

# WHY PRAY?

## Becoming God's Friend

**Discussion Guide**  
**Vol. 9, No. 10**  
**June 21, 2009**

Sermon Title

### Praying With Faith

*Matthew 8:1-13 with Hebrews 11:1 & 6*

by Paul R. Martin

#### Sermon Outline

**Introduction:** I have spoken a great deal about prayer, about listening to and hearing from God, about praying in the Spirit and abiding in Christ, but so far I have said very little about faith as it relates to prayer. How does faith fit into the picture. Is it required? Where does it come from. Is faith what gets the work done? In Matthew 8 there is the story of a Centurion who seeks out Jesus to heal his servant (also see Luke 7). Jesus says of this man that he has the greatest faith He has ever seen. What does it all mean?

#### I. The Nature of Faith and Authority

- A. The Centurion understands Authority
- B. Jesus equates this understanding with faith
- C. The Centurion also expects that Jesus will heal because he has heard of His character
- D. The understanding of authority is coupled with the expectation of grace

#### II. Two Elements Necessary for God to Act

- A. Hebrews 11:6—we must believe that He IS (the Great I AM of Eternity)
- B. Hebrews 11:6—we must believe that He will act on our behalf

#### III. The Nature of Faith—Hebrews 11:1

- A. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen
- B. Faith must be rooted in truth—it has no power of its own (I Cor 15:14, 17)
- C. Faith can be weak or strong, and it can grow (II Cor 10:15, I Thess 3:10, etc)
- D. Faith in God is required for everything in the spiritual walk
- E. Faith must be acted upon to be real—it is not just a state of mind (James 2)
- F. Faith itself is a shield and a defense against the enemy (Eph 6:16; I Pet 1:5)
- G. Faith comes from hearing the word (rhema) of Christ (John 15:7, Rom 10:17)

**Conclusion:** God is the Creator-Power behind all Kingdom work. He is the Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, Deliverer, Restorer, Mountain-mover, Provider, Comfort, Shield, Strength, Source of Eternal Life. But FAITH is the conviction that gives Him room to work in our lives and in the lives of others. Our confidence in Him and in His revealed truth, our conviction about His character and power, is the key that releases His Spirit to operate in our lives and circumstances to bring about His kingdom goals. We partner with God when we hear His word and believe with confident expectation that He will act according to His revelation and then ask Him in simple trusting faith to do what He has promised. To paraphrase an old Gospel song, God does the work, prayer is the key to heaven, and faith actually turns the lock which opens the door!

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. **6** And 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 seek Him. (*New American Standard Bible 1995*)

**Matthew 8:1-13** When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him. <sup>2</sup> And a leper came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." <sup>3</sup> Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. <sup>4</sup> And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." <sup>5</sup> And when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, imploring Him, <sup>6</sup> and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, fearfully tormented." <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." <sup>8</sup> But the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed." <sup>9</sup> "For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it." <sup>10</sup> Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel. <sup>11</sup> "I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; <sup>12</sup> but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." <sup>13</sup> And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed that very moment. (*New American Standard Bible, 1995*)



### Discussion Questions

1.) Explain in your own words what Hebrews 11:1 means to you. Give an example.

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2.) In what ways have you exercised faith this last week?

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3.) Compared to 5 years ago, is your faith growing or diminishing? Explain.

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Matt. 6:30  
Matt. 8:10, 26  
Matt. 9:2, 22, 29  
Matt. 14:31  
Matt. 15:28  
Matt. 16:8  
Matt. 17:20  
Matt. 21:21  
Mk. 2:5  
Mk. 4:40  
Mk. 5:34  
Mk. 10:52  
Mk. 11:22  
Lk. 5:20  
Lk. 7:9, 50  
Lk. 8:25, 48  
Lk. 12:28  
Lk. 17:5f, 19  
Lk. 18:8, 42  
Lk. 22:32  
Acts 3:16  
Acts 6:5, 7  
Acts 11:24  
Acts 13:8  
Acts 14:9, 22, 27  
Acts 15:9  
Acts 16:5  
Acts 20:21  
Acts 24:24  
Acts 26:18  
Rom. 1:5, 8, 12, 17  
Rom. 3:22, 25ff, 30f  
Rom. 4:5, 9, 11ff, 16, 19f  
Rom. 5:1f  
Rom. 9:30, 32  
Rom. 10:6, 8, 17  
Rom. 11:20  
Rom. 12:3, 6  
Rom. 14:1f, 22f  
Rom. 16:26  
1 Co. 2:5  
1 Co. 12:9  
1 Co. 13:2, 13  
1 Co. 15:14, 17  
1 Co. 16:13  
2 Co. 1:24  
2 Co. 4:13  
2 Co. 5:7  
2 Co. 8:7  
2 Co. 10:15  
2 Co. 13:5  
Gal. 1:23  
Gal. 2:16, 20  
Gal. 3:2, 5, 7ff, 11f, 14, 22ff  
Gal. 5:5f  
Gal. 6:10  
Eph. 1:15  
Eph. 2:8  
Eph. 3:12, 17  
Eph. 4:5, 13  
Eph. 6:16, 23

4.) "My sheep hear my voice." How do you hear the voice of God in your life?

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Phil. 1:25, 27  
Phil. 2:17  
Phil. 3:9  
Col. 1:4, 23  
Col. 2:5, 7, 12  
1 Thess. 1:3, 8  
1 Thess. 3:2, 5ff, 10  
1 Thess. 5:8  
2 Thess. 1:3f, 11  
2 Thess. 2:13  
2 Thess. 3:2  
1 Tim. 1:2, 4f, 14, 19  
1 Tim. 2:7, 15  
1 Tim. 3:9, 13  
1 Tim. 4:1, 6, 12  
1 Tim. 5:8

5.) How do you personally couple what you hear with faith? What action do you take? What does it look like?

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1 Tim. 6:10ff, 21  
2 Tim. 1:5, 13  
2 Tim. 2:18, 22  
2 Tim. 3:8, 10, 15  
2 Tim. 4:7  
Tit. 1:1, 4, 13  
Tit. 2:2, 10  
Tit. 3:15  
Phlm. 1:5f  
Heb. 4:2  
Heb. 6:1, 12  
Heb. 10:22, 38f  
Heb. 11:1, 3ff, 11, 13, 17, 20ff, 27ff, 33, 39  
Heb. 12:2  
Heb. 13:7  
Jas. 1:3, 6  
Jas. 2:1, 5, 14, 17f, 20, 22, 24, 26  
Jas. 5:15

6.) What are the significant signposts in your life to which you can point as proof that God has/is leading you and how does these build your faith?

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1 Pet. 1:5, 7, 9, 21  
1 Pet. 5:9  
2 Pet. 1:1, 5  
1 Jn. 5:4  
Jude 1:3, 20  
Rev. 2:13, 19  
Rev. 13:10  
Rev. 14:12

**MEMORY VERSE**

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 6 And 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 seek Him. *(New American Standard Bible 1995)*

# PRAYER JOURNAL

As we have for the last several weeks, once again keep a brief prayer journal. Write down each day how you heard the voice of God speaking to you.

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

### The Mission of the Small Groups Ministry

We are a church of connected small groups that meet purposefully on a regular basis to equip one another for ministry, to love and build up one another in Christ, to know Him intimately, and to reach out to a lost and dying world in obedience to the Great Commission.

### Prayer Requests:

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