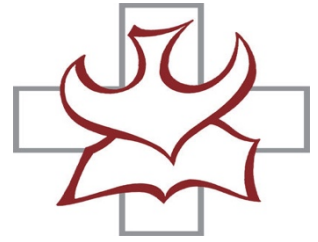


# The Humble Centurion

Psalm 119:1-12 Matt 8:5-13 Rom 8:31-39

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**A Roman centurion** was a commander in the Roman Army; they were known for bravery, courage, and strict discipline. They were the backbone of the Roman Army, men of power, authority and influence. There were several different grades and levels of Centurions, but they all commanded men and were skilled in battle. By necessity, they were hard men who lived in brutal times.

Today we heard the story of a **Roman Centurion** who humbled himself and approached Jesus on behalf of his servant. This Centurion was not asking Jesus for victory in battle, nor the spoils of war, nor even advancement in rank. **He was pleading on behalf of his servant!** *"Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly,"* he said. In the text, Matthew is emphasizing the earnest nature of the request. The **Roman Centurion** approached Jesus, he was pleading, and he was saying.

This **Roman Centurion** teaches us about humility. In this story, we can learn at least two things about humility.

The first is that we humble ourselves when we **consider the needs of other people as our own**. This is the opposite of pride, which is self-absorbed, self-centered, and thinks only of itself. In humility, you consider the needs of others as if they were your own and you do something to help. One of the most important things you can do is intercede for them to the Lord. That is exactly what the **Roman Centurion** did!

The **Centurion** found Jesus, approached Him publicly, and pleaded on behalf of his paralyzed servant. Be sure to grasp the magnitude of this: a Roman Centurion humbled Himself publicly before Jesus. He cared about

his servant, he was determined to help, and he knew that Jesus could help. So he brought the need of his servant before Jesus.

*We also know that Jesus cares;* we have seen first-hand that He is good and gracious, merciful and loving and that He will help. We have seen first-hand how the Lord has helped us in our times of need. We know that He came into the world to rescue us from our sins. We understand His great love for us in His suffering and death on our behalf. We believe that He is a refuge and strength, and ever present help in times of trouble. We know that He watches over our lives and promises to make all things work for good. We have seen first-hand how the Lord has helped us in our times of need.

And so, like the **Roman Centurion**, we *humble* ourselves, *approach* Jesus, and we *ask* Jesus to help our neighbor as if we were praying for ourselves and our own needs. *Humility considers the needs of other people as if they were your own.*

The second thing we can learn about humility from this **Roman Centurion** is that humility *recognizes the authority and the power of the Word of Jesus.*

The **Centurion** knew that Jesus could heal his servant, and He trusted the power of Jesus' word to do it. He did not even need Jesus to come to his house; He asked Jesus to just **"give the Word!"** and it would be done. *He recognized the authority and the power of Jesus' Word.*

One of the most repeated teachings in Holy Scripture is *the authority and the power of the Word of God.* Humility is placing yourself under the Word of God; pride would be placing yourself over the Word of God. When you humble yourself and place yourself under the Word of God, it will be seen in three ways.

**First, you will TRUST IT; you will believe what it says.**

You will hear the Law of God in the Bible as it convicts you of sin, and trust what the Bible says about you: that you are poor miserable sinner who needs a Savior. You humble yourself, and confess your sins to the Lord.

Then you hear the Gospel of Christ; that Jesus is the One True God Who came into the world to rescue you from sin, guilt, and death. You believe that Jesus died on a cross and rose from dead for you and your salvation. You trust that these words about Jesus are true, and that they apply to you. You humble yourself and believe in Jesus as your only hope of salvation.

Humility places you under the Word of God, and you take Scripture to heart: you believe in Jesus and trust in the Gospel.

**In Christ, you recognize the authority and the power of the Word of God, and in humility, you place yourself under it. When you place yourself under the Word of God, it means that you not only trust it, but you also obey it.** As a disciple of Jesus, learn the Word of God throughout your lifetime, striving to become ever more biblically literate and doctrinally sound. As you do, you put it into practice. Humility places you under the Word of God and you obey it.

The Lord teaches us in Scripture how to live in this world as His People; He teaches us to have a Biblical understanding of the world around us; and He empowers us through the Word of God to live a holy life.

- † You learn about the 10 Commandments: and obey them.
- † You learn about love, patience and kindness: and put them into practice
- † You learn about the Fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control; and we strive for these things.

As a disciple of Jesus, you are baptized and you are continually learning and obeying His Holy Word. You are mindful of this beatitude:

"Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!" Luke 11:28

Humility places you under the Word of God, and you obey it: you put it into practice in your life!

**Humility not only places you under the Word of God, and you obey it; but in humility, you confess it to the world!**

In Christ, you recognize the authority and the power of the Word of God, and in humility, you place yourself under it. When you place yourself under the Word of God, it means that you not only **trust** it and **obey** it, but you also **confess** it to the world!

*The Lord doesn't expect **unbelievers** to confess His Word publicly, but He does expect His People to!*

**Confessing the Word of God simply means that you “echo” it in your words and conversations . . . it means that you are not ashamed of Christ and His Word.** Confessing the faith is talking about your faith at opportune times. Those times might be when you are talking with a friend about life; it might be confronting a loved one with about sin; it is when you encourage, uplift and support someone with the promises of God; it when you assure someone of God's love and forgiveness in Christ; it happens when you take a public stand on the Word of God – knowing that you are probably all alone in doing so, and you will be persecuted because of it. **Confessing the Word of God simply means that you “echo” it in your words and conversations . . . it means that you are not ashamed of Christ and His Word. THAT'S HUMILITY!**

Surprisingly, a proud Roman Centurion teaches us about humility. He humbled himself, approached Jesus, and pleaded for his servant. That very hour, the servant was healed by the power and authority of Jesus and His Word.

That same power and authority is at work in your life. You humble yourself when you place yourselves under the Word of God: when you trust it, obey it, and confess it! AMEN!