

Jesus's Sovereign and Saving Word

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The King and His Glory / Healing; Faith; Mercy; Grace / Matthew 8:5–13

In Matthew 8:5-13, a Roman Centurion requests Jesus to heal his servant revealing his great faith in Jesus's power to heal through His word. This episode models three attitudes you need as you approach Jesus in faith.

Pre-sermon Comments

Hebrews 11:1 LSB

Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Section Proposition and Outline

In [Matthew 8:1-17](#), following Jesus' authoritative teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew presents three miraculous healings as undeniable demonstrations of Jesus' divine authority and messianic identity, confirming that He is the promised Son of God.

- Jesus's Powerful and Personal Touch: He Cleanses the Leper (8:1-4) [Last Week]
- **Jesus's Sovereign and Saving Word: He Heals the Gentile's Servant (8:5-13) [Today]**
- Jesus's Compassionate and Conquering Ministry: He Restores the Suffering (8:14-17) [Next Week]

Sermon Text

Matthew 8:5–13 LSB

⁵ And when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading *with* Him, ⁶ and saying, “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, fearfully tormented.” ⁷ And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.” ⁸ But the centurion said, “Lord, I am not good enough for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ “For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this man, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come!’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this!’ and he does *it*.” ¹⁰ Now when Jesus heard *this*, He marveled and said to those who were following, “Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel. ¹¹ “And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline *at the table* with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; ¹² but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ¹³ And Jesus said to the centurion, “Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed.” And the servant was healed that *very* moment.

Review

Matthew 7:28–29 LSB

28 Now it happened that when Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were astonished at His teaching;

29 for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes.

Matthew 12:24 LSB

But when the Pharisees heard *this*, they said, “This man does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.”

Matthew 8:4 LSB

⁴ And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

Leviticus 14:1–4 LSB

¹ Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ² “This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing. Now he shall be brought to the priest, ³ and the priest shall go out to the outside of the camp. Thus the priest shall look, and if the infection of leprosy has been healed in the leper, ⁴ then the priest shall give a command to take two live clean birds and cedar wood and a scarlet string and hyssop for the one who is to be cleansed.

Matthew 5:17 LSB

¹⁷ “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

Mark 1:44–45 LSB

⁴⁴ and He said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in desolate areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.

Discussion Questions

Pastor Brandon opened by recognizing how easy it is to let life’s problems distract us from our devotion to the Lord. What are some things in your life right now that tend to dominate your thoughts and energy?

How would you define “devotion” in your own words? What does it mean to be devoted to the Lord?

Pastor Brandon said, “*What you’re committed to will always dominate your money, time, energy, and thoughts.*” When you reflect on your life, what do your priorities reveal about your commitments?

Are there any “good” things in your life—like family, work, or personal goals—that you’ve found yourself placing your hope in more than in Christ? How can we guard against this?

Why do you think it's so easy for Christians to subtly shift their faith and hope from God to something else—even something noble?

Read [Hebrews 11:1](#). How does this verse help clarify what it means to live by faith?

How does trusting God in what we *do not* see help realign our hearts and minds when life feels uncertain or overwhelming?

Pastor Brandon mentioned that everyone has faith—but not everyone puts their faith in God. What are some common “substitutes” for faith in God that you see in the culture, or even in the church?

According to Pastor Brandon, Matthew's Gospel emphasizes the authority of Jesus through both His *teaching* ([Matthew 5–7](#)) and His *miracles* ([Matthew 8–9](#)). Why is it important to see that Jesus had both words of authority and works of power?

How do the miracles in [Matthew 8](#) (e.g., the cleansing of the leper) show not only Jesus's divine power but also His personal care?

Sermon Proposition and Outline

In [Matthew 8:5-13](#), a Roman Centurion requests Jesus to heal his servant revealing his great faith in Jesus's power to heal through His word. This episode models three attitudes you need as you approach Jesus in faith. You must:

Demonstrate True Humility ([Matthew 8:5-7](#))

Discern His Great Authority ([Matthew 8:8-9](#))

Display True Faith ([Matthew 8:10-13](#))

You Must Demonstrate True Humility ([Matthew 8:5-7](#))

Matthew 8:5 LSB

⁵ And when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading *with* Him,

Capernaum

Matthew 4:13 LSB

¹³ and leaving Nazareth, He came and lived in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali,

The Centurion

The reason for the centurion's desperation

Matthew 8:6 LSB

⁶ and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, fearfully tormented."

Luke 7:2 LSB

And a centurion's slave, who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die.

The Centurion Cared for His Slave

There can be no friendship, nor justice, towards inanimate things; indeed not even towards a horse or an ox, nor yet towards a slave as slave. For master and slave have nothing in common: a slave is a living tool, just as a tool is an inanimate slave. ~ Aristotle

John 2:24-25 LSB

24 But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men,

25 and because He had no need that anyone bear witness concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.

Matthew 8:7 LSB

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

Matthew 8:7 NIV

⁷ Jesus said to him, “Shall I come and heal him?”

Discussion Questions

Why is the centurion’s approach to Jesus surprising, considering his background and position?

Follow-up: What does this tell us about the nature of true humility?

The centurion pleads with Jesus but doesn’t directly ask for healing. What might this reveal about his heart and how he viewed Jesus?

Why would it be significant that a Roman centurion—an outsider and enemy to Jewish culture—would show such concern for a slave? How does this model compassion and humility?

Considering [John 2:24–25](#), where it says Jesus knew what was in man, how does Jesus’ immediate willingness to heal (v. 7) affirm the sincerity of the centurion’s heart?

Why is humility essential when approaching Jesus in prayer or faith? How does pride interfere with our relationship with Him?

In what area of your life is God calling you to demonstrate true humility right now? What might that look like practically this week?

What’s one way your small group can actively cultivate an atmosphere of humility in your relationships and prayers?

You Must Discern His Great Authority ([Matthew 8:8-9](#))

Lord, Lord

Matthew 8:8 LSB

⁸ But the centurion said, “Lord, I am not good enough for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

Matthew 8:6 LSB

and saying, “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, fearfully tormented.”

Matthew 8:8 LSB

But the centurion said, “Lord, I am not good enough for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

Matthew 8:8 NASB95

But the centurion said, “Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

Matthew 8:8 NIV

The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

Matthew 3:11 LSB

“As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

2 Corinthians 2:16 LSB

to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is sufficient for these things?

Reconciling with [Luke 7](#)

Luke 7:3 LSB

³ Now when he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave.

Luke 7:7 LSB

“For this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but *just* say the word, and my servant will be healed.

Matthew 8:8 LSB

8 But the centurion said, “Lord, I am not good enough for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

Luke 7:1–3 LSB

¹ When He had completed all His words in the hearing of the people, He went to Capernaum. ² And a centurion's slave, who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die. ³ Now when he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave.

The extent of Jesus's authority

Matthew 8:9 LSB

⁹ “For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this man, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come!’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this!’ and he does *it*.”

You Must Display True Faith ([Matthew 8:10-13](#))

The definition of faith

Matthew 8:10 LSB

¹⁰ Now when Jesus heard *this*, He marveled and said to those who were following, “Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel.

Hebrews 11:1 LSB

¹ Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Israel's advantage

Romans 3:1 LSB

¹ Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision?

Romans 3:2 LSB

² Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

Ephesians 2:11–12 LSB

¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you—the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” *which is* performed in the flesh by *human* hands— ¹² *remember* that you were at that time without Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

The Roman Centurion’s great faith

Matthew 8:10 LSB

¹⁰ Now when Jesus heard *this*, He marveled and said to those who were following, “Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel.”

Ephesians 2:8–9 LSB

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹ not of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:5 LSB

⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

Hebrews 12:2 LSB

² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Matthew 8:11 LSB

¹¹ “And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline *at the table* with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven;

Hebrews 11:17–21 LSB

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only *son*, ¹⁸ to whom it was said, “IN ISAAC YOUR SEED SHALL BE CALLED.” ¹⁹ He considered that God is able to raise *people* even from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he also received him back. ²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come. ²¹

By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and WORSHIPED, *leaning* ON THE TOP OF HIS STAFF.

The gospel came through Abraham's seed, as Matthew has already attested through Jesus' genealogy. But the benefit of the gospel, which is salvation, is appropriated by faith, not by genealogical descent. The Jews played an integral part in God's bringing the Messiah and His gospel, and they are yet destined to play an important role in the end times. It was integral to God's plan of salvation that His own Son be born, live, and die as a Jew. But the fact that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—or any other Jew—will be in the kingdom of heaven will not be because of their Jewishness but because of their saving faith. ~ John MacArthur

The sons of the kingdom

Matthew 8:12 LSB

¹² but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The Reality of Hell

Revelation 20:15 LSB

¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Jesus heals the servant

Matthew 8:13 LSB

¹³ And Jesus said to the centurion, “Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed.” And the servant was healed that very moment.

Discussion Questions

What does the centurion's repeated use of the title “Lord” (vv. 6, 8) reveal about his understanding of Jesus?

Why is this significant coming from a Roman officer?

In [Matthew 8:8](#), the centurion says, “I am not good enough.” What does the Greek word *hikanos* mean, and how does it differ from the idea of being “worthy”?

How does this deepen our understanding of humility before Christ?

Read [Matthew 8:9](#). How does the centurion’s experience with Roman authority help him understand Jesus’s authority?

What does it mean that he speaks “from the lesser to the greater”?

Why does Jesus “marvel” at the centurion’s faith ([Matthew 8:10](#))?

What does this teach us about what true faith looks like?

Considering [Ephesians 2:11–12](#) and [Romans 3:1–2](#), why is it so remarkable that the centurion, a Gentile, expressed such faith?

How does this passage challenge the assumption that spiritual advantage (like being raised in a Christian home or having access to Scripture) always results in stronger faith?

The centurion acknowledged he was “not good enough.” How does recognizing our own insufficiency open the door to experiencing God’s power?

Jesus has authority over disease, demons, nature, and even death. Where do you need to submit to Christ’s authority today—perhaps in an area you’ve tried to control on your own?

What is one step of faith you can take this week that reflects confidence in Christ’s supreme authority?

The Gospel

God

Created and owns everything

[Gen 1:1](#)—*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*

[Psalms 24:1](#)—*The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it.*

Is Perfectly Holy

[1 John 1:5](#)—*This is the message we heard from Him and announce to you that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.*

[Matt 5:48](#)—*Therefore you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Requires perfect obedience to His Law

[James 2:10](#)—*for whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.*

Man

Has broken God's law

[Rom 3:10,23](#)—*there is none righteous, not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Will pay the eternal penalty for his sin

[Rom. 6:23](#)—*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*

Cannot save himself by his good works

[Titus 3:5](#)—*He saved us not based on works which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.*

Christ

Came to earth both as God and sinless man

[Col 2:9](#)—*For in Him the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form*

Demonstrated God's love by dying on the cross to pay sin's penalty

[Rom 5:8](#)—But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us

[2 Cor 5:21](#)—He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Rose from the grave and is alive today

[1 Cor 15:4](#)—And that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

Sinners

Must repent of all that dishonors God

[Isa 55:7](#)—Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

[Luke 9:23](#)—if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

Must believe in Christ as Lord and Savior

[Rom 10:9](#)—that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

Will you repent and believe in Christ?

[Acts 17:30](#)—therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance God is declaring to men that all everywhere should repent.

Don't hesitate to contact Pastor Brandon or Pastor Keith if you have any questions about this sermon or if you would like to know how to follow Christ.

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Additional Quotes

Ordinarily, when something clean touches something unclean, it becomes unclean as well. But here, for the first time in history, things ran in the other direction, as the cleanliness of Jesus healed the unclean leper. ~ Philip Graham Ryken

The law could only diagnose his disease, but could not heal it. Jesus Christ could do what the law could not do, and the poor leper soon proved it. What a blessed thing it is for us that the Lord Jesus Christ has come to cleanse us from the leprosy of sin. ~ Charles Spurgeon

He that healed the leper is still almighty. Let us never despair of anyone's salvation. Let us pray on, and speak on, and work on, in the full assurance that nothing is too hard for the Lord. ~ J.C. Ryle

The leper's approach to Jesus—marked by reverence, humility, and faith—is a model for every sinner who seeks divine mercy. He did not demand healing, but simply submitted to the Lord's will, acknowledging Christ's sovereign power. ~ John MacArthur

Christ's power was put forth in cleansing the leper; His pity was shown in touching him. His power was manifest in that He could cleanse him with a word; His pity in that He would. ~ Matthew Henry

In touching the leper, Jesus was not defiled; rather, the leper was cleansed. Here we see a beautiful picture of the incarnation—where the Holy One takes on human flesh and touches the unclean to make them clean. ~ R.C. Sproul

The leper's words are a prayer of faith: 'If You will, You can.' Faith confesses God's omnipotence, but submits to His will. ~ Augustine of Hippo

The command to show himself to the priest underscores that Jesus did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it. His miracles validated His messianic identity and upheld the Law's witness. ~ D.A. Carson

The touch of Christ is the healing of the soul. Where sin has made us untouchable, grace makes us whole. ~ A.W. Tozer