

Small Groups – The Bible (and faith) – myfishbites.com

Let's read the Bible first – Matthew 8.5-10 and Matthew 8.13:

When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. 'Lord,' he said, 'my servant lies at home paralysed, suffering terribly.'

Jesus said to him, 'Shall I come and heal him?'

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. 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.'

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, 'Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. 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. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Then Jesus said to the centurion, 'Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would.' And his servant was healed at that moment.

Question: What happened as Jesus entered Capernaum (tricky one!)?

Question: Do you believe Jesus still heals people today? Why or why not? What does the Bible say?

Activity: Make a list of where you go when you need something or need help

Teaching: The centurion came to Jesus. He knew where to bring his need and his request. The centurion didn't even ask Jesus to heal his servant. He just told Jesus what the need was:

Philippians 4.6-7 and 19 - Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

It was Jesus who responded, "I will go and heal him." This tells us the heart of Jesus – to heal and to restore, to make all things new and makes things right. God is a good God. Whenever Jesus saw the crowds, he was moved with compassion. We should be like Jesus as he has sent us to represent him and to be his hands and feet.

Acts 10.38 – "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him."

John 14.12 – "Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."

John 20.21 – "...As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

It's good to have other people to help, but Jesus and God's Word should always be the main and best place to go as he has all the answers, all the solutions!!

Philippians 4.19 - And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus

Question: Are there people or situations that you know of, that need healing? Now is a good time to list them / think about them and pray God's healing over them. If you know any Bible verses about healing, speak those out!

(Isaiah 53.3 and 1 Peter 2.24 / Psalm 103.2-3 / Psalm 107.20 / Proverbs 4.20-22)

Question: What kind of attitude did the centurion have when Jesus spoke saying he would go and heal the centurion's servant?

Question: What do you think the centurion meant when he talked about being a man under authority and the authority he had over his soldiers?

Question: In verse 13, Jesus told the centurion to go, saying that what he believed would happen (Jesus speaking the word and the servant being healed). And it happened that very hour... What kinds of things do you think you can learn from the faith of the centurion?

Teaching: One of the key things that the centurion said was when he said to Jesus, "Just say the word and my servant will be healed." Do you realise that the Word of God contains the power within it, to do what it says it will do. The centurion put the Word of God above anything and said to Jesus – "I believe your Word is all powerful because you have all authority in heaven and earth."

Matthew 28.18-20 - Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

Like the servant, we need to put the Word of God above every situation, every person and everything. Sometimes it's hard because we see things around us but when we see bad things, we need to keep our eyes on Jesus so we don't sink. Even when we see things around us, we need to know that even though it's real, the Word of God is even more real. It's like a 'higher reality' that is more true than what we see. We walk by faith and not by sight.

The centurion also had an incredible faith. Many of us want to see supernatural things happen before we believe – we almost want Jesus to appear and go and personally turn up in a situation we're praying about or worried about. But we can pray and we have also been given authority by Jesus to speak his Word. Actually the greatest faith is when we believe God's Word, pray God and trust God to fulfill his Word (do what he says he will in the Bible). The Bible is more powerful than we can imagine. So we need to put the Bible on the inside of us.

Whatever we put inside of us will come 'out' of us, so when we fill ourselves with the Bible, we know that the Bible will come out from us. Romans 10.27 says that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. So when we put the 'seed' of the Word of God in us, the 'fruit' of the Word of God (faith) will come out! Just like when we plant apple seed in the ground, an apple tree grows!!

In John 20, Jesus appeared to his disciples. One of the disciples called Thomas didn't believe Jesus had risen from the dead and wanted to see Jesus in person. Jesus did appear in person and showed Thomas the wounds Jesus had suffered on the cross. Then Jesus said this...

John 20.29, Jesus said - Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'

Today, choose to get to know the truth and believe the Bible!

Response: Is there anything that God has spoken to you today? Write it down.

Is there any kind of commitment you want to make to God? Write it down.
