

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS & MEDITATIONS YEAR A

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Source: <https://www.dailyscripture.net/>

MONDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2023 – 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Scripture: **Luke 7:1-10**

1 After he had ended all his sayings in the hearing of the people he entered Capernaum. 2 Now a centurion had a slave who was dear to him, who was sick and at the point of death. 3 When he heard of Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his slave. 4 And when they came to Jesus, they begged him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, 5 for he loves our nation, and he built us our synagogue." 6 And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; 7 therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. 8 For I am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." 9 When Jesus heard this he marveled at him, and turned and said to the multitude that followed him, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." 10 And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave well.

Say the word, and let my servant be healed

Meditation: Do you approach the Lord Jesus with confident trust and expectant faith? A Roman centurion boldly sought Jesus with a daring request. What made him confident that Jesus would receive his request and act favorably towards him? Like a true soldier, he knew the power of command. And he saw in Jesus both the power and the mercy of God to heal and restore life.

In the Roman world the position of a centurion was very important. He was an officer in charge of a hundred soldiers. In a certain sense, he was the backbone of the Roman army, the cement which held the army together. Polybius, an ancient write, describes what a centurion should be: "They must not be so much venturesome seekers after danger as men who can command, steady in action, and

reliable. They ought not to be over-anxious to rush into the fight, but when hard pressed, they must be ready to hold their ground, and die at their posts."

Expectant faith and humility draws us close to the Lord Jesus

The centurion who approached Jesus was not only courageous, but faith-filled as well. He risked the ridicule of his Roman companions by seeking help from a Jewish preacher from Galilee, as well as mockery from the Jews who despised the Roman occupation of their land. Nonetheless, this centurion approached Jesus with confidence and humility. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) notes that the centurion regarded himself as unworthy to receive the Lord into his house: "Humility was the door through which the Lord entered to take full possession of one whom he already possessed."

This centurion was an extraordinary man because he loved his slave who had become seriously ill and he was ready to do everything he could to save his life. The centurion was also an extraordinary man of faith. He believed that Jesus had the power to heal his beloved slave. Jesus commends him for his faith and immediately grants him his request.

The Lord is merciful and gracious to all who seek him

How do you approach the Lord Jesus - with doubt, fear, and disbelief? Or with trust and confident expectation that he will give you whatever you need to follow and serve him? Surrender your pride and doubts to him and seek him earnestly with humble trust and expectant faith.

"Lord Jesus you came to set us free from the tyranny of sinful pride, fear, and rebellion. Take my heart captive to your merciful love and truth and set me free to love and serve you always with joy and trust in the power of your saving word. May your love grow in me that I may always seek to love and serve others generously for their sake just as you have generously laid down your life for my sake."

DAILY QUOTE FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

The power of Divinity and the grace of humility

by Ambrose of Milan, 339-397 A.D.

"How great is the sign of divine humility, that the Lord of heaven by no means disdained to visit the centurion's servant! Faith is revealed in deeds, but humanity is more active in compassion. Surely he did not act this way because he could not cure in his absence, but in order to give you a form of humility for imitation he taught the need to defer to the small and the great alike. In another place he says to the ruler, 'Go, your son lives' (John 4:50), that you may know both the power of Divinity and the grace of humility. In that case he refused to go to the ruler's son, lest he seem to have had regard for riches. In this case he went himself lest he seem to have despised the humble rank of the centurion's servant. All of us, slave and free, are one in Christ (Galatians 3:28, Colossians 3:11)." (*excerpt from EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE 5.84*)