

Sermon-Based Small Group Bible Study

Encounters with Jesus: Faith in Jesus (Luke 7:1–10)

Open

Select one of these “ice breakers” to get the conversation going toward the study.

- Do you prefer to be the person in charge or the person behind the scenes?
- These days we’re used to technology that lets us do things from a distance that used to require us to be present. What’s something you really depend on being able to do at a distance?
- Tell us about a person who stood up for you when you really needed it.

Dig

After reading Luke 7:1–10, discuss these questions.

1. Imagine yourself a person of Jewish faith in the time of Jesus. The Roman Empire has ruled your people for nearly a hundred years. How do you feel about Romans, especially Roman soldiers and their commanders living in your land? Why do you think the Jewish elders in this story feel as they do about this Roman officer (verses 3–4)?
2. Look at what the centurion does in verses 5–8. What kind of person does he appear to be to you? Give some words or phrases to describe him.
3. The idea of “authority” is important in the centurion’s message. What does he understand authority to mean? What is his attitude toward his own authority? Toward Jesus’ authority?
4. Jesus says the faith of the centurion is greater than he has seen in Israel (verse 9). How do you think that felt to those who heard it?
5. Do you think there is a connection between authority (what the centurion talks about) and faith (what Jesus talks about)? How would you describe the connection?

Reflect

Use any of these prompts to encourage group members to apply the text to their own experiences.

- How would you evaluate your faith these days? Strong like a bull? Steady like a tractor? Hard to start on cold mornings like an old car? Missing like your misplaced wallet?
- How does the idea of submitting to Jesus’ authority feel to you? Comforting? Intimidating? Challenging? Mysterious?
- Pastor Bryan pointed out how this story shows the range of God’s word: it calls us to love our enemies because God loves all people. How have you seen the range of God’s word at work?

Pray

Invite the group to pray together using any of these suggestions.

- What needs have you heard from others in the group that we can pray about?
- What is happening in your life or those close to you that calls for faith in the authority of Jesus? What can we ask for in prayer about that situation?
- Who in your life is like the centurion’s servant, someone you care about who has great need? How can we pray for that person?