

**“Faith and Authority”**

**Matthew 8 v5-17**

**Scripture Ref: John 5:30; Matt 26:39; Rom 6:5-11; Is 53:4-6**

- 1. Last week we saw a man who was an outcast, who was written off, a man who was too revolting for anyone to have anything to do with him**
  - a. Yet Jesus saw him, had compassion on him, reached out and touched him, and healed him!**
  - b. Giving us a living illustration that no matter how bad things get in your life, Jesus is willing to reach out with a healing touch!**

**Why is this important?**

- 2. I believe that many Christians today live in a state of lacking in their lives – spiritually and physically...**
  - a. They think...**
    - i. “Jesus could help me, but I am too insignificant for Him to notice,” or**
    - ii. “Jesus could help me, but I don’t have the right associations,” or**
    - iii. “Jesus could help me, but He’s busy with more important things”**
  - b. By having this mind-set, they are missing the most powerful redemptive and restorative force in existence!**
- 3. Today we will look at three more people whom Jesus healed, and the truths that they reveal about our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant**

5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, 6 saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented."

- 4. Few things about a Centurion:**
  - a. A Centurion was not a political appointee; The Roman Centurion was a exceptional man who had proven himself in battle, in wisdom, and in leadership.**
  - b. Roman Centurions were career soldiers, highly respected by all, including their troops – as they would lead their troops into battle as the point man – taking the most dangerous place among the ranks.**
  - c. A Centurion would have been a gentile – a Roman citizen – not a Jew.**

- d. A Centurion was not liked by the Jews, remember they were an occupying force, and the Centurion would be the one who would carry out the orders of Rome
- 5. Yet this man was different, apparently a man of integrity, as he comes to Jesus on behalf of one of his servants.
  - a. Luke's account adds more detail, telling us that the Centurion was well known by the Jewish elders, and had even built a synagogue for them.
  - b. That tells us something about his character.
- 6. Point?
  - a. (1) There were many social, political, and religious reasons that would be a barrier between this man and Jesus
    - i. and yet he acted against the political culture and the racial and religious bias and he approached Jesus – for a favor!
  - b. (2) here was a man who had authority, power, and strength, and here he is coming to a lowly Jewish carpenter to ask for help!
    - i. A wealthy Roman approaching a poor Galilean
    - ii. A powerful Centurion approaching a meek carpenter
    - iii. A mighty man of war approaching the Prince of Peace

### **Jesus Response**

7 And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

- 7. **Are we surprised? If Jesus would touch a leper, then it stands to reason that He would come to the aid of this Roman.**

8 The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

- 8. **I see in this man the face of many people today, who may have all the things that the world can offer: money, power, authority.**
  - a. **And yet there comes a time in their life that they encounter something that they cannot overcome.**
- 9. **The Centurion's words indicate to me that he had an understanding of a simple concept – a concept that many Christians miss:**
  - a. **Jesus is one who is *under authority*, and because of that fact, Jesus is one who *wields authority*.**
  - b. **Many people want authority – they want to tell people what to do, boss people around, make the big decisions**

- c. But they may not understand that in order to *wield authority*, you must know how to be *under authority*.
  - i. Having authority without being under authority is a recipe for disaster!
- d. Jesus was one who was under the authority - of His Father in Heaven.

**John 5:30** *I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.*

- e. Even to the point of the cross...

**Matt 26:39** *"O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."*

- f. And because Jesus was fully submitted to the will of His Father in Heaven, He was given all authority!

10. Last week we read that "*Jesus taught as one having authority*", now Jesus is will show His authority.

10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! 11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

### ***Faith & Authority – the Link***

11. Contrast to the leper– one man believed Jesus *could* but didn't know if Jesus *would*.

- a. This man not only believed Jesus *could*, but also had faith that He *would*!

12. Jesus marveled that this man had this kind of faith, and I think the key to this man grasping the concept was that he understood that authority and faith are linked...

- a. Think about it – if I told you that I was going to get you into the Inaugural celebration in Washington, you might view that promise with a little well-founded skepticism.
- b. But if David Axelrod, Obama's campaign director, made that promise to you, you would be making flight arrangements!
- c. See – I don't have the authority to make that promise good – Axelrod does.

- d. So you are willing to TRUST what Mr Axelrod tells you, and even act on it.
  - e. But – what if he lied to you? Well, he could, but would he? I don't think so, because of the fact that he is under the authority of the President-elect, he is now accountable for what he commits to.
13. Think about that for a second – Jesus is under the authority of God the Father much more so that a staffer is to the president –
- a. Jesus IS God, so He has the nature and integrity of God.
  - b. And so Jesus WILL do the will of the Father.
14. So when it comes to being involved in the details of our lives – we can trust:
- a. Jesus is WILLING (as with the leper)
  - b. Jesus is ABLE (both the leper and Centurion understood)
  - c. Jesus is FAITHFUL do perform what He promises

**Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed**

14 Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. 15 So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.

15. Mark tells us they had just come from church, Jesus went to church!
- a. And Peter was obviously married! So much for the first Pope being celibate!
16. What is special about this healing? Well, any healing is pretty special!
- a. But it doesn't seem that she ask him, or exhibited any special spiritual attribute that would have made her deserving.
  - b. Jesus just touched her, and she was healed!
17. But one thing that does stand out: As soon as she was healed, she began to SERVE.
- a. That speaks to me – because each and every Christian that is here today has been healed – maybe you weren't sick and were brought off your death-bed...
  - b. But we have been healed – freed from the bondage of sin and death:

**Rom 6:5-11**

*5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised*

*from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

- c. And I don't know about you, but to grasp the fact that Jesus has freed me from the bondage of sin and death, that motivates me to serve Him!**

**18. I read recently that the Obama campaign built an unprecedented network of support, which included an e-mail list with 10 million names and cell phone numbers, had 3 million donors and 1.5 million active volunteers.**

- a. These were people that believed in the vision that Obama cast, and were willing to do whatever he asked to accomplish that vision.**
- b. No president in history has had anything close to this.**
- c. Of course, now that they election has been won, there has been a little let-down.**

*"Honestly, the next day there was a little bit of a deflation," Obama volunteer Zeba Khan told "Good Morning America," "like we were down a little."*

*Khan, 28, is one of a number of Obama activists who have found themselves at a loss. Their mission accomplished, there is no longer that cause to throw their enthusiasm behind.*

*"It became my life," said Khan*

- d. Think about this – if people will do that for a president who will serve four, maybe eight years.**
  - i. Who, if everything that he promised comes to pass, AT BEST will get our economy going, create some jobs, get health-care for the 15% of our population that does not have it, put some money in your pocket...**
  - ii. His legacy may last a decade if everything goes to plan.**
- e. How should we respond to God, who has forgiven our sin, saved us from hell, given us His Spirit to empower us, broken the bondage of sin in our lives, given us eternal life,**
  - i. FOR ETERNITY - FOREVER!**

**19. I have to give credit where credit is due – I admire the Obama campaign, because they somehow rallied their people to serve and give in a way that the Christian community SHOULD.**

- a. He raised \$55 M in February alone, over \$440M total – hey we just need \$15,000 to finish the Youth Building!**

**Many Healed After Sabbath Sunset**

16 When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: *"He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses."*

**20. In closing - this section dealt with four different people who are healed:**

- a. **A Jew who was an outcast - no social or religious privileges.**
- b. **A Gentile member of the army occupying and oppressing Israel.**
- c. **A woman, related to one of Jesus' devoted followers.**
- d. **Unnamed multitudes.**

**21. Their requests were made in different ways:**

- a. **A direct request from the sufferer, made in his own faith.**
- b. **A request from one man for another, made in faith on behalf of a suffering man.**
- c. **No request made because Jesus came to the sufferer, so there was no evidence of faith from the healed.**
- d. **Sufferers that were brought to Jesus, with different kinds of faith.**

**22. Jesus used different methods to heal:**

- a. **Jesus used a touch that was forbidden.**
- b. **Jesus used a word spoken from afar.**
- c. **Jesus used a tender touch.**
- d. **Jesus used a variety of unnamed methods.**

**23. Matthew summed it up with an OT scripture that we being fulfilled right before his very eyes:**

*"He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses."*

***Isa 53:4-6***

*4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

**24. Summary? It does not matter how bad things are, or who you are, whether you are near or far, sick on your bed, possessed or oppressed by demons – Jesus is the answer!**

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***Matthew 8v5-17***

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