

FOUNDATIONS: "THE BEST OF THE BEST"

LESSON 1 "ONE OF THE BEST PRAYERS IN THE BIBLE"

Intro. Tonight we're going to begin a new series dealing with some of the people in the Bible who were the best in their class.

- ***In the next three weeks we will be looking at three different people who were exceptional in one particular area of their lives***
 1. We're going to begin by looking at *"one of the best prayers in the Bible"*
- *One of the greatest prayers in the Bible was made by a Roman Centurion*
 - a. He prayed for one of his slaves
- 2. Our prayers say a lot about us
 - a. It's not so much the "technique" we're going to talk about as it is the heart of the one praying
- 3. Our text says he made Jesus marvel
 - a. This means literally that Jesus *"admired"* him

Matthew 8:5-13 (NKJV)

5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him,

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

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

8 The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.

9 "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"

11 "And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

12 "But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

I. ONE OF THE OBVIOUS REASONS THIS WAS A GREAT PRAYER IS IT WAS _____

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

A. WHAT MADE IT SO EXTRAORDINARY WAS ITS _____

- **Matt. 5:8** "*only speak a word, and my servant will be healed*"

1. We need to keep our believing _____

Luke 18:17 (NKJV) "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

a. What makes a child's faith so endearing is its simplicity

2. We can make believing far _____

a. If we would simply take God at His word, we would see greater results from our prayers

b. Our natural minds can make believing too complex

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV) casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

c. Our trust and belief in God is meant to be simple

- "only speak a word..."
- The centurion's faith was two-fold

B. HE BELIEVED JESUS _____

Matthew 8:9 (NKJV) "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

1. We need to believe that Jesus has the _____ to do what we ask Him to
 - a. Whether it's healing us, meeting our needs, helping us control our emotions, or whatever

Matthew 8:2-3 (NKJV) And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, **if You are willing, You can** make me clean."

3 Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, "**I am willing; be cleansed.**" Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

- b. The leper didn't question His ability, he questioned His willingness
 - c. Jesus answered his question, "**I am willing**"
- We need to believe He is willing and able

Luke 1:37 (NKJV) "**For with God nothing will be impossible.**"

C. THE CENTURION BELIEVED IN THE _____

Matthew 8:8 (NKJV) The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. **But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.**

1. God's word is _____

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- a. Because God's word is alive, it will bring life whenever it is believed

2. God's word is _____

Hebrews 11:3 (NKJV) By faith we understand that ***the worlds were framed by the word of God.***

- a. When we hear and speak God's word it will frame a better world
 - *The Centurion in our story said, "only speak a word, and my servant will be healed"*
 - *That word spoken created a whole new world for his servant*
- b. Jesus has spoken words of forgiveness, healing, provision, protection for our kids, help with getting along with other people
- c. His word will create a better world for us

Isaiah 55:11 (NKJV) So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

- *We have to understand, He has already spoken the word for us*
- *When we apply confidence in His word it will frame a better world for us*

II. THE CENTURION'S PRAYER WAS GREAT BECAUSE HE WAS PRAYING FOR _____

- *The truth is most of us have a pretty easy time thinking about and praying for ourselves*

A. WE WILL BE EXTRAORDINARY WHEN WE BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT AND PRAY ABOUT THE _____

- *Being saved means we need to take up the idea of our "extended family"*
- *We care deeply enough to really pray for each other*

1. What made the guy in our story extraordinary is _____ about someone no one else would have expected him to care for
 - a. The one he was praying for was *a servant; literally a slave*
 - b. They had no rights; they were generally viewed as pieces of property
 - c. When they got sick and had little chance of recovery, they were disposed of
 - d. Jesus said caring for others would be the evidence that we belong to Him

John 13:35 (NKJV) "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

- *If we want to pray some really great prayers they need to include others*
- *Their needs, health, kids, finances, happiness*

B. PART OF CHRISTIANITY IS ALLOWING GOD TO MOVE IN OUR HEARTS AND CAUSE US TO CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO _____

ex. *Over 50 times in the New Testament it uses the phrase "one another" or "each other."*

- *"love one another, greet one another, serve, forgive, submit to, encourage, consider, pray for, comfort, be hospitable to one another"*

1. Our relationship with Christ is very _____ but it's not at all _____
 - a. What makes us Christians is our love for each other

Romans 12:15 (NKJV) Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Galatians 6:1-2 (NKJV)

1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

- *We're called to "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep, bear one another's burdens"*
- *1Cor 13 says love looks for what is good in each other and overlooks a lot that isn't good*

Philippians 2:4 (NASB) do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

2. The phrase _____ is the Greek word "skopos"
- a. We get our word "telescope" from
 - b. We need to learn to telescope the needs of others and bring them up close to us

1Thessalonians 4:9-10 (NKJV)

9 But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;

10 and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more;

3. Our love is _____ when it cares for others

Mark 2:1-5; 10-12 (NKJV)

1 And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.

2 Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

3 Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.

4 And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"--He said to the paralytic,

11 I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

12 Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

ex. *This paralyzed man was healed when his friends brought him to the house Jesus was in and tore off the roof. It says when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "arise, take up your bed and go to your house."*

- *God wants to use every one of us to be a part of a miracle in the lives of others*

PRAYER AND CONFESSION; *Jesus, I want to pray great prayers. I believe You are willing and able to answer me. Help me to think of the needs of others. I want to be used to pray for and see the miracles the lives of others. Thank You for using me, in Jesus' name, Amen.*

FILL IN THE BLANKS FROM LESSON #1

I. ONE OF THE OBVIOUS REASONS THIS WAS A GREAT PRAYER IS IT WAS ___ (FULL OF FAITH)

A. WHAT MADE IT SO EXTRAORDINARY WAS IT'S (SIMPLICITY)

1. We need to keep our believing ____ (simple)
2. We can make believing far ____ (too difficult)

B. HE BELIEVED JESUS ___ (COULD DO IT)

1. We need to believe that Jesus has the authority or ability)

C. THE CENTURION BELIEVED IN THE ___ (POWER OF THE WORD)

1. God's word is ____ (**alive**)
2. God's word is ____ (**creative**)

II. THE CENTURION'S PRAYER WAS GREAT BECAUSE HE WAS PRAYING FOR ___ (SOMEONE ELSE)

A. WE WILL BE EXTRAORDINARY WHEN WE BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT AND PRAY ABOUT THE ____ (NEEDS OF OTHERS)

1. What made the guy in our story extraordinary is (**he cared**) about someone no one else would have expected him to care for

B. PART OF CHRISTIANITY IS ALLOWING GOD TO MOVE IN OUR HEARTS AND CAUSE US TO CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO ___ (EACH OTHER)

1. Our relationship with Christ is very ____ (**personal**) but it's not at all ____ (**private**)
2. The phrase ____ (**"look out for"**) is the Greek word "*skopos*"
3. Our love is ____ (**perfect**) when it cares for others