

## WALKING WITH AUTHORITY

**Thesis:** Understanding Jesus Authority allows us to walk in faith.

### **Matthew 8:5-13 (NLT): The Faith of a Roman Officer**

5 When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer[a] came and pleaded with him, 6 “Lord, my young servant[b] lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain.”

7 Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.”

8 But the officer said, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. 9 I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, ‘Go,’ and they go, or ‘Come,’ and they come. And if I say to my slaves, ‘Do this,’ they do it.”

10 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, “I tell you the truth, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel! 11 And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. 12 But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

13 Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, “Go back home. Because you believed, it has happened.” And the young servant was healed that same hour.

### **Also see... Luke 7:1-10 (NLT) - The Faith of a Roman Officer**

7 When Jesus had finished saying all this to the people, he returned to Capernaum. 2 At that time the highly valued slave of a Roman officer[a] was sick and near death. 3 When the officer heard about Jesus, he sent some respected Jewish elders to ask him to come and heal his slave. 4 So they earnestly begged Jesus to help the man. “If anyone deserves your help, he does,” they said, 5 “for he loves the Jewish people and even built a synagogue for us.”

6 So Jesus went with them. But just before they arrived at the house, the officer sent some friends to say, “Lord, don’t trouble yourself by coming to my home, for I am not worthy of such an honor. 7 I am not even worthy to come and meet you. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. 8 I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, ‘Go,’ and they go, or ‘Come,’ and they come. And if I say to my slaves, ‘Do this,’ they do it.”

9 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to the crowd that was following him, he said, “I tell you, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel!” 10 And when the officer’s friends returned to his house, they found the slave completely healed.

**Hebrews 11 :1 (NLT)** Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.

**2 Corinthians 5:7 (NLT)** For we live by believing and not by seeing.

*2 Corinthians 5:7 (NIV) For we live by faith, not by sight.*

**2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT)** For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

**John 20:29 (NLT)** Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those

**Matthew 28:18-20 (NLT)** Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations,[b] baptizing them in the name of

the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

**Icebreaker Question:** Who was a leader that you loved to follow? What made them a great leader?  
*For example: Your High School Soccer coach, a certain Boy Scout Leader, your first boss, or 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher*

**Activity: Who’s the boss:**

Using the list below, have the group discuss who should be the boss and why. You can choose famous, fictional, or even people in the group.

**For example: Alien Invasion:** Who would be best to lead against Alien Invasion. Someone could say “Will Smith in *Men in Black*”. Another could say, “Will Smith from *Independence Day*.” Another could say, “Will Smith from *I, Robot*.” (it does not have to be Will Smith, but I would follow him anyway!).

- Choir Leader
- Dance Battle
- Budgetary Crisis
- Gardening project
- Making a movie
- Pie Eating Contest
- Playing *Call of Duty*
- Rock & Roll Band
- School Science Project
- Screaming Contest
- Service Project
- Storming Normandy
- Teaching Middle School Math
- Wizarding Battle

**Video: Avengers – Captain America’s Authority**

Throughout the movie, there seems to be conflict on who should be the leader of the Avengers. In the final battle, that authority is given to Captain America. Here are a few scenes from that movie from the final battle where Cap commands with Authority. (Note: *These scenes have action violence and the words “hell” and “bastard” are uttered.*)

**Captain America’s Authority Questioned:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ya3NETEncw> (1:15-2:10 – MAIN SCENE – TWO COPS QUESTION ORDERS FROM CAPTAIN)

**Discuss:**

- Why did these people question the order’s given by Captain America?
- What made them change their mind?
- What might this show say about how people establish authority? (earned not given)

***Captain America leads Avengers with Authority.***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nEo40Y-Qrc> (00:00 – 2:28) (1:15-2:28) (MAIN SCENE- CAPTAIN GIVE ORDERS TO THE AVENGERS ON HOW TO FIGHT THE BAD GUYS)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-YXnfFym7c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-YXnfFym7c)

**For and Extended Version: Watch these two clips together.**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-m6UKS1L0YQ> & [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhRVRR\\_61xU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhRVRR_61xU) (END SHORTLY AFTER “HULK SMASH!”)

**Discuss:**

- Why do the Avengers finally decide to follow Captain America’s authority?
- What made Captain America the ideal leader for that situation?
- How do the Avengers respond to his Authority? (they follow his orders)
- What does this say about how people respond to those in Authority? (they follow their orders)

### **Would Jesus make a good leader?**

Using the same list from “Who’s the boss,” discuss if Jesus would make a good leader for any of these activities and why.

### **BIBLE STUDY:**

#### **Read Matthew 8:5-13**

Discuss:

- Why did the Roman Officer/Centurion come to Jesus?
- What does the Roman Officer/Centurion ask Jesus to do that is different from others seeking healing?
- What does the Roman Officer/Centurion say about Jesus Authority?
- Why is Jesus authority significant?
- Why is it important to understand and respect Jesus’ authority?

#### **Talking Point (from *New Testament Resources*): The unexpected example of faith**

A Roman centurion was a man of war. He understood how authority worked. He had soldiers beneath him whom he expected to obey his every command without question. He also had officers above him, and he knew without hesitation he’d obey every one of their instructions. The centurion understood if Jesus wanted to do something, it would be done. So he asked Jesus to heal his servant, fully confident it would be accomplished. The centurion’s act of faith came from understanding Jesus was in control.

- How does Jesus respond to the Roman Officer/Centurion?
- Why does Jesus highlight that the Roman Officer/Centurion is a Gentile (non-Jewish)?
- What might that mean for a Jew? What might that mean for a Gentile? What does this mean for you?

#### **ABOUT FAITH:**

Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel!” (vs 10)

- How was Jesus using this situation to teach people about faith?
- What is faith and how does the Roman Officer/Centurion display it?

Look at the following verses and discuss what they may be saying about faith. (*all of these verses show that faith often comes when we cannot see the outcome, but need to trust in God without seeing*).

- **Hebrews 11 :1** (NLT) Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.
- **2 Corinthians 5:7** (NLT) For we live by believing and not by seeing.  
**2 Corinthians 5:7** (NIV) *For we live by faith, not by sight.*
- **John 20:29** (NLT) [*this is what Jesus says to doubting Thomas after he finally believes that Jesus is risen*] Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.”

How does the Roman Officer/Centurion understanding of authority strengthen his faith?

**Talking Point (from *New Testament Resources*):Do you believe Jesus is in control?**

We may find it difficult to trust anyone because we’ve been let down too many times. Jesus is different than any of the people who have let you down. He has complete authority over everything. Can you trust him with your problems? If you find yourself worrying about things and don’t believe Jesus can help you, maybe you just don’t know him as well as you need to. Our faith increases when we understand Jesus better. He’s in control. He loves us and wants the best for us.

In the Great Commission Jesus says, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations...” (Matthew 28:18-19).

- What does it mean that Jesus has “all authority?”
- How should knowing that Jesus has all authority strengthen our faith?
- What should our response be?
- Is there an area in your life that you do not think that Jesus can have authority?
- How might confessing your unbelief strengthen your faith?

**PRAYER TIME:**

Spend time either quietly or as a group. Guide the group through each stage of prayer.\

- Praising God for his authority
- Confessing the areas in your life where you don’t trust his Authority?
- Ask God to help you have faith, even when you cannot see.
- Like the Roman official, bring your requests to God.