

The Touch of Jesus

“Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.” (Luke 4:40)

Lessons from miracles Jesus did, as they are recorded in the Book of Luke.

LESSON 4: Healing a Servant

“Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.”

(Luke 7:6-7)

As you listen to the teacher, fill in the blanks!

1. Even the Son of God was _____.
2. Whatever God commands we _____.
3. God uses even bad things or crazy things that people do to _____ His _____.

The seventh chapter of Luke begins with an amazing story that is also told in Matthew 8. It is about the healing of a Roman centurion's servant (vs. 1-10). The miracle happened in the city of Capernaum, where many of Christ's most wonderful miracles were done (Matthew 11:20 and 23). It was the headquarter city of His earthly ministry (See Luke 4:31). There are some very important lessons in the scriptural account of this miracle, and an army officer was the ideal person to show us certain of these lessons.

“I Am Not Worthy”

The first interesting thing about this centurion was his humility. The *“elders of the Jews”* (vs. 3-5) told Jesus that this man, although a Gentile, was indeed *“worthy”* for Him to help because *“he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.”* Incidentally, the foundation of this synagogue may be found in the ruins of Capernaum today. But the centurion said, *“I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof”* (v. 6). He didn't ask for a miracle based on his worthiness of a miracle. He was asking just because the servant *“was dear unto him”* and he didn't want him to die (v. 2). The man's genuine sense of unworthiness was demonstrated in the fact that he sent others to make the request of Jesus: Jewish elders first (v. 3) and then friends (v. 6). When the request was made, the soldier insisted that the Lord Jesus not come to his house, but instead *“say in a*

word” (v. 7) that the servant would be healed. He was sure that if Jesus just said it, it would happen! We should never ask the Lord for something on the basis that we *deserve* it! All we really deserve is Hell! His answers to our prayers come from a throne of grace—unmerited kindness (Hebrews 4:16).

“Authority”

At the end of this story, Jesus says that the centurion had “*great faith*,” and actually greater faith than any Jew He had met (v. 9). Interestingly, the Gentile officer’s faith was based upon his practical understanding of “*authority*” (v. 8). If we can understand what authority is, we too can have great faith. Look carefully at what the centurion said. He said he was not worthy for the Lord Jesus to come under his roof (v. 6) and that a personal visit wasn’t necessary anyway (v. 7) because Jesus could just say the word, and the servant would be healed. This military man understood this because he was “*a man set under authority*” and also a man *in authority*. When he gave a verbal command to a soldier under him, that soldier would obey him (v. 8). It was the same way with his servant. When the master told a servant something to do, he would do it. That’s how *authority* works. The one *in authority* says a word to one *under authority*, and the subordinate *obeys* that word. The centurion had heard of or seen the miracles Jesus was doing, and he figured out that the Son of God was just exercising His authority. Matthew 8 groups several miracle stories together to show Christ’s authority. Look up this chapter, and see this. He healed the leper with a command (Matthew 8:3). He healed the servant with a command (Matthew 8:13). He cast out devils with His word (Matthew 8:16). He rebuked a storm and it obeyed him (Matthew 8:26-27). The centurion could see that the miracle-working *power* of the Lord Jesus was related to His *authority*. He had authority over disease, nature, and devils. He commanded and they obeyed.

Authority is a vital principle of life. People who don’t understand it mess up their lives. Genesis 3 explains that God instituted an authority system among mankind after man’s fall (v. 16). Many scriptures tell us to submit to divinely ordained authority (See Deuteronomy 5:16, Proverbs 16:10, Romans 13:1, Ephesians 6:1, and I Peter 2:13-14). Parents are supposed to teach their young children the principle of authority by using corporal punishment to instill the automatic obedience of verbal commands. We can know that our kids have learned the authority principle when they respond correctly to “*a word*” (Luke 7:7) from us.

“Great Faith”

The centurion’s faith was founded on his conviction that Jesus had all authority. This was true because Christ is God in the flesh, but it is even more true now because He has triumphed over all of His enemies. Read about the authority of the risen Christ in Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:14-20, Romans 8:37-39, Ephesians 1:15-23, and Colossians 1:16-18. Because He is the Victor, His authority is absolute over all things. Therefore our prayers to Him have amazing potential. Look at something interesting before finishing your study of this lesson. The word “*power*” in the English version of the Book of Luke is translated from two different Greek words: *dunamis*, which means ability, and *exousia*, which means authority (and sometimes is translated “*authority*”). Jesus not only had the *ability* to do miracles, He had the *authority* to do them. See how these words are used in Luke:

ABILITY	AUTHORITY
(<i>dunamis</i>)	(<i>exousia</i>)
Luke 4:14	Luke 4:32
Luke 4:36	Luke 4:36 (“ <i>authority</i> ”)
Luke 5:17	Luke 5:24
Luke 9:1	Luke 9:1 (“ <i>authority</i> ”)
Luke 10:19	Luke 10:19 (“ <i>of the enemy</i> ”)