

Great Faith



Throughout the ministry of Jesus, we see remarkable examples of faith among people who were not Jewish. Their circumstances were different, but each one came to Jesus with faith, humility and expectation.

Let us look at these two accounts and see what their faith can teach us today, and how we can draw from their interactions with Christ.

1. The Centurion — Great Faith

Matthew 8:5–13 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying:

“Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.” Jesus said to him: “I will come and heal him.” But the centurion answered: “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a **man under authority**, having soldiers under me.”

When Jesus heard this, He marvelled and said: **“I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!”** Then Jesus said to the centurion: “Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that same hour.

Intercession: Praying on Behalf of Another for Healing

This is an amazing example. It takes a soldier's perspective to understand how authority works. The centurion understood that Jesus had authority, and that He did not even need to be physically present. **"Only speak a word, and my servant will be healed."**

We understand here that when we pray, we too can believe that God will work. The Lord said that this man had **great faith** because he believed in Him when many of His own people did not.

Your own examples: Many of you will have prayed for others, or on behalf of others, and seen the Lord work—maybe for healing, for a job, or for something that needed to be resolved. You prayed, you believed, and you saw God move.

This Scripture is also a great source of encouragement and direction, reminding us that the Lord is working even when we cannot see how He will do it.

2. The Canaanite Woman — Great Faith

The next example we can also read together.

Matthew 15:21–28

Jesus went into the region of Tyre and Sidon, and a woman of Canaan came to Him, crying out: **"Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."** At first, Jesus answered her not a word. But she continued, and she came and **worshipped Him**, saying: **"Lord, help me!"** She continued to believe and continued to ask.

Finally, Jesus answered her: **"O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire."** And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Intercession: Praying on Behalf of Another for Healing and Deliverance

Here we see again someone interceding to God for a relative or loved one, but also enduring and continuing to ask, knowing that He is the only One who can do it.

This woman demonstrates persistence in asking the Lord on behalf of her demon-possessed daughter. Even though Jesus' earthly ministry was initially directed to the **"lost sheep of the house of Israel,"** we see the heart of God and His compassion even towards her.

We too can persevere in prayer for healing and deliverance, which are sometimes two different sides of the same coin.

This Scripture is also a great source of encouragement and direction when we, or someone else, have a situation going on.

For Us Today — New Covenant

Now, many of the same situations happen today. The Lord is asking us to follow His example. As His disciples on the earth, we have been given authority in His name.

We should not approach every situation simply by asking the Lord to come and do what He has already given us authority to do. We can pray, intercede and ask God, but we should also trust the God who lives in us to work through us.

So, in one sense, we are not the centurion or the Canaanite woman. We are now disciples of Jesus, called to continue His work and exercise, with persistence, the authority He has given us.

We get the following picture to help guide us.

Luke 10:17–19 The seventy returned with joy, saying:

“Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” And Jesus said:
“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.”

We must also remember and understand that we too live under the authority of the Word of God. This means there are times when we call out to God, and there are times when we go in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit in authority—with great boldness and without fear.

What can we learn from this today?

- **When praying for someone who is sick:** We don't have to pray fearfully as though nothing can be done. We can pray in faith and, where appropriate, pray for healing in Jesus' name.
- **When someone is oppressed or demonised:** We can stand in the authority of Jesus' name and pray for deliverance, rather than being intimidated by the enemy.
- **When facing fear:** We can remember that Jesus has given authority over the power of the enemy. We don't have to submit to fear.
- **When witnessing or evangelising:** We can step out boldly, trusting the Holy Spirit to lead us rather than being paralysed by what people might think.
- **When we don't know what to do:** This is where we call out to God, pray, listen and seek the leading of the Holy Spirit. Authority does not mean acting independently of God.

- **When confronting spiritual opposition:** We don't rely on our own strength or personality; our confidence is in Jesus and His authority.

To End

We pray to God, we listen to God, and then we obey God. We use the word of God as a guide and a source of encouragement

There are times to ask, times to wait, and times to step out in the authority He has given us.

The key is being led by the Holy Spirit and standing on the Word of God.

This is what **great faith** looks like, not simply believing that God can do something, but trusting Him enough to pray, persevere, listen and obey.