

J.J.

AMAZING GOD
Matthew 8:5-13

Matthew 8: ⁵ When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. ⁶ “Lord,” he said, “my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly.”

⁷ Jesus said to him, “Shall I come and heal him?”

⁸ 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. ⁹ 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.”

¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ 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. ¹² But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

¹³ 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.

INTRODUCTION

We are amazed by a lot of things BUT there’s a story in the Bible where it shows where our Lord is amazed at.

By God’s grace, in the past weeks, we studied : “Obeying God”. Then we studied about “Pleasing God.” Last week we started our study on “Amazing God”. Yes, our Lord is amazing but we’re not using this as an adjective but we’re using it as a verb.

When it comes to pleasing God, we studied, that God is already pleased with us and the reason why we please Him is because He’s already pleased with us. We summarized pleasing God in one word – sacrifice. It takes a giving up one’s self in order to please God.

But when it comes to amazing God – **HERE’S THE KEY:**

*¹⁰ 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**.”*

The same story is seen in Luke

*Luke 7:9 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, “I tell you, I have not found **such great faith** even in Israel.”*

You know in the Bible, there are degrees in faith.

NO FAITH

Matthew 13:58 And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

LITTLE FAITH

Matthew 8 : 26 He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?”

GREAT FAITH

Matthew 15:28 28 Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

It was only with this centurion where we see that our Lord was “amazed”.

SUCH GREAT FAITH

¹⁰ 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.”

So then by God’s grace, let’s look deeper. Why would God be amazed the great faith of the centurion but never mentioned anything with the Syro-Phoenician woman?

Note : Not to take away from the Syro-Phoenician woman, remember, she also received that commendation that her faith is great.

I looked at the two words here.

ETYMOLOGY ON THE SYRO-PHOENICIAN WOMAN FAITH

Great – megas – huge large, strong,

ETYMOLOGY ON THE CENTURION’S FAITH

Such Great or So Great - tosoutos – so great – from o (last letter of the Greek alphabet, omega) and autos – this means, overwhelming, or the ultimate

But based on context, here’s the difference between “megas” faith (megas faith is already good).

NOW HERE’S THE DIFFERENCE :

Syro-phoenician woman – great faith compared to Centurion’s such great faith.

The centurion’s faith is “THE ULTIMATE” kind of faith...it’s the omegas, autos...in short, **it’s one of a kind.**

Illustration :

There’s a little building, there are great buildings but there is a one-of-a-kind building or the ultimate building.

IN SHORT, I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS KIND OF FAITH.

Remember what our Lord said.

¹⁰ 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."

THAT'S THE KIND OF FAITH THAT AMAZED OUR LORD!

The Elements of SUCH Great Faith

FULL TRUST IN GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY, MERCY AND AUTHORITY

REVIEW

I. TRUST IN GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

⁵ When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. ⁶ "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly."

Notice that the centurion acknowledged Jesus as Lord.

Etymology : Lord "kyrios" master;

Note : When you call Jesus "Lord", it says a lot. If you call someone Lord, it means you look at yourself as the servant. So if you call Jesus "Lord", you are saying to Him, I am your servant, I'll do whatever you want me to do today.

The centurion who is in charge of men himself, who is in charge of enforcing the Roman law (because the Jews were under Roman occupation and Jesus was a Jew), calls Jesus, "Lord".

The centurion had such great faith that amazed our Lord because He trusted on who Jesus is...HE IS LORD!

And as Lord, He can do anything and He can decide on what He wants to do but at the end of the day, we need to also see the our Lord Jesus is good and loving and kind and holy....IT MEANS ALL HIS PURPOSES ARE GOOD EVEN IF WE, DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.

ILLUSTRATION: David, a 2-year old with leukemia, was taken by his mother, Deborah, to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, to see Dr. John Truman who specializes in treating children with cancer and various blood diseases. Dr. Truman's prognosis was devastating: "He has a 50-50 chance." The countless clinic visits, the blood tests, the intravenous drugs, the fear and pain--the mother's ordeal can be almost as bad as the child's because she must stand by, unable to bear the pain herself. David never cried in the waiting room, and although his friends in the clinic had to hurt him and stick needles in him, he hustled in ahead of his mother with a smile, sure of the welcome he always got. When he was three, David had to have a spinal tap--a painful procedure at any age. It was explained to him that, because he was sick, Dr. Truman had to do something to make him better. "If it hurts, remember it's because he loves you,"

Deborah said. The procedure was horrendous. It took three nurses to hold David still, while he yelled and sobbed and struggled. When it was almost over, the tiny boy, soaked in sweat and tears, looked up at the doctor and gasped, "Thank you, Dr. Tooman, for my hurting."

Monica Dickens, *Miracles of Courage*, 1985.

This is the reason we can even thank God during times of suffering simply because we know He is allowing it for our good even if we don't understand it.

IMPORTANT QUOTE: This is the foundation of faith that amazes God. It's putting our trust in what He can do but more than that IT'S TRUSTING ON WHAT HE WANTS TO DO. JESUS IS LORD.

Quote : 'God is too good to be unkind and He is too wise to be mistaken. And when we cannot trace His hand, we must trust His heart.' - Charles Spurgeon

What's God's heart?

This now brings us to the second element of this omega "such great one-of-a-kind" faith.

II. TRUST IN GOD'S MERCY

⁸ The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof.

Faith is total dependence on God's goodness and not on our own goodness.

It was A.W. Tozer who said:

"God answers our prayers not because we are good but because He is good."

Biblical Context : Remember during that time that the Jews doesn't enter the house of a Gentile (the centurion is a Gentile) or else they will be unclean. The centurion knows about this and he admit his own uncleanness...his own unworthiness

In the parallel passage, the Jews asked Jesus in behalf of the centurion and they said that Jesus must heal the servant because he deserves it because of what he has done.

Luke 7: ³ The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴ When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, ⁵ because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue."

Note : Isn't this sometimes how we think when we pray? Lord, answer my prayers because I pray every day. I give to those who are in need. I go to church and etc.

But the centurion said in verse 6

... “Lord, don’t trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. ⁷ That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you.

III. TRUST IN GOD’S AUTHORITY

What is authority?

Illustration : You know the story of the three kids boasting about their dad.

The first kid said, “My dad is so strong and powerful that he could pull a car with his hands.” The second kid said, “Your dad is so weak. My dad is so strong and powerful that he could pull a truck with his teeth.” The third kid said, “Both of your dad are a wooz. My dad is so strong and powerful that he can stop a truck running at 120 KM per hour with his bare hands.” The other kids said, “Wow! How does he do that?” The third kid said, “Well, my dad is a policeman.” He sees a truck speeding. He raises his hand to stop them and they stop. **THAT’S AUTHORITY**

This is the reason we know that the centurion acknowledges that Jesus is God when he called Him Lord.

But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ 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.”

Look at how the centurion acknowledges the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ OVER EVERYTHING!

Let me explain : The centurion compares the authority of Jesus with his authority over his men. *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.”*

But that authority is limited. He affirms the Lord’s perfect authority because “just by saying the word” to even sickness, **it will OBEY HIM.**

What the centurion is saying, he can say even to his servant, “Give me a glass of water and the servant will give him a glass of water.” But he can’t say to his servant, “Be healed.” He knows it doesn’t work that way.

He acknowledges his authority is limited but **THE LORD’S POWER AND AUTHORITY IS LIMITLESS!**

That’s what the disciples have seen

Mark 4: 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

41 The disciples were absolutely terrified. "Who is this man?" they asked each other. "Even the wind and waves obey him!"

Application: If you are undergoing problems, God has complete authority over those problems. He is still in control over those problems. Financial problems? He is in control. Health problems? He is in control. Relational problems? He is in control.

THE LORD'S POWER AND AUTHORITY HAS NO LIMITS.

He even has control and authority over the decision-making of people.

*Proverbs 21: 1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord,
Like the rivers of water;
He turns it wherever He wishes.*

Biblical Illustration : He even has authority over the most powerful man on earth.
Exodus 7: 3 But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in Egypt, 4 he will not listen to you.

APPLICATION : You can say to your children, get me a glass of water and they will obey you. But you can not say to your children, "Magbago ka." You can advise but it is only God who can change the heart. Those are the things you kneel down and cry out to God.

Remember there's a purpose on everything he does. That's why when you have relational problems, you don't have to get angry or frustrated...BRING IT TO GOD!

QUOTE: God allows trials and suffering in our lives so we can experience His power and authority.

2 Corinthians 12: 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Illustration: There is no situation I can get into that God cannot get me out. Some years ago when I was learning to fly, my instructor told me to put the plane into a steep and extended dive. I was totally unprepared for what was about to happen. After a brief time the engine stalled, and the plane began to plunge out-of-control. It soon became evident that the instructor was not going to help me at all. After a few seconds, which seemed like eternity, my mind began to function again. I quickly corrected the situation.

Immediately I turned to the instructor and began to vent my fearful frustrations on him. He very calmly said to me, "**There is no position you can get this airplane into that I cannot get you out of.** If you want to learn to fly, go up there and do it again." At that moment God seemed to be saying to me, "Remember this. As you serve Me, there is no situation you can get yourself into that I cannot get you out of. If you trust me, you will be all right." That lesson has been proven true in my ministry many times over the years.

James Brown, Evangeline Baptist Church, Wildsville, LA, in Discoveries, Fall, 1991, Vol. 2, No. 4.

Quote: Faith is not merely your holding on to God--it is God holding on to you. He will not let you go! E. Stanley Jones.

It is believing that God is holding on to you and that's the reason why you can sleep at night....that's God's power and authority.

Look at how the Lord reacted

¹⁰ 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."

THAUMAZO – "ADMIRE" – when this word is used it's always people "admiring" Jesus but this one it's Jesus admiring a person...WOW!!!

Now of course, our Lord uses this as an opportunity to show the people during that time the only way to be saved is to put their faith in Him.

¹¹ 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. ¹² But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Remember: The subjects of the kingdom are the Jewish people who believed that they can get to heaven is because of their heritage and of following the law and etc. But here's a centurion, who is not a Jew and who considers himself undeserving and yet puts his faith on who our Lord Jesus is.

Application: Again, it's the same with any other religion, they believe they could go to heaven by what they do. It's not in what we do, it's who we put our faith our trust in and that is our Lord Jesus Christ.

I'm pretty sure you know the rest of the story...AMAZING FAITH MAKES AMAZING THINGS HAPPEN

¹³ 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.

Story : In the middle of Chicay's cancer, a lot of people emailed me sharing words of encouragement but there was one email from my friend which was just a one-liner that truly encouraged me. He did not even wrote, "Dear Jerry" or greetings. He just wrote, "According to your faith let it be done to you."

QUOTE: GOD IS AMAZED NOT ON WHAT WE DO FOR HIM BUT OUR BELIEF ON WHO HE IS SPECIALLY DURING TIMES OF TRIAL.

VERY IMPORTANT TO NOTE : GOD ALLOWS TRIALS AND SUFFERINGS IN OUR LIVES SO THAT YOU CAN SEE HOW AMAZING HE IS BUT TO ALSO GIVE US A CHANCE TO AMAZE HIM WITH OUR FAITH IN HIM

Illustration: When I was young, I used to sleep between my Tatay and my Nanay. When I wake up in the middle of the night, it was so dark that I become afraid but then I would put my leg either on my Tatay or my Nanay and I would get back to sleep soundly again. It's the fact that I know they are there that puts me back to sleep. It's the same with faith, it's knowing that whatever is happening God is there – the one who is control, the one who loves us and the one who has the power and authority to change the situation is with us.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

S.G.D.