

THE WHOLE STORY OF THE GOSPELS

The gospels are all about JESUS! Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are commonly referred to as the gospels. From slightly different angles they all tell the story of Christ's earthly ministry culminating in His death and resurrection. The GOSPEL (Good News) is all about WHO Jesus is and WHAT He has done to secure our salvation. *It's all about Jesus!*

It never ceases to amaze me how so many professing evangelicals consistently jump over WHO Jesus is to the WHAT Jesus has done in His all-important cross-work. The gospels DON'T do that. At great length the gospels lay out FIRST and foremost WHO Jesus is and then building on that emphasize His all-important cross-work and resurrection. This is the basic thematic order! Thus, the CROSS-WORK of Christ builds on the PERSON of Christ. It is the PERSON of Christ that makes His CROSS-WORK satisfactory and all-sufficient as evidenced in His resurrection (cf. Rom. 4:25).

Christ must be believed on for WHO He is as Lord-God as well as for WHAT He has done as Savior. Who He is as Lord (meaning GOD-MASTER) has everything to do with His sovereign authority. Matthew 8 is all about this. It's about authority and Christ's rightful authority as the King Who brings in the kingdom. That is what was presented in Christ's earthly ministry as He came presenting the kingdom on the condition of repentance (cf. Mt. 4:17).

The point in context in Matthew 8:5-13 is that **FAITH recognizes Christ's Lordship authority**. This is the essence of faith! One cannot divorce true faith from the proper recognition of Christ's authority! This is what it means to truly know Jesus as "Lord". It means to recognize His authority as MASTER, as sovereign GOD-MASTER! And saving faith personalizes it!

When the Gentile centurion in Matthew 8 humbly recognized Christ's authority to just speak the word and it would bring healing, Christ then marveled and said, "***Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel.***" (Mt. 8:10). This is the stuff of true FAITH. It recognizes Christ's Lordship authority. It is only those who have this kind of faith that will enter the kingdom. Note in context what Christ then immediately went on to say...

Matthew 8:11 (NKJV)

11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

The Jews thought they, as the favored people of God, were most certainly going into the kingdom in contrast to wretched Gentiles. But Jesus said MANY Gentiles from all over the world (from the east and west) will sit down with the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) in the kingdom.

Christ here put his finger on the very thing that is necessary to get into the kingdom and that is FAITH – faith of the nature which was exhibited by the centurion. These are the ones going into the kingdom. And praise the Lord He said there would be “MANY” of us!

And what kind of faith did the centurion have? He had a faith that recognized Christ’s authority as Lord! This is the kind of faith that will get you a seat with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom.

It is true that the GOSPEL is that “***Christ died for our sins...was buried...and that He rose again***” (1 Cor. 15:3-4). But the point is, it was **CHRIST** Who did this! All is predicated on His PERSON. John 1:12 is clear. Those who receive Christ are those “***who believe in His name***”. His NAME is WHO He is – His PERSON!

The all-important CROSS-WORK of Christ cannot be divorced from His PERSON as Lord-God. Christ is SAVIOR only by virtue of Him being LORD! (cf. Isa. 45:21-22; 1 Cor. 1:2) Many want a Savior, but not a Lord, but true saving faith recognizes Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior!