

A Centurion's Faith

Scripture Reading — Luke 7:1-10

"I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed."

Luke 7:7 —

Some people say we live in a time of indifference, irresponsibility, and apathy. The phrase that best describes this era is "I don't care."

But in today's reading we encounter someone with a different attitude: a centurion who cared deeply for someone in his circle of responsibility. This officer of the Roman army had a servant. This servant, who was certainly not in the same class as the centurion, was seriously ill. The centurion had heard of Jesus' healing power, so he asked some elders of the Jews to serve as messengers and request Jesus' help.

In Jesus' day, there was serious tension between the Romans who ruled and the Jews who were ruled. But the care shown by the Roman centurion to his servant gives us a glimpse of his character. He had earned the respect and admiration of the Jewish community. That's evident from the willingness of the Jewish leaders to bring the request of this man to Jesus.

This centurion also received praise from Jesus: "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." Jesus commended a Gentile (non-Jew) as a model of faith for God's own covenant people (the Jews)!

Do we have the kind of faith that inspires us to action for the needs of our neighbors? Or do we remain complacent and unmoved by the needs of those around us? James 2:17 says, "Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

Prayer

Father, forgive us if we have overlooked the suffering of our neighbors. Move us to action in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

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