

How we doing? Everyone excited and awake and ready to go, got here safe. Wonderful, wonderful. Hey everyone online, thanks for joining us. We appreciate you getting out of bed, probably in your pajamas sitting there in the living room, we love you, thank you for being here. Hey guys, if you want to turn in your Bibles to Matthew Chapter 8, that's where we're going to be, Matthew Chapter 8. As David mentioned my name is Pastor John, I'm one of the pastors here. I spend a lot of my ministry discipling students and I'm kind of moving into experience and teaching, but it's a blessing to be here, a blessing to bring the Word with you one more time here, so Matthew Chapter 8.

Real quick, I just want to share, some of you don't know this, but a couple months ago my wife and I were redoing our guest bathroom and how many of you did some house projects during the COVID year? Okay. That's usually what happens. Right? You're like sitting there reading or watching TV and you're like, "We need a new light." Right? And so this was us, we were just kind of looking around our house being like. So we were fixing our half bath up and we were trying to do it ourselves, you know, one of those, you know, how-to type things, and so we were doing the floors and all of a sudden my oldest daughter who had a bedroom close to the bathroom, she came out and she was having a seizure. And so we just, you know, obviously as parents we just kind of panicked and went over and kind of grabbed her, laid her down, and it was about a minute, minute and a half .

And so afterwards we were talking to her and she was telling us how she thought she had them before and it was just such a shocking thing. Anybody ever had that moment in life where something happened that you didn't plan for and it just kind of hit you like a truck, you know what I'm talking about? So that was this moment. And so instantly we just let that need known to our church family and brothers and sisters, many of you in this room, just to lift it up in prayer and we just appreciate you doing that.

And you know, in life that happens often but I want to talk a little bit about that story of how that goes and share a little bit about that story throughout the message just because I wanted to bring something just applicable to my life to this passage because I believe the Word of God to be true. Believe—I don't just teach it—I believe it to be true both in Word and in deed and in actions and as we apply it to our lives. And I can promise you that what we're about to read here is true, both in the story itself but also in the root of what Jesus is teaching us here about faith and prayer, and so that's the takeaway.

I want you to ask this question all throughout: What does this teach me about prayer and faith? How does the centurion's faith change mine? Because my prayer is that every morning that we come into this place that God would come in one way in our spirit and our walk, but He would take us out of this place and just convict our souls to be more in love, more pursuing Him. I mean, if that's what happens here we win, because the more we grow in our relationship and our love for Jesus the more we all win. Everything else is a distraction.

And so turn with Matthew Chapter 8 with this question in mind: What do we learn about prayer? What do we learn about faith with the centurion? And I want to stop and say this, in this passage this is the second miracle that we're going to see in the gospel of Matthew. We're changing our series, last week



*"that's why you see this behind me"*

was the beginning of the series called MIRACULOUS, that's why you see this behind me, and we're talking about miracles, miraculous encounters with Jesus. So the book of Matthew's written by the apostle – right? – and he's very analytical. Matthew was actually a tax collector, so can you imagine the person in your life that kind of keeps the books – right? – categories. And so Matthew, it's so funny, he writes the Gospel that way. So Matthew has a teaching part – right? – The Beatitudes and he breaks it down about what Jesus says about different topics and we

talked about that, character, Kingdom, competency, those things, and now he's shifting towards miracles and last week we talked about the leper. And if you guys weren't with us, go online and watch it. It's very powerful to talk about just that miracle and how the leper and just what it was to be a leper at that time and be outcasts and really, they were considered walking dead. And so people would run at their presence; they were alone and isolated.

So we talked about how the leper pursued Jesus and everyone ran away and yet Jesus, the living God, the same Jesus that we worship right now, reached out to the leper, healed him. But in that we talked about all the dynamics of what it took for the King of the universe to reach out and the humility that the leper had to go to Jesus in the midst of no one telling the leper to go, but he recognizing his need for Jesus. And using his circumstances not to be bitter towards Jesus but to go and say, "Father, You can heal me, but your will be done." And we kind of challenged each other to say, "Okay, have you approached God with those things, the baggage or the brokenness in your life, have you approached in anger or in humility like the leper?" And do we recognize the power that Jesus has over this world?

Leprosy was something that was not cured but the King of kings reached out and touched and instantly it was cured, so God is above our circumstances. He's greater than the laws of man and the laws of nature because He created all those things, and so I hope that it just kind of stirred in you a heart to go to the Lord for the big things. And know that there's nothing in your past that disqualifies you from going to Him. There's no shame you have to hold on to to not bring to Jesus. No, He knows you and He loves you despite.

And so this morning we're going to talk about the centurion, the second miracle. Now recognize this, Matthew—and we actually know this from later Scripture—there's so many miracles that Jesus performed that these disciples saw, so many. In fact, they said it can't even be in a book, like, it wouldn't even fit. So Matthew being analytical says these are the big ones, so of all the miracles Matthew's like but I really want you to know about the leper, I really want you to know about—and Pastor Rob's going to share another one next week—but we're highlighting the ones that Matthew highlighted because these are the big ones. Matthew's like there's a lot to these miracles and they're worth writing down and being recorded and being talked about 2,000 years later. So know that, there's a lot here, a lot of meat to this miracle, and so join me in reading about this, Matthew Chapter 8, verse 5:

<sup>5</sup> *When he*

— this is Jesus —

*had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him,*

**– MATTHEW 8:5 (ESV)**



Now stop, just real quick, if you study Scripture you know that there's two stories, there's one in Luke [Chapter 7] as well. And there's kind of a little bit of like a theological—when you do hermeneutics where you study different texts—there's a little bit of a question about this story into what actually happened. So in Luke it says that there was a representative that came for the centurion, and so what that means is that a person of that authority, he had hundreds of people, we're gonna read this, he had hundreds of people underneath him, he's a Roman official. Oftentimes he didn't speak directly, he would have a representative who would listen to what he had to say and go and tell that person and ultimately it was the centurion talking because if that person would say something different they would be beheaded. Right? Like, it was a matter of just a representative coming.

So in Luke it seemed like there was a representative that was speaking for a centurion but the centurion was still talking, it was just somebody that was kind of walking up talking to Him. And in Matthew, Matthew just didn't seem to, I think, didn't seem to think that was important because, really, he knew that the words were the centurion's words. So does that make sense? So just know that there's a little bit of a context question here. But just know that the centurion, the words that he spoke are the words in his heart and his faith and Jesus marveled at that man and his faith and so it was enough that Matthew said okay, this is the meat of that. So let's keep going, verse 6:

*<sup>6</sup> "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly." <sup>7</sup> And he said to him, "I will come and heal him."*

— this is what Jesus responded, verse 8:

*<sup>8</sup> But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>9</sup> For I too am a man 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 servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." <sup>10</sup> When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. <sup>11</sup> I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, <sup>12</sup> while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness.*

— What in the world does that mean? We're going to talk about it. —

***In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." <sup>13</sup> And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.***

**– MATTHEW 8:6-13 (ESV)**

Okay, stop. First off, I wish I was there when that servant was healed. Can you imagine? Just being in the home [SNAPS HIS FINGERS] BOOM! instantly. God is not bound by the laws that He created. Church, that's important. That's why prayer is powerful. But in this text we see a lot of things and first off, I want you to notice something that anytime you read Scripture, when you see something like the King of kings is marveled at, when Jesus is marveled at something you underline that, you highlight that, and you say, "Okay. What in the world made the King of kings, the Lord of lords marvel?" The Man, like, hear me, the Man who created everything, everything – marveled. So if you're a follower of Jesus, here's what I hope you ask, if your love for Jesus is your point—which it should be, is to give Him glory and to know Him more, that's the point of your life—if the point of your life is to know God and to give Him glory and you read that He marveled at something, you need to know everything about that thing. What happened? Why does He marvel? And so that's what we're going to really do. Why did the centurion's faith impact Jesus so much?

And let me just tell you this, there's two times in Scripture where Jesus marvels. This time a centurion, a Gentile, and the other time He marvels at the unbelief of His community that he grew up in, the Nazarenes, He marvels at their unbelief. So the only time God is marveling in a positive way is this passage. So are you guys excited? Like, that's powerful, that means we need to be writing stuff down.

So here's what He marvels at, we break it down, the first thing that's astounding to Jesus, astounding faith, the first thing is this, that the centurion recognizes Jesus' authority. Look again in verses 5-7. So the centurion comes to Jesus, this is important, so again, the centurion is a Roman official, he has

hundreds of people underneath him. Rome, the empire of Rome, is one of the largest, most powerful empires known to man. This man doesn't have to come to anybody except for his superiors. If he says, "I want that person to come," that person has to come or they're thrown in jail. You get me? So for him to come to Jesus was upside down with the reality of the time. Completely weird.

In fact, it actually would probably hurt the centurion's authority because he would be going to, technically, somebody that was beneath him. But the centurion comes to Him, whether it was a representative or in person, he comes to Him which is an act of humility saying everything in my life is—the centurion is saying this by coming to Jesus—all this authority is just man-made. Somebody gave me a title. People tell me I'm valuable, but that's just man's systems, that's a democratic or social – whatever system men create and whatever authority that exists, the centurion is like yeah, that's all man-made, You're greater than I am, You're more powerful than I am, so he comes to Jesus. That's an act of humility.

And then he says this, look at the passage, then he calls Jesus, "Lord." So the Roman official who sees Rome as the authority says to a Jewish man you are Lord—don't miss this, church. This man could have lost everything that he has by doing that. You're Lord, I'm going to come to You because You have more authority than me, this is just man-made, and You are Lord. You're not a teacher, You're not a rabbi, You're not a self-help person, You are Lord. This Roman official says Rome isn't, You are. That's powerful. You know why? Not only because this man could have lost everything, but listen, he does it for somebody else. I'm going to give, I'm going to will all of my man-made accomplishments I'm going to put at the feet of Jesus—willing to give it all up not even because I'm sick but because the servant that I love is sick. So he says I'm willing to risk it all for You to do something only You can do because You have the authority, You have the power—for somebody else, not even for me.

First off, what a leader that man was. Talk about how to be a leader, that's a leader, you lay down your life for somebody else. I wonder, do we have an example of that? He's willing to lay down all of his earthly treasures for the sake of not only himself but for somebody else. Jesus is seeing all this happening. And so he calls Jesus Lord and he pleads with Him. Look, he's pleading with Him:

*<sup>6</sup> "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly."*

**– MATTHEW 8:6 (ESV)**



*"Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home"*

He's willing with all and he's pleading, he's saying Lord, I need You to help me. So he's saying well there is something—we talked about this last week—there's something in this life of this man with all of this authority that he cannot do. So in life, guys, there are times like having a 10-year-old daughter walk out and having a seizure. There are times in your life where you are not in control and you're reminded of it—and where you go matters. A lot of us go inward and we build up fear and anxiety because we don't know what to do, but as believers we are to give that to the Lord because He is over that thing. He is greater than

that thing. He is in control. He has authority. He can fix it. He can change it. And He wants us to.

So the centurion sees something that all of his power that the Roman Empire gave him and he can't do anything, he can't solve this, so he goes to God knowing that God is ultimately over this. He's greater than any rule that men have. Man, don't we need to hear that? There's nothing man can do that's going to exhort the authority of our Savior Jesus—nothing. He's on the throne. He is King. He is sovereign. He is good. His will be done despite us. So he goes to Him.

And here's some things to apply just because, again, if Jesus is marveling at this man we need to understand this. So God marvels when we seek Him over everything else. So as you are stepping into that next career move or looking at your finances or talking about your family and all these things, if you put God first in that thing He rejoices in that. *Lord, I want You to guide these things. I want You to be first in all of these decisions. I'm going to bring it to You, I'm going to seek You, and I'm going to understand, Lord, it's about your will for my life. So if You want me to take that job, You need to guide it. Lord, if You want to fix my marriage, Lord, I need You to change our hearts.* Like, it's You, God. So you're seeking God, pleading with Him to do only what He can do and you can recognize the authority that He can do those things. Like, You can do that.

I just prayed for somebody after first service who is in a wheelchair and he's a brother in Christ, and what did we do? We prayed and we said, "God, You can heal this; but if You don't heal it that's okay, You're still God." Bring glory in this. Let it be a testimony that somebody can have joy and peace despite their physical circumstances. So if You don't heal it, be glorified. If You heal it, be glorified, but we're going to give it to You and we're going to ask You because You can; because we see it over and over and over again that You can do anything that You want to do for your glory. And there's power in that truth.

The centurion knows that God can heal. And listen, when my daughter was going through that sickness we had the privilege—and I want you to hear me—the privilege of being in this area where we could go to hospitals all over this place that have wonderful doctors, wonderful treatment, and so we were able to go and get her treatment and kind of go through procedures and get her medication and just talk to the doctors. And we had wonderful interaction with them answering questions about what it is and how we can help moving forward and all these wonderful things, but the truth is that was limited. Most of what they can do is prevent, that's okay, that's wonderful, that's a gift, but my God can heal.

And I know that I'm going to go and seek man but before that, man, we're going to the Lord. We're going to the King of kings and, "Father, You are in control of this. Yes, we will be able to have privilege to interact with the gifts You've been creating in this world, that You've given to people in this world, but Lord, You are the one who gave it to them. They're just image bearers of You." And so we go to God and we say, "Lord, You are the one who's in control. Thank you for these blessings. But Lord, You hold the reins."

And so He marvels at the humility and the gentleness and the trust that the centurion has. Here's another thing that Jesus just seems to think is astounding, that the centurion was humble, so humble before the person of Jesus. Look at verse 7, He [Jesus] says:

<sup>7</sup> *And he said to him, "I will come and heal him."*

<sup>8</sup> *But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed."*

– MATTHEW 8:7-8 (ESV)

He [the centurion] says I'm not willing. The Lord is asking to come to his house and he says no, I'm not willing to have You, I'm not worthy to have You under my roof. Why is this a big deal? Sounds like a little point but it really isn't. I'm going to give you some background here.

So at the time, it's actually not an Old Testament law, but at some point, you know, it became a Jewish law just through the teaching over time, you know those "little cones" Pastor Lee talks about, just man-made laws. But at the time Jewish people would be considered unclean if they entered into a

LITTLE  
CONE



= Personal, cultural,  
and denominational  
traditions, opinions,  
and preferences

company of the Gentiles, the house of a Gentile, it was a ceremonial unclean kind of practice and so they just didn't do it. And so you see in Scripture a bunch of times –

BIG  
CONE



= God's commands

right? – where the Jewish people lead Jesus to Pilate but they're not willing to go in. Remember this? Or like the Samaritan woman, she's like so shocked when Jesus is drinking out of the same cup as her. Or even in Scripture when it talks about, um, I think Peter – right? – he's going to be in the home of Cornelius but he's kind of hesitant. This is why, this is kind of a cultural thing for Jews, that there was kind of you're interacting with Gentiles—and for those who don't know, Gentiles were everybody that weren't Jews—and so it was kind of hesitant, we didn't want to defile.

So the reason this is a big deal is so what was the reason the centurion said he's unworthy? Was it because of that? Did he not want Jesus to be seen as "defiled" even though Jesus doesn't, He doesn't need the law, you know what I mean? Like, He's okay. Was that the reason or was it something else? And I'm gonna actually argue that it's something else. I actually think the centurion was marveling at who Jesus was and He was coming to terms with actually who it was that he was interacting with, and he was in awe of Him.

Have you ever been in awe of Jesus? If not, then you don't know Him. I'm just gonna say that, you don't know Him if you haven't been in awe of Him. Times when you just step back and you're like, *How in the world am I able to be in relationship with You?* Like, just like a feeling of, like, you ever see somebody who's really good and you just see that you're not? Like, imagine a perfect per– like, there's a, ah, and so, like, even—remember Peter? He's fishing all night and Jesus says, "Hey, cast your fish net again." Peter is so much like me, he's like, "Aw, I fished all night, there's no fish." Like, doubting. So he does it and the fish all come and it's overflowing and what is what does Peter say? Do you remember? Luke 5:8:

*"Depart from me,"*

— he says:

*"for I am a sinful man, O Lord."*

– LUKE 5:8b (ESV)

So what is Peter's response? Man, why are You even with me? Like, there's an awe of saying God, You are so good, how in the world are You even able to interact with me? This is kind of, I think, what the centurion is doing here. He's like Lord, I don't even really deserve to be in your company. I just have this servant who's sick and I know You can just speak it and it can happen, but man, I don't – I'm a sinner, I'm a Roman official, I have all this baggage. I don't even think I'm worthy to be in your sight. Jesus, again, Jesus is marveling at his faith, not only because he sees Jesus for who He is but he recognizes how good He is and how disqualified he is from even being able to do this, but he knows that He can—does that make sense? Like, let me just make this real for you.

**THAT IS  
THE LIE OF  
THE ENEMY**

There is a culture we live in, it's a humanistic culture—college kids, look at me—you are taught humanistic theology and ideology in your classes. You are. That you are to follow your dreams and you are the god of your life and it's about your feelings and your desires and everything else is wrong. That's a humanistic ideology. You are called to die to self, so it's a lie, but you're

taught that lie. And in this culture and it's even in the church and this is why I'm calling it out, in this culture we say, "We gotta do more than just pray." You ever heard that? "Oh, they're just wanting to pray; we gotta do more than just pray." Listen to me: That is the lie of the enemy. Are you kidding me? We have access to the King of kings, the Author of all that is, and He says that when we pray He listens and He responds. We have that gift—and we make less of it?

What would it be like if we didn't have prayer? How lost would we be if we had nothing to do with God, no relationship with Him, no way to give our doubts and our fears and our pain and our suffering to Him? If it was just men and our solutions, how helpless would that be? How dare we just pray! How dare we not pray! Like, are you kidding me? To make light of prayer and to make high of man's ability to fix their sinful broken nature is against the Gospel. It's a gift – to see that as less, how dare we. What would it look like if we prayed more, church? If this church, if this country was on their knees—are you kidding me? If this church was on their knees, do you have any idea what God would do? We make



less of prayer? *Oh, we gotta do more than just pray.* Are you kidding me? This flies in the face of that nonsense. You know our problem – we don't pray enough. That's the problem. And we live in a world that wants to make less of that power. Why? Because they want to worship themselves. You look at the human history of mankind, without God what happens? Do you think it's good? Open a history book, how dare we just pray—come on, church.

So this is the application that I want to call out here is that prayer is powerful and here's the thing, not just prayer in the sense of your own personal prayer, this is an intercessory prayer. Prayer that is *here's a need* and everyone in the Kingdom of God hears that need and just starts to cry out. There's power in intercessory prayer where the people of God get loud so Heaven pays attention. Like, what would it look like—I just, I've just been asking this question—what would it look like if God marveled at us? Like, what would that look like? Like, can you imagine Jesus being like, "Okay, I got it. They just keep screaming louder and louder for Me. They're not complaining to Me, they're not angry at Me, they're just asking Me for more and more of Me. Man, their faith is so loud I'm gonna respond." Like, what would that do to everything in our lives, our family, our friends that don't know Jesus? What would that do if our prayer became louder and louder when we see that the King of kings sees that type of faith and He's marveled, He pays attention to it.

So not only is he humble but he trusts God. Look at 8-13, I'm not going to read this all again but I just want you to highlight these things. He trusts that God can do what He says He can do; he trusts Him. Lord, You just have to speak a word and it will happen. So God, You can do anything You want to do, we trust You in that. Yes, I have a friend or a family member or somebody sick or have somebody who doesn't know Jesus, but we as a church trust that God is going to change them. God's going to deliver them. God's going to give them victory. We pray with confidence that God is going to answer that prayer. This is the heart of what God wants for His people.

<sup>8</sup> But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed."

But not only this—I want you to notice this—Matthew is the only the time that they do this, the Jewish audience was really the primary audience for Matthew as he writes this. And so Matthew knows that so in this he takes like a little shift because he goes from talking about this miracle to all of a sudden talking about the "*sons of the kingdom*" and you're like, Matthew, what in the world are you doing here? So here's what's happening is Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience about a Gentile's faith, and so Matthew then says in his text that Jesus is calling out the irony that this Gentile has a greater faith

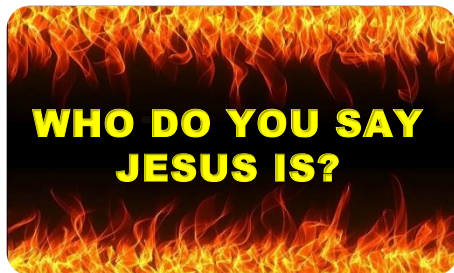
<sup>10</sup> When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith."

than the Jewish people that are around Jesus at that time. Jesus is saying I have never seen a faith like this, which means all these rabbis, all of His followers, everyone that has made their life choice to follow Jesus or to ask Jesus a bunch of questions or to memorize the Old Testament, all of those people did not have the faith of this Gentile. And so what Matthew is doing is he's saying for those people who call themselves "*sons of*

*the kingdom*" what he's saying is that you think you're saved because you're born into a family with a title of "Jewish," that somehow generation is going to save you. Matthew is calling this out to say listen many people will think that they know Jesus, but they don't; that they've done all these works, it says it in Matthew<sup>1</sup> later, all these works for God but they don't know Jesus. They don't know Him, they don't have faith in Him, they don't see Him for what He is. They want something *from* Him.

<sup>11</sup> I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, <sup>12</sup> while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The centurion didn't actually want anything from Him, he just made his need known and he said your will be done, but You are God despite what I want. All these Gentiles were asking questions and doubting and challenging the person of Jesus and He calls them out to say listen, faith to go to Heaven



THAT IS THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS BECAUSE JESUS TALKS ABOUT HELL OFTEN

means you need to believe that I am who I say I am. Period. **Who you think Jesus is—look at me in this room—is the most important question of your life.** You can chase the world and produce the same fruit that every person has that has come before you and it's meaningless. The real question is: Who do you say Jesus is? That is the question that matters because in Scripture Jesus talks about Hell often. We don't talk about Hell often. Why? Because people don't like the topic of Hell. The reason Jesus talks about Hell often is because He loves you. And our God, the living Jesus, does not wish anybody to go to Hell, that's why He talks about it a lot— because He wants you to understand

the reality of that question and how powerful it is depending on what your answer is.

Here's what I mean, in this passage He describes Hell as what? What does He say? Do you see it? Look at me – "*weeping and gnashing of teeth*," this is what God uses to describe Hell in Scripture. And so Jesus is calling out people who are going to be judged and are going to see God and experience His goodness like, okay, I'm gonna hit this home. **Please listen to me** because there are people in this room I know that know of Jesus but have never met Him; you've never given your life to Jesus, you're just kind of on the fence. A famous mentor always says Satan owns the fence. It's nothing, being on the fence just means you're asking questions like the Jewish people were that did not see Jesus as God. It's not enough to say, "I believe Jesus is God." The demons believe Jesus is God.<sup>2</sup> It's not enough. Who is He to you? Who is Jesus to you?

<sup>12</sup> while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

And so in this context He's talking about Hell, this is why. Because when we get to Heaven—I say this all the time, I want you to listen to me—when we get to Heaven I'm confident in this, when we're judged

<sup>1</sup> See Matthew 7:21-23

<sup>2</sup> See James 2:19



by God we're going to see that everything in our lives, everything we wanted was found in complete [satisfied] in Him, everything that we wanted. So for those right now that are trading the relationship with Jesus for the created things of this world, I want you to know that the things you love in this world you will find in completeness in Him. So God, I don't want to follow You, I want this relationship; but the desires you have for that relationship will be made complete in Him so you're gonna recognize that you settled for less. Lord, I want my house, I want my money, I want my power—you're gonna find more joy in Him than in all those things. And in that moment you're gonna see that everything your soul wanted is found in complete, this was what you wanted your whole life, you just didn't know it. You thought it was religion and tradition and that He was distant. You're gonna meet and you're gonna know this is what I need. And then He is going to ask who is Jesus. And in that moment, for those who have denied their need for Jesus, [they] are going to be separated from that God and are going to weep. There's no parties in Heaven, there's no parties, there's no joy, there's no relationships, there's no goodness. Why? Because it's all found in Him. So you're going to separate from God and it's going to be weeping because you are going to be separated from the things that you love and that you needed.

And so that's why we wish that no one goes to Hell and that everyone gives their life to Jesus—everyone—because we want you to go and find your completeness in Him. And saying, "Lord, Jesus is my Lord, I know that I needed Him. I accepted His sacrifice on the cross and I knew my whole life that You were the treasure." And that's why Jesus is like listen, I want to warn you about what Hell is because it's important for you not just to think of Me as a "good teacher" but to know that I am Jesus. And the centurion said You are Lord, You are my Savior. He calls Him for what He is and Jesus rejoices in that. And so that's the Gospel.

Here's a prayer that we have in this church, that you would come to this church and you would love our worship, love our communities, love the Next Generation ministries that we have for your kids, love the Café and the bagels and the coffee, love all this stuff, but if you miss Jesus we failed. We failed if you miss Jesus. I spent many years growing up in the church and I never knew Jesus. I knew the things of, the people of, the rules, the traditions, the expectations, I knew all of that but I did not know Jesus. Thank the Lord that He pursued me. If you don't know Jesus, you miss it. The centurion didn't miss it. He didn't miss it. And here's the powerful thing about the centurion's faith is that the centurion gives us a picture of where our faith is right now. Right? We don't get a chance—yet—to see Jesus face to face, He's coming back, some of us think sooner than later He's coming, but we don't get a chance to see Him face to face right now. But we have an intercessory, don't we? We have an agent through His Spirit that's going to pray on our behalf and we have access to the King of kings, and so that access is through prayer and we need to be a church that prays.

So we have this new app that we introduced, it's actually a community, it's called Prayer Page, it's a prayer group. You can access it through our app in Church Center, you can go on there and find it, a prayer community. You can actually go to our [website](#) under "Community," go to "Prayer." You can join a group, it's our prayer group. And here's what this is, we want to redeem technology for the glory of God, all else will burn away, but if we use it for the glory of God it will stay.



So here's the thing, we have this Prayer Page where our prayer is that all of our communities that meet throughout the week they're going to ask their people prayer requests, and then they're going to put it on this prayer forum and the people of God are going to see

those prayers and pray for them. So we have the tool ready and it's already being used, you can join that and then you get texts on your phone that somebody is in need of prayer, that Pastor John's daughter just had a seizure and I need you to lift it up to the Lord, and our church can come alongside each other and pray and lift it up.

And listen, let me just be honest, when I started to tell people about this one of the things that happens was they joined and they're like, "Oh, there's just – they just come, there's all these messages that pop up on my phone, all these alerts, I'm gonna make it quiet." And I'm like okay, you could do that but you don't make your sports scores quiet. You've got blasts of all these alerts on your phone about things that don't matter. You're telling me if somebody gives you a prayer request and you are a child of God you won't rejoice? You're telling me that we can't use our technology and redeem it in a way that instead of checking if we got likes we hear prayer requests that we can give to the Lord so that we become an army of prayer?

Do you know what that will do? Do you know the miracles we'll see, and the freedom and the deliverance and the healings that would happen if we are an army that prays? So I'm going to invite every one of you to get that app, go to the Blue Wall, talk about it, we'll show you it. It just will come up like a text message, "so-and-so is going in for surgery" and "lift this person up in prayer." Man, what would it look like this year if our church prayed; not just say we're gonna pray for you, but what would it look like if we prayed instantly over each other? And I walk out here and I see all these people praying for each other. What would that look like? How loud we could get. What would it look like if Heaven responds how loud we are, that Jesus would look at Calvary Fellowship Church in Downingtown and He would marvel. I don't know about you, but that's my prayer.

So we're going to end this service just with an opportunity to challenge you to be part of this process, to be in a community all this week. All this month, actually, we're going to be talking about communities but even if you're not comfortable yet in communities online, you can join the Prayer Page. You can start to pray, start to give your needs, share your needs, meet the needs of others. But I'm also going to invite you during this time, there's no pressure but if you need prayer, if you need somebody to intercede on your behalf, we're going to invite you up to the altar just for a time of prayer. We're going to have people praying over you and if you're not feeling comfortable praying over them up close to pray, pray over them in your seats. Start to practice this idea of intercessory prayer. Amen?

All right. Will you worship with us as we give time for the Lord?

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**YouTube:** <https://youtu.be/DJh9PX13DDM>

**SoundCloud:** <https://soundcloud.com/cfdowningtown/miraculous-encounters-with-jesus-the-centurion-1321>

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