

Lesson 10 – 3 October 2010

Faith Rewarded

Lesson Scope: [Matthew 8 and 9](#)

Lesson Focus

The scope of this lesson covers the same chapters as last week's lesson. The focus of that lesson, however, was on Jesus and proofs of His divinity. This lesson focuses on the faith expressed by those who benefited from Jesus' miracles.

The setting of these events is Capernaum and the nearby Sea of Galilee. Even though many in Capernaum believed on Him, apparently many more did not believe on Him.

Jesus had performed many miracles here. He had taught in the synagogue on various occasions. Yet, later, Jesus needed to pronounce judgement on this city for her unbelief. "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted Unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day" (Matthew 11:23). We will focus on a few people in the Capernaum area who were not faithless but believing. Faith without expression will die. The Scriptures give us three definite phases of faith's expression that are intertwined in the Christian's life: "The just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38), "For by faith ye stand" (2 Corinthians 1:24), and "For we walk by faith" (2 Corinthians 5:7). Sometimes we may see more of one than the other, but each is vital to avoid drawing back. We should with the disciples pray to the Lord, "Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5).

In considering these three phases of faith's expression—living, standing, and walking—it may be helpful to remember the definition of faith given in Hebrews 11:1. This should help us to better understand how "the elders obtained a good report."

Do not use these thoughts as a filler. The lesson before you is full of spiritual truth and practical expressions of faith in the lives of believers in Jesus' day. Are you able to testify how God rewarded faith in your life? God's power is able to meet all man's needs. Those provisions produce life-changing results in proportion to man's faith.

Lesson Aim: To observe expressions of faith that God rewards.

Theme Verse: [Hebrews 11:6](#). But Without faith it is impossible to please him: for lie that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Lesson Text

"Lord, If Thou Wilt"

[Matthew 8:1-3](#)

When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. ²And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. ³And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

[Matthew 8:5-10](#)

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, ⁶And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. ⁷And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. ⁸The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. ⁹For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. ¹⁰When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

[Matthew 8:13](#)

And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

"Lord, Save Us"

[Matthew 8:23-26](#)

And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. ²⁴And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. ²⁵And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. ²⁶And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

Matthew 9:18-26

While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, my daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. ¹⁹And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples. ²⁰And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: ²¹For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. ²²But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. ²³And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, ²⁴He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. ²⁵But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. ²⁶And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

"Thou Son of David, Have Mercy"

Matthew 9:27-30

And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. ²⁸And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. ²⁹Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith are it unto you. ³⁰And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.

Questions for Study

"Lord, If Thou Wilt"

1. What expressions of faith are evident in the leper and the centurion?
2. Explain the significance of the term "under authority" used by the centurion.
3. How is "great faith" developed?

"Lord, Save Us"

4. In these passages, which persons excelled in faith? Explain.
5. Why did Jesus conclude that the disciples had "little faith"?
6. How does faith overcome fear?

"Thou Son of David, Have Mercy"

7. How strong a faith did the blind men express?

Analyzing the Passage

Jesus met the needs of all who came to Him. Some came in complete faith, and others had faith mingled with fears. They came from many walks of Jewish life—the leper, a ruler of the synagogue (Jairus in Luke 8:41), a sick woman, blind men, and the disciples. Even a Gentile centurion received Jesus' help.

Jesus classified the centurion's faith as "great" (Matthew 8:10). It truly was amazing that a Gentile figure of authority should express explicit understanding of Jesus' authority (Matthew 8:8-9). Later Jesus described the disciples as having "little faith" (Matthew 8:26). They who were men of Israel acquainted with the Scriptures (John 1:40-51) and who walked dally with the Master, should have had the "greatest" faith. But they were fearful in the severe storm, even when Jesus was present (Matthew 8:25). Jairus and the sick woman also feared when circumstances changed from what they expected (Luke 8:47, 50). But their fears were immediately dispelled by Jesus' comforting words.

Worship is an important element of faith that can be expressed in attitudes and actions. Some of the people in this lesson fell at Jesus' feet in outward worship. Others worshiped by expressing proper attitudes of humility and submission to Jesus' authority.

Principles and Applications

"Lord, if Thou Wilt"

1. God rewards those who come to him (Matthew 8:2). Coming to Jesus in an act of faith that brings one to the light (John 3:21) Zacchaeus sought to see Jesus," who came to his house (Luke 19:2-6). Jesus invites, "Come ... and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). God reserves a reward for the diligent seeker.

2. God honors those who are willing, to submit to His will (Matthew 8:2). Jesus, in His agonizing prayer in Gethsemane, exemplified perfect submission. We too ought to say, "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (James 4:15). My Jesus, as Thou wilt; / Oh, may Thy will be mine: / Into Thy hand of love, / I would my all resign. True Submission to God will counter self's demands, even though they may be urgent or intense.

3. God responds to those who worship and revere Him as Lord (Matthew 8:2-3). "Then they that feared the Low) spake often one to another: and the

Low) hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name" (Malachi 3:16).

4. God rewards' those who beseech Him and acknowledge their need (Matthew 8:5-6). "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (John 14:14). He who asks in a beseeching attitude is unlikely to ask amiss (James 4:3). The centurion humbly laid his need before Jesus, and the answer came immediately—"I will come and heal him."

5. God honors those who acknowledge their unworthiness (Matthew 8:8) Many others have prayed with this attitude. Isaiah said, "Woe is me! for I am Undone- (Isaiah 6:5). Job said, "I abhor myself, and repent" (Job 42:6). Daniel prayed, "O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face" (Daniel 9:8). The centurion said, "I am not worthy," and Jesus ranked his faith above that of all others in Israel (8:10).

6. True faith acknowledges the authority of Christ (Matthew 8:8-9). Peter declared. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68-69). This profound truth, later expressed also by the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:37), must be the core belief of every true child of God. Many deny Jesus' authority vainly expecting to escape it.

"Lord, Save Us"

7. The Lord calms the fear of those who come to Him in desperation (Matthew 8:23-20). The storm must have been very extraordinary to cause such alarm to the disciples, some of whom were experienced seamen. But they cried out to Jesus. No doubt we all need to admit to fear at times. Even Paul said, "Within were fears. Nevertheless God ... comforted us" (2 Corinthians 7:5-6). Faith grasps hold of God's unchanging hand of comfort. Fear is an emotional feeling that brings torment. It is one thing to fear but quite another to be controlled by it. The psalmist said, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee" (Psalm 56:3).

8. "If I may but touch his garment" was an expression of faith that Jesus honored (Matthew 9:20-22). "Seest thou how faith wrought with [her] works, and by works was faith made perfect?" (James 2:22). Her touch was one of faith—the action of faith that was first expressed in thought. Without faith, the touch was only a touch, the disciples thought that a touch was insignificant (Luke 8:45), but Jesus set the record straight—"Thy faith hath made thee whole. "

"Thou Son of David, Have Mercy"

9. Faith is at times made known by a verbal declaration of God's ability, to meet our need (9:28). The blind men's "Yea, Lord," although simply spoken, no doubt resounded with absolute certainty. Doubting Thomas gave a full acknowledgement of faith when he saw Jesus: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). The man with a demon-possessed child cried out with tears, "Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24). The simple declaration Paul uttered in Acts 27:25 says it all: "I believe God."

Important Teachings

1. God rewards those who come to Him (Matthew 8:2).
2. God honors those who are willing to submit to His will (Matthew 8:2).
3. God responds to those who worship and revere Him as Lord (Matthew 8:2-3).
4. God rewards those who beseech Him and acknowledge their need (Matthew 8:5-6).
5. God honors those who acknowledge their unworthiness (Matthew 8:8).
6. True faith acknowledges the authority of Christ (Matthew 8:8, 9).
7. The Lord calms the fear of those who come to Him in desperation (Matthew 8:23-26).
8. "If I may but touch his garment" was an expression of faith that Jesus honored (Matthew 9:20-22).
9. Faith is at times made known by a verbal declaration of God's ability to meet our need (Matthew 9:28).

Answers to Questions

1. What expressions of faith are evident in the leper and the centurion?
The leper came to Jesus and worshiped Him. He expressed an attitude of submission—"If thou wilt" (Matthew 8:2). He also stated his complete confidence in Jesus' power to heal—"Thou canst make me clean" (Matthew 8:2).
The centurion also came to Jesus. He expressed attitudes of humility, submission, and unworthiness (Matthew 8:5-8). Such an expression from a Gentile figure of authority was truly amazing. Jesus saw that he had great faith.
2. Explain the significance of the term "under authority" used by the centurion.

A centurion was a Roman officer in command of one hundred men. He was "in authority," but he was also subject to higher authority placed over him. Each authority expected instant obedience from those under him. The centurion indicated a humble spirit by using the term "under authority" rather than "of authority." He had developed good attitudes toward Israel as a nation (Luke 7:2-6).

The centurion was indicating proper respect for and understanding of the Lord Jesus' superior authority and the power of His spoken word.

3. How is "great faith" developed?

Great faith is developed by initially and continually coming to Jesus, by giving Him undivided loyalty and reverence, by submitting to His will, by humbly acknowledging one's unworthiness of His notice and/or help, and by yielding to His supreme authority.

4. In these passages, which persons excelled in faith? Explain.

Jairus and the diseased woman expressed greater faith than the disciples. Jesus Himself testified to this fact. Jairus expressed his faith by simply believing that, if Jesus came to his house and laid His hands on the body of his dead daughter, she would live. He also expressed his faith by believing Jesus' words (Luke 8:50) during the delay while Jesus healed the diseased woman.

The diseased woman expressed her faith first in thought—"If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." Notice the word may and then the word shall. This progression of faith became her firm conviction and moved her to action. The touch became the action of the faith she possessed. Jesus plainly stated, "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

5. Why did Jesus conclude that the disciples had "little faith"?

They were His disciples and acquainted with the Scriptures. They walked with Jesus daily and saw His miracles. Yet, they were fearful in the great storm, even while Jesus was in the boat with them. Perhaps Jesus used the word little in comparison to the great faith of the centurion, a Gentile outsider.

6. How does faith overcome fear?

Faith acts as a governor over fear. Consider David, who said, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee" (Psalm 56:3). Even the apostle Paul said "Within were fears. Nevertheless God ... comforted us" (2 Corinthians 7:5-6). All of us, if we are willing to admit it, sometimes meet overwhelming

circumstances. It is one thing to fear but another thing to be controlled by it. Fear is an emotion that brings torment. Faith grasps hold of God's comforting power and the facts of His eternal Word. The disciples, Jairus, and the diseased woman did not remain in fear, but they turned to Jesus for help to overcome fear. Isaiah's declaration "I will trust, and not be afraid" seems to be the testimony of one who has received God's comfort (see Isaiah 12:1-2).

7. How strong a faith did the blind men express? The blind men were acquainted with the prophetic Scriptures and applied them to Jesus as "thou son of David." They sought for mercy in a way that may seem demanding, but the title they gave Jesus sets their request in the right light. They persevered, following Jesus into the house when He at first delayed His response. Their answer, "Yea, Lord," no doubt resounded with absolute certainty.

Summarizing the Lesson

Faith is a living pow'r from heav'n
Which grasps the promise God has giv'n-,
Securely fixed on Christ alone,
A trust that cannot be o'er-thrown.
Faith finds in Christ whate'er we need
To save and strengthen, guide and feed-,
Strong in His grace it joys to share
His cross, in hope His crown to wear.
Faith to the conscience whispers peace,
And bids the mourner's sighing cease,
By faith the children's right we claim,
And call upon our Father's name.
Such faith in us, O God, implant,
And to our prayers Thy favor grant,
In Jesus Christ, Thy saving Son,
Who is our fount of health alone.

--Petrus Herbert

Research Guide

1. In the other Gospels, study the accounts parallel to Matthew 8 and 9.
2. In *Doctrines of the Bible*, study the chapter titled "Faith."
3. Look up each Scripture used in *Analyzing the Passage*, in *Principles and Applications*, and in *Answers to Questions*.