

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 4
Gospel Lesson for Adults

Scripture: Luke 7:1-10

We remain Easter people, now with the wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails. Our task for the months ahead in this season of Ordinary Time, which extends to the end of November, is to look at what Jesus so tenaciously taught his disciples and see what is in these teachings for us as we carry out the work we have been given to do. Jesus promised his disciples a helper, an Advocate, who would stand with them making the work possible. This same helper, the Holy Spirit, hovers over us still eager to quench the fire of fear and replace it with the powerful energy of love.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus goes from calling the disciples to immediately healing people and teaching through his actions. In today's lesson, we hear a story about a servant being healed because the centurion (a Roman army officer) had enough belief, enough faith to ask Jesus to heal his servant who he valued highly. The centurion knew that he did not deserve Jesus granting his request and he asked anyway hoping that he would bring healing. This is a story that is more about the centurion's faith in Jesus' ability to heal than it is about the man who was healed.

Theme: Unexpected healing

Before Class: You will need copies of the Bible or copies of the scripture passage. If you would like to have the group read from more than one translation, make sure and have either Bibles or copies of different translations on hand.

Beginning: Invite the group to think about a time when they asked for something even though they did not necessarily deserve it. What was it like to ask? What was it like to receive? Do not have them respond at this time, but invite their responses during the Questions portion.

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, be with us as we meditate on your word. Help us to understand the centurion's faith so that our own faith may grow. Hear our prayers as we come to you, asking for your healing and love. Amen.

The Scripture: Luke 7: 1-10 Invite a volunteer to read. If you choose, you could have a few different translations and have different volunteers each read from a different translation.

Questions:

I wonder how the centurion had heard of Jesus?

I wonder why the servant was so important to the centurion?

I wonder what Jesus thought of this request?

What made the centurion believe so much, that Jesus' mere words healed the servant?

I wonder if we have the faith of the centurion?

Do we ask Jesus for healing or favors, even though we feel like we may not deserve them?

As we began our time together, I invited you to think about a time when you asked for something even though you did not necessarily deserve it. What was it like to ask? What was it like to receive?

Getting Closure: In this story, the centurion asked for healing on behalf of his servant. I wonder if there has been a time when we have asked for something on behalf of someone else. How can we serve as a voice to those who are not heard in our society? Where are the places we can speak up and ask, even if we do not know that answer to the questions? Where is our faith leading us to speak up?

Closing Prayer: Loving God, we thank you for your healing words. Remind us, as we go forth from this place, that we, too, are called to ask for what we see is needed. Help us to speak for those who have no voice, help us to be brave and stand up for others that we all may be healed and know your love. Amen.

Luke 7:1-10

7After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ²A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. ³When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. ⁴When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, “He is worthy of having you do this for him, ⁵for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.” ⁶And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, “Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; ⁷therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸For I also am a man set 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 slave, ‘Do this,’ and the slave does it.” ⁹When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.” ¹⁰When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

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