

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 8:5-13

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour. (KJV)

The power of God's word is verified in the present Gospel. The believing centurion asked Jesus only to speak the word necessary for healing his ailing and afflicted servant.

Jesus recognized the strong faith in the centurion. Jesus told the centurion to go his way. The servant was healed according to the way the centurion believed. Complete faith in Christ's power to heal by His word rested within the centurion.

Today's Gospel gives each attentive believer the opportunity to examine his or her personal degree of faith in the Lord God. Each person hearing the Holy Gospel is exposed to the Lord's teachings.

Each person reading the Holy Scriptures learns about the word of God. Making the word of God the governing way of daily life is the expectation for each believer. Having complete faith in God's word and power of God's word rests with each person.

The world is full of teachings that run contrary to God's word and seek to weaken the faith of believers. Believers receive varying messages and are subject to worldly teachings that attempt to dilute the Lord's teachings.

The power of God will not be minimized or overcome. The Lord God created the world. The Lord Jesus Christ defeated death and rose from the tomb following crucifixion and burial.

The Lord's word withstands all challenges and attempts to distort or weaken the power of the Word. The centurion's faith in Jesus's word was well-placed. The centurion's faith in the Lord did not lead to disappointment.

Patience is an important lesson in the current Gospel. Believers do well to turn to the Lord in faith and to wait patiently for the Lord to act. The centurion was patient in turning to Jesus in faith.

Jesus healed the ailing and afflicted servant. The Lord validated the centurion's strong faith. Patient believers of each century have their faith in the Lord validated. Attentive Scripture readers learn of the value of patience and faith placed in the Lord.

The Gospel of St. Luke states: “In your **patience** possess ye your souls.” (Lk.21:19). The centurion’s soul was rich with patience and faith in the Lord. The present Gospel lesson is enriching for each receptive believer.

Joy emanates from the centurion’s faith and the Lord’s response to that faith. Healing for the servant came from the centurion’s strong faith and the Lord’s action. The ailing and afflicted servant became well and had a new opportunity at life.

God’s Holy Church teaches believers to value God’s word. The Church proclaims God’s word consistently throughout the world and throughout the centuries. Church history is rich with lessons of strong faith in God’s word.

Believers choose the way each moment of life is utilized. Wise believers fill the moments of life with God’s word. Believers strengthen their faith by immersing the self in God’s word.

The heart, mind and soul filled with God’s word have unlimited capabilities. The impossible becomes possible with God. The ailing and afflicted servant in the present Gospel was healed at a distance because of the centurion’s faith in Jesus’ word.

The daily news is filled with negativity. God’s word provides brightness, hope and healing. God’s word serves to guide believers through the dark moments of life to the safe harbor where heart, mind and soul are healed.

The ailing and afflicted servant in the present Gospel had his future changed dramatically by the centurion’s strong faith. Employers with strong faith in the Lord make a positive difference in the lives of their employees.

Workers with strong faith in the Lord make a positive difference in their daily work environment. Family life improves when family members share strong faith in the Lord’s word.

The Church proclaims the Holy Gospel at each Divine Liturgy to enrich and strengthen attentive believers. God’s word is intended to change the believers’ behavior for the better with each reading of the Holy Gospel.

May the centurion’s strong faith evident in the current Gospel be an enriching example for receptive believers today. May God’s word bring healing to hurting minds, hearts and souls.

Thank God for the opportunity to hear the Holy Gospel. Thank God for the Church protecting, preserving and proclaiming the Gospel through the centuries. With gratitude, may today’s Gospel fill our hearts, minds and souls.

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost. Venerable Athanasius of Mt. Athos. Venerable Sergius the Wonderworker of Radonezh. July 5/July 18, 2021. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic