](#)

**D. L. Moody says:** "God has put the matter of salvation in such a way that the whole world can lay hold of it. All men can believe. A lame man might not perhaps be able to visit the sick; but he can believe. A blind man, by reason of his infirmity, cannot do many things; but he can believe. A deaf man can believe. A dying man can believe. God has put salvation so simply that young and old, wise and foolish, rich and poor, can all believe if they will."

Anyone can believe only if they want too. The centurion believed and went on to convince Jesus about how much he really believed. **Matthew 8:9** "I have officers who give orders to me, and I have soldiers who take orders from me. I can say to one of them, 'Go!' and he will go. I can say to another, 'Come!' and he will come. I can say to my servant, 'Do this!' and he will do it."

[When an army general gives an order, how can he know that it will happen?](#) He has to be able to trust the soldiers to follow it. The soldiers have to obey their commanding officers. If we are soldiers in God's army, we should obey our orders too. Our commanding officer is Christ, because he has been put in charge of the church.

The Bible says that Christ is over everything for the church, and he is the one we have to follow and obey. **Colossians 1:18** "He is the head of his body, the church; he is the source of the body's life. He is the first-born Son, who was raised from death, in order that he alone might have the first place in all things."

Even though this centurion was in charge of many other men, he recognised that Jesus was above and in charge of everything. And that's what faith is all about; it's about recognising who Jesus is and being humbled by His authority and power.

Now your parents may hold a lot of authority over you guys but not as much as Jesus holds over them. **Bismark** may be superman but he's not Jesus. **Yemi** might be superwoman but she's not Jesus. **Jenny** might be supergran but she's not Jesus.

My point is we all have our limitations but Jesus knows no limits. When Jesus had just finished talking about putting a camel through the eye of a needle he says to His disciples in **Matthew 19:26** "This is impossible for human beings, but for God everything is possible."

The centurion believed this and demonstrated his faith in Jesus by telling Jesus that he believed that He had the power to heal his servant. And with great faith comes great reward.

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Matthew 8:10 "When Jesus heard this, he was astonished. "In all of Israel I have not found anyone with this much faith!" Matthew 8:11+12 "I assure you that many will come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of heaven. But those who should be in the Kingdom will be thrown out into the darkness, where they will cry and gnash their teeth."

You see guys there will be a whole load of people who think they are going to heaven but sadly because they put faith in themselves instead of Jesus and because they are relying on what they are doing instead of what Jesus has done, they will miss the boat.

But there are also a whole load of people whom we think won't get to heaven but they will because they have demonstrated their faith in Jesus and trust what He has done. The centurion had faith with legs attached, he went to Jesus, he believed in Jesus and he knew that Jesus would only have to say the word and his servant would be healed.

And like I said earlier with great faith comes great reward. Matthew 8:13 "Then Jesus said to the officer, "You may go home now. Your faith has made it happen!" Matthew 8:13 "At that very moment, the servant was healed!"

Now notice again that Jesus didn't say give me a couple of fish and some bread and I will heal your servant. He didn't say give it a couple of days and your servant will be healed. No! The servant was healed at that very moment. Don't be fooled guys by all these TV evangelists or anyone who claims they can heal the sick and make the lame walk. No-one has that power today, only Jesus has the power to do these things.

And one of the main reasons He did these things is because of what is written in John 20:30+31 "In his disciples' presence Jesus performed many other miracles which are not written down in this book. But these have been written in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through your faith in him you may have life."

'The Incredible Hulk' tells the story of Dr Bruce Banner, who seeks a cure to his unique condition, which causes him to turn into a giant green monster under emotional stress. While on the run from the military, which seeks his capture, Banner comes close to a cure.

But the warmongers who dream of abusing his powers won't leave him alone, nor will his need to be with the only woman he has ever loved, Betty Ross. Upon returning to civilization, our brilliant doctor is ruthlessly pursued by a nightmarish beast of pure adrenaline and aggression whose powers match the Hulk's own. The Abomination. You see guys just like the only hope for the citizens of New York was something incredible, the incredible hulk.

Our only hope is someone incredible and His name is Jesus. But His strength didn't rely on muscle, His strength relied on obedience. And it's my hope and prayer that each of you will learn to trust on His strength to get through life rather than your own.

How can it help us to know that Jesus is greater than sickness? Well we can start by knowing that we don't have to be afraid, because Jesus is in charge. We can continue to trust Him more when we pray. We can continue to look forward to getting to heaven.

Let me leave you with the inspired words of Paul in Colossians 1:11 "May you be made strong with all the strength which comes from his glorious power, so that you may be able to endure everything with patience. And with joy give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to have your share of what God has reserved for his people in the kingdom of light."