

“Can We Trust in the Son of Man?” Mark 7:1-35

Please stand and open your Bibles to Isaiah 61:1-3

In our verse by verse study of the book of Luke we are now coming to the main part of Jesus’ earthly ministry as he is going from town to town teaching the people and proclaiming the He is the Son of Man, the promised Messiah. Today we are going to look at four stories that deal with our trust in Jesus. We are going to see the faithful, the faithless, one who has lost their faith and those that have rejected it. Through it all the application will be “Are you trusting the Son of Man?”. Not only can He be trusted, but He is also worth leaving all and following Him! Let’s start with the first...

The Faithful

Luke 7:1-10

Here is a man who is not even Jewish and has heard about Jesus that goes out of his way to help one of his servants. This is unusual as servants were considered property that could be replaced. These were the disposables in that culture and only had value when they were productive. If one is to fall ill, they were often left for dead and replaced with the next man up. This shows a little about this man’s character. If you do a study

on centurions in the bible you will find a highly moral and loyal group of people in the Bible. A Centurion is just that. One who is over a “Century” of soldiers. They had to be good leaders to keep the morale and they had to be able to facilitate between the subjects and the governing officials. They were often left in authority in small villages and cities to keep the peace and to make sure everyone is following the law. It was part of the Roman “Pax Romana” where Rome was ruling the world with an iron fist and had troops everywhere to keep this peace. Not only does this guy have a good character but he was good at diplomacy. He didn’t just do his job but sought the betterment of the subjects of his rule. He helped them build a Synagogue and showed great respect for their beliefs. He even understood their law about not entering into a gentile’s house. But he takes it a step further in his trust and faith in who Jesus is. He understands from what he has heard about Jesus that He is not just a normal person. By just the works he knows this is a man of great authority. He didn’t need a bunch of proof. He didn’t need to test it. He heard and he believed. This is the type of faith that He wants you to have. Here is an outcast from Israel. A Gentile who is wanting to help his slave. An outcast of an outcast so to speak. This is in stark contrast to the religious leaders, who know the word. They know the prophecies. In a little while they will say His miracles are from the devil. We assume because this city was the home of Peter and all the

people that come for healing that surely, they all believed in Him, right?

Matthew 11:23

And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

This is the reality of it all. The hardest people to reach are the religious and the traditionalist. Jesus condemns them because even though the evidence is right in front of them, they refuse to believe. This man only heard of Jesus and set himself out to find Him and all he asked for was the word. Let that sink in for a minute. Are you one who needs proof? Experience? Look, all these people had all the proof they needed and still did not believe. This is real faith. Jesus says it and you believe it. Where do you find this word? In your Bible!

Romans 10:17

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

It is no accident that this story is put in right after Jesus talks about the foundation you are building on. Believe it and build

on it. Put your trust in it. He can and will do it. Matthew tells us His final words to the man...

Matthew 8:13

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.

As you have believed, it will be done for you. That is the kind of faith that saves. Now we run into the faithless

The Faithless

Luke 7:11-17

Nain is about 25 miles southeast of Nazareth so a little bit of a distance from the last story. The contrast is telling. The crowd that is following Jesus comes into the town full of joy, excitement and anticipation. The crowd coming out of the city is sad, hopeless and mourning. These are the faithless. They have lost all hope. It is this widow's only son that has died. She has lost her husband and now her only son. A crowd of people with hope running into a crowd of people without it. But did you know that Jesus cares about the faithless?

Luke 7:13

When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not weep.”

Jesus has compassion on those that have lost hope and all faith in a future. He is a friend to the friendless and ready to help anyone who needs it. Paul explains it like this...

2 Timothy 2:13

If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

It is not how much faith you have, it's what you do with what faith you do have.

Matthew 17:20

So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”

We will be looking at this story not to long from now...

Mark 9:23-24

Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!”

The same God who raises the dead can and will help you and restore you. Don't let anyone tell you that you don't have enough faith. Take what you have and put in towards Jesus and good things will happen! But what if we lose faith? Here is our last story...

A Lost Faith

Luke 7:18-29

Now, before you get all critical of J the B, we need to understand something. He is sitting in prison while all this is going on. I have been there, and I know what happens. You have too much time to think and the old “Could of, Should of and Would ofs” sink in. Oh, come on, I know you all are too spiritual for that! You think J the B is above having a pity party of his own? After all he is the forerunner of the Messiah! When is he going to get the show on the road and break me out of this place? You know, the old “How long, oh Lord?”. One thing to keep in mind when reading this that all Jewish people during that time had believed that the Messiah was going to come and rule and reign over the world. It was their idea that He would

break the rule of Rome and rule the nations with a rod of Iron. The idea of the church age was still a mystery. This context helps you understand J the B's response. Are you the coming one or not? Jesus does not correct him but just tells his guys to look and report what you see. What was that? His fulfilment of the word. We read this at the beginning. You want to be reminded of the truth? You want your faith restored? Get back to the word. Remember Jesus fulfilled prophecy. He died on a cross and rose again from the dead. These are facts of history. Many today have lost faith in the return of Christ. I believe this is the main reason for the blessing of Revelation...

Revelation 1:3

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

Notice that Jesus did not condemn J the B of his lack of faith? Do you know that He is not condemning you either? Look, He goes on to remind them of who he is and what he is. Even in our days of the hardest faith and those days that are the biggest struggle for us this is still a fact...

1 Peter 1:3-5

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Do you know that your standing before God is not based on your struggle with faith? Once you have placed your faith in the finished work of Christ, He is the one who holds you, He is the one who will carry you through. Just the B's doubt did not change who he was and will not change you. There is a big difference between one who struggles with their faith and one who rejects it all together.

The Rejected Fatih

Luke 7:30-35

There is a difference between a struggle and a rejection. The religious leaders were likened to little children playing games. Playing a role just to try to get your attention but it is all phony. They had rejected the witness of John and thought of themselves as superior to everyone else. They rejected John and they rejected Jesus. And in that sense rejected God and

His word. Wisdom is justified by her children and God's children come in many forms and levels of faith. Don't let that discourage you and continue to trust in the one who has, can and will save you. We have talked about faith that comes through the word of God and at any size can move mountains. It can be restored through the word of God when lacking. Once we have placed it in the Savior our position never changes and will be made perfect and complete when we are with Him in eternity. Let's remember a couple of things about faith before we leave today...

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Just because J the B couldn't see it does not make it so. The Centurion didn't need to see it for he believed. The widow had none, and Jesus came and gave it to her. None of these rejected it like the Religious Leaders and make sure you do not either.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Those who seek Him will find Him. I don't know which of these camps you fall into today, but I know where the answer is for all of them. Put your trust in Him and He will see you through.