

Passage: Matthew 8:5-13

Let's start out tonight by reading **Matthew 8:5-13**. This is an amazing account of a miracle Jesus performs. Let's get the full picture of what is going on here.

- A centurion is a Roman military officer who is in charge of about 100 men. In Luke's account the centurion sends friends to talk to Jesus, but in Matthew it does not mention them. This is not important to the point of the story since it is the centurion's words that are being conveyed in both accounts.
- The centurion is not a Jew so it would have been strange for a Gentile to approach a Jewish leader for healing. In fact, in the original text Jesus' response would have been translated more like "You want *me* to come heal him?"
- The centurion has a humility about him, though, and a respect for the authority and power of Jesus. He replies by saying that he is not worthy to have Jesus come to his house. He just requests healing sight unseen.
- Jesus is impressed by the faith that the centurion has. He has not found this faith in the chosen people of Israel. At this time salvation is only open to Jews, but Jesus foretells of salvation opening up to the Gentiles and talks of Jews who will not see the Kingdom of Heaven because of their lack of faith in Christ.
- Jesus then immediately performs an amazing miracle of healing without even seeing the servant.

What Does This Tell Us

Scripture points to faith again and again as the key to salvation. Faith in Jesus Christ as the all powerful savior of God's people.

Look at this miracle that Jesus performs, this is faith in something that is bigger than yourself. I don't know about you, but I can't comprehend how someone would heal a sickness at all much less heal it from a totally different location.

With miracles Jesus is showing us that he is not just a man with just another message. He has power that is different from anyone else and therefore we should have faith that he is the messiah.

Has anyone, like your friends or family, told you they could do something and you didn't believe them? You then ask them to prove it, right? This is how the Jewish leaders treated Jesus, they were constantly challenging him and questioning him. We demand to see people prove themselves.

The lack of faith that we show in other people carries over into lack of faith in Jesus Christ. What does it mean to lack faith in Jesus Christ?

- If you flat out say that Jesus was just a man and God is just something you believe in if you want.
- Another way, though, is living life without acknowledging that we need Christ, or going about our lives putting ourselves first.

This passage provides direction if you are not a Christian. One of the biggest questions that people have is "what is the purpose of life?". Jesus points us to a story that is bigger than ourselves, he points us to God who demands our worship, but sin has corrupted us. Faith in Christ brings us back to God.

This passage also has a warning. The Jews were God's chosen people, but now that the messiah has come, faith in Christ is required for salvation. What does this have to do with us? Some of us have grown up in the church and been around it so much that we are "used" to Christ's miracles and the message of faith. Faith is a continual thing that should be constantly examined in your life. Do not get into a rut of neglecting to pray and read your Bible. Have an amazing faith in the work and salvation of Jesus Christ.