

## “DIGGING DEEPER”

For personal or small group study

Week of August 3, 2008

- There is God’s kind of faith that He plants in our inner being, our **spirit** -- “spirit” or an “intuitive faith”.

- Understanding the dynamics of what made faith work and acting on it was what impressed Jesus.

### 3. UNDERSTANDING AUTHORITY REVEALS AUTHENTIC FAITH

- Faith to the centurion was not presumption, fantasy or superstition. It was all about the authority a person had.

- It wasn’t a matter if Jesus could heal his servant, it was a matter if He would only command his servant to be healed. This revealed the centurion’s authentic faith.

**John 5:19** “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do **only** what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

- The Father was Jesus’ authority, and as a submissive servant, He was very careful to only **mimic** what He saw His Father doing.

*Authentic faith is simply doing what your spirit is sensing Jesus Christ is doing in Heaven, then mimicking Him -- because of His authority!*

- Faith isn’t about you. It’s about what you **believe** about who God is!

- It is crucial you learn to distinguish His voice from the voice of your emotions, mind or stubborn will -- and the voices of those around you.

### So ... How Do You Respond?

- **Has the expression** of your faith, been more like the centurion’s that caught Jesus’ attention, or like that of the disciples when Jesus rebuked them for their “little faith?”
- **Are you satisfied** with the type of faith you have? If not, what do you plan to do now that you have a better understanding of what true faith is?
- **Do you sense** you need to humbly bow at His altar and confess your lack of true faith in Christ’s authority? Do you deeply sense you need to be more aggressive in getting coaching in seeking to identify His voice?

**Your response will tell you  
what type of faith in God you have!**

**QUICK REVIEW:** As you read Matthew 8:5-13 and Luke 7:1-10, what thoughts or questions come to your mind about the centurion and his understanding of faith? Why?

### TODAY’S FOCUS

1. What comes to your mind when you think about what it might take to impress Jesus or to get His attention?
2. The centurion told about in Matthew 8:5-13 was a Gentile, a Roman soldier and not a religious Jew. How did this fact make his understanding of faith even more impressive? Consider the relationship between these two groups and his unpopular position. [A centurion was a career military officer in the Roman army with control over 100 soldiers. Of all people, they were hated by the Jews for their oppression, control and ridicule.]

### GETTING THE POINT

1. What are some of the obstacles that the centurion could have let stand between himself and Jesus? What part did his understanding of authority play in his comprehension and applying his faith? [Matthew 8:26; 9:6; 10:1; Hosea 4:1-2, 6; James 1:6; 1 Timothy 6:9-10]
2. Pastor and author John Bevere says, “*Faith and obedience are inseparable because obedience is evidence of true faith.*” How is this true? In what ways is it possible for us to allow our faith to stagnate? [James 2:14-17; Hebrews 11:6; John 15:14-17]
3. Can we obey and not necessarily be submissive? How does that challenge our attitude and faith? [Hebrews 13:17; Isaiah 1:19-20; Daniel 3:16-18; 1 Peter 3:3-6]

### A LOOK INSIDE

1. Are you satisfied with the type of faith you have? What will it take for you to have the kind of faith that gets Jesus’ attention? [Mark 12:29-31; John 15:12; 1 Timothy 6:11-12, 20; James 1:2-5; 2:20; 4:7-8]
2. Develop an action plan with your group that will help each of you to strengthen your faith and please God. [Consider beginning a life-coaching partnership with someone who will help you seek and identify God’s voice and direction.]

# Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. We sincerely hope you will be especially aware of God's presence as we worship. If this is your first time to worship with us, here is what you can expect:

## Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship, you are free to connect with God in whatever biblical way that expresses your heart's adoration. Some may remain seated, others stand, kneel, clap or lift their hands.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

## Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

## Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

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We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

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## HOW TO IMPRESS JESUS

*"It takes 'astonishing' faith"*

Matthew 8:1, 5-13; Luke 7:1-10

### FOCUS FOR THE DAY ... "Faith that will catch Jesus' attention"

**Matthew 8:5-13** "When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering." Jesus said to him, "I will go 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 astonished** and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, 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! It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that very hour."

## WHAT IMPRESSES JESUS?

### 1. WHAT WAS JESUS ASTONISHED WITH?

- Jesus is NOT impressed with a person's **position**.
- Jesus is NOT impressed with how much a person **gives**.
- Jesus is NOT impressed with how **religious** a person is.
- Jesus is ONLY impressed with a person's **faith**.  
Hebrews 11:6 says, "without faith it is impossible to please God"
- If a person who wasn't a Christ follower could have the kind of faith that impressed Jesus, you certainly can too!

### 2. WHAT WAS SO UNIQUE ABOUT HIS FAITH?

- Jesus was impressed with this man's **understanding** of faith and how it **worked**.

#### Understanding how real faith works ...

- The most common concept of faith is "mental or emotional belief", which is generated by our soul, not our spirit.