

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #21

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 7:1-10

Sermon Date: Feb 5, 2006

Introduction:

With his sermon completed, Jesus heads back to Capernaum, his base of ministry. Here he has a special experience with a Roman centurion, a captain who led a hundred men. After this encounter, Jesus would say of this man, "I have not found such great faith even in Israel." What about this man showed such great faith and how can we follow his example?

What is faith, anyway? Hebrews 11:1 tells us "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see." What are you hoping for? What do you wish you could be more certain about? What are you trying to see, but not able to? This story of Jesus and the centurion provides us with a vivid example of turning to Jesus when we face hard times, and trusting him and him alone to meet our needs and supply even our faith itself. Where does our faith come from? "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17) Turn now to that Word, and be strengthened in your faith and your love of Christ.

This bible study was developed by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. To hear a sermon on the same scripture passage covered in this bible study, come to one of our Sunday worship services (8:30am or 11:00am) on the date listed on page 1. Or after that date you can hear it by logging on to www.southshorebaptist.com/sermons/

*South Shore Baptist Church
578 Main Street, Hingham, MA 02043
(781) 749-2592*

Bible Study:

1. Read this week's bible passage and use the chart below to make observations and jot down any questions you have. Consider also the parallel passage from Matthew.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>Luke 7:1-10</p> <p>When Jesus had finished saying all this in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ² There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. ³ The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴ When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, ⁵ because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." ⁶ So Jesus went with them.</p> <p>He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to say to him: "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. ⁷ That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁸ For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."</p> <p>⁹ When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." ¹⁰ Then the men who had been sent returned to the house and found the servant well.</p>	

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p><u>Parallel Passage:</u> Matthew 8:5-13</p> <p>⁵ When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. ⁶ "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering."</p> <p>⁷ Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him."</p> <p>⁸ 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. ⁹ For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."</p> <p>¹⁰ When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. ¹¹ I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."</p> <p>¹³ Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that very hour.</p>	

2. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

Dig Deeper:

4. Compare the way the Jewish elders appealed to Jesus (7:4-5) and the way the centurion (through his friends) addresses Jesus (7:6-8).
 - a. On what basis do the Jewish elders appeal to Jesus?

 - b. On what basis does the centurion appeal to Jesus?

 - c. The centurion seemed to understand that Jesus had authority. Considering previous passages such as Luke 4:35-36, 5:13, 5:24, 6:5, what has Jesus demonstrated that he has authority over?

 - d. How does Jesus regard the centurion's appeal?

 - e. Read Philippians 3:1-11. Based on that passage and the story of the centurion, what do you hear God telling us about how we are to live?

 - f. How does this apply to your life right now? Where do you see yourself living by confidence in yourself and your abilities more than you are living by faith in Jesus' authority and power?

5. The centurion was faced with a very painful circumstance, watching one of his workers suffer and face death (note the tone of Mt 8:6).
 - a. What was the pattern of his response? (what did he do? what did he not do? who did he turn to for help? what was his attitude?)

 - b. What painful circumstances have you (or someone you love) faced recently? What has been the pattern of your response? (what did you do or not do? who did you turn to? what was your attitude?)

 - c. How might you deal with your situation more like the centurion did?

6. Some people's faith is greatly challenged by apparent discrepancies between different accounts of what otherwise seem to be the same stories in the Bible. These give us a chance to exercise our inductive study skills – observing carefully, drawing upon what we know about the culture and context of the story, the author's style, purpose, audience, and vantage point, etc. Of course, apparent discrepancies also serve to test our faith, and to teach us to rely more fully on the Holy Spirit, who is there to guide us and help us fully understand the truth.
 - a. What differences do you see between the Luke and Matthew accounts of the centurion story?

 - b. How might these apparent differences be reconciled?

Question 6 Hints:

If one news account says “The President warned the Prime Minister not to attack,” while another account says “The President sent his ambassador to warn the Prime Minister,” would you see this as a discrepancy?

For more help, you can consult a handbook of Bible difficulties, such as When Critics Ask by Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe.

7. What does the incident with the centurion show us about how we are to appeal to Jesus – how we are to pray?
(See also Matthew 21:22, James 1:6)



Use the centurion’s appeal as a model for your own prayer to Jesus as you close this time of study.