



CRAZY FAITH

THE KIND OF FAITH THAT MOVES MOUNTAINS



Small Group Discussion Guide



PREPARATION

STUDY

Spend the week studying Matthew 8:5-13. Consult the commentary provided and any additional study tools to enhance your preparation.

PRAY

Pray for our pastors and this week's message, the upcoming group time, your group members, and their openness to God's Word.

LANDING POINT

Confident faith believes in Jesus's authority and power over my life.



GROUP DISCUSSION

CONFIDENTIALITY | What's said in the group stays in the group.

NO CROSS-TALK | Be considerate of others as they share. Refrain from side conversations and texting during group time.

NO FIXING | We are not in the group to fix each other. Jesus does that part.

SHARING | Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Don't talk too much or too little. Every person brings something valuable to the group.



INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

CONFIDENCE AND DOUBT

When you think about it, faith comes down to confidence and doubt. Do we have confidence in who God is and what He can do; or do we doubt His love, goodness and power? The kind of faith that amazes Jesus is a faith that's confident. It's a faith that says, "Despite my circumstances and any reason I might have to doubt, I know who you are. I know You can do anything if it's Your will."

This week your group will discuss a time when a Roman soldier surprised Jesus with His confident faith. Like the soldier from the story, you can have confident faith in Jesus's authority and power over your life.

Q: *What are the differences between someone who doubts God and someone who's confident in Him? How does each person live differently?*



DEEPER DIVE

Select 2–3 questions to discuss as a group.

JESUS WAS AMAZED

Jesus often traveled to different towns and cities. One day when He was in Capernaum, a Roman officer approached Him in dire need. So, let's take a look at what happened and how the Roman soldier amazed even Jesus.

Q: *Have a volunteer read Matthew 8:5-13. After the story is read, split into pairs [or groups in breakout rooms] and retell the story in your own words.*

Q: *Share about a time when you had to trust in someone's word to do something. How did your trust in that person play a role in the situation?*

Q: Explain how the centurion's faith was "crazy faith."



REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

FAITH THAT HAS POWER

This story doesn't play out the way we might expect, does it? Jesus agreed to go and heal the centurion's servant; but the centurion told Jesus, "Just say the word and that's enough." What does the centurion's faith teach us about confident faith? It teaches several things:

- *Faith understands Jesus's authority.* The centurion saw Jesus as a man of authority because he, too, was a man of authority. He understood that all Jesus had to do was say the word. Crazy faith believes that Jesus can do anything just by saying the word. No spectacular show is necessary, only His word.
- *Anyone can have faith.* The centurion was a Roman, a Gentile. Matthew used this story to show us that faith is available to all, not just the religious types. Jesus came to save the lost and that includes everyone. He welcomes anyone who has faith in Him.
- *Through faith, God's power is released.* Jesus told the centurion that what he requested would be done according to his faith. Often God works in our lives because (1) we have faith, (2) in proportion to our faith, or (3) in accordance with what we expected. Crazy faith says, "I'm going to expect big things from a big God who is able."

Q: Where do you lack confidence in your faith? How could you gain more confidence?

Q: Name one area in your life where you need confident faith like the centurion's. Pause to pray for God to give you that kind of faith.

Q: What's one thing you can do this week to increase your faith in God's authority and power over your life?

Q: How can the group be praying for you this week?



COMMENTARY

WHAT IS A CENTURION? A centurion was “a Roman officer in charge of a hundred men.”¹

A GOSPEL FOR ALL NATIONS “The second miracle, the healing of the centurion’s servant (8:5–13), is a reminder to us of Jesus’s concern to extend the kingdom beyond the Jewish world. In His encounter with a Roman soldier, we again have the principle of Jesus reaching out that we saw when the wise men came to worship Him as a child. All this anticipates the Great Commission to all the nations.”²

‘TILL KINGDOM COME “The coming kingdom [of God] is often portrayed in terms of a feast, particularly a wedding feast (Isa. 25:6; Matt. 22:1–14; Rev. 19:7–10).”³

A CELEBRATION AND A WARNING Jesus highlights the centurion’s faith in this story but there is also a veiled warning to those who think they are believers. Anyone—Jew or Gentile—can have faith and it’s the quality of faith, not one’s religious background or knowledge about God, that is the true measure of a believer.⁴

ENDNOTES:

1. Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1835.
2. Iain D. Campbell, *Opening up Matthew, Opening Up Commentary* (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2008), 56.
3. Stuart K. Weber, *Matthew*, vol. 1, *Holman New Testament Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 117.
4. Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 142–143.