

Chaplain Reflection – by Pastor Jeremy Eubanks

There is a remarkable encounter that is recorded in Matthew 8. Jesus has just ended his most famous sermon; one in which he talks about forgiving those that hurt us, loving our enemies, being careful in how we judge one another -it's a sermon that is very challenging and probably had people wondering if he really meant it.

As he is headed back into his home base, he is met by someone who would have been seen by most as an enemy, a Roman Centurion. This man was the picture of an authority that most despised and disrespected. Yet as we read in the passage, this man amazed Jesus with his faith.

I don't know if you've ever wondered what it would take to amaze Jesus. The encounter is recorded in Matthew 8:5-13 NIV **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?”**

⁸The 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.

Both Jesus and this Roman Centurion crossed barriers that might have kept them apart. There were boundaries of authority, ethnicity, and religion and yet both Jesus and this soldier crossed those boundaries for the good of an unnamed servant.

Faith is taking a step in the direction you believe God is leading and trusting Him with the outcome. Every day, you will come across barriers that people use to try and keep people apart. When you take steps to cross those boundaries, even when nobody else notices, you are following the example of those who have amazed Jesus.

May you be encouraged as you take those steps of faith.