**Live in Community**

Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**Believe Boldly**

Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong. And do everything with love. ([I Corinthians 16:13–14](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Co16.13-14))

*The gospel message is shocking to many, shocking because of its implications. God has made himself known to us and promised to place His Spirit into our heart. We have been given direct access to Him. The Bible encourages us to come to Him with boldness. Our boldness in approaching Him is not from our words or our achievements. Instead, it’s based on God’s promises. So we ask, remembering His power and faithfulness. And we encourage those around us to do the same. Believe boldly.*

**Session Overview**

**Remember His Power**

**Biblical Encounter:** A Roman Officer Shows Impressive Faith ([Matthew 8:5–13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt8.5-13))

**Outcome:** Believe in the authority and power of God to provide the impossible.

*In this session, we’ll look at a time Jesus honored the faith of someone many would have considered an outsider. When we spend time in the Bible, it helps us know how great Jesus’ power is, and how much we can trust Him to do incredible things. As we get to know Jesus more, we see that nothing is impossible for Him and we learn to believe boldly.*

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| First time leading *Live* for Adults? Check out the [Facilitator Guide](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf). |

To access session content and videos from a computer, visit: [BibleEngagementProject.com/downloads](https://bibleengagementproject.com/downloads)

**Engage**

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| **QUESTION**Share about a time that you felt like you were powerless to do or accomplish something you really wanted or needed to. |

Have you ever stood close to a majestic waterfall? If you have, recall the feeling of strength and power you drew from the water falling at a high rate of speed. The famous Niagara Falls bordering the United States and Canada is one of the highest and widest falls—with the most water flow—in the world. It produces an incredible amount of electrical power for millions daily. We are all fascinated by things that show great power or strength. We also appreciate people who have power as well. In an unstable, unpredictable world, we want something or someone powerful to rely on.

**Watch**

As we watch this video, think about your answer to these questions: When you face something impossible, do you turn to Jesus quickly and expectantly or do you hesitate? Why do you think that is?



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**Consider What the Bible Says**

During the time the New Testament events were taking place, the Roman Empire dominated Israel. This meant that Israel’s capital city Jerusalem and all Israel’s towns often included Roman troops and government. Roman soldiers from multiple parts of the world would have been stationed there. Because of their post, many would have heard about Israel’s God. And they would have been aware to varying extents of the people's beliefs and religious practices. This makes the encounter in [Mark 8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk8) even more interesting.

**Did You Know?**

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| *An interaction of this type in New Testament times was rare as most Jewish people saw a Roman officer as an enemy and conqueror, rather than someone they would have a conversation with. This tension would eventually lead to all-out war about forty years after the events of the Gospels. This officer, however, appeared to be extremely different. He not only broke social norms by going to Jesus, but according to* [*Luke 7:5*](https://biblia.com/bible/luke/7/5)*, his true love for the Jewish people led him, as a Gentile, to help pay for the building of a synagogue.* |

**A Soldier Looks for Jesus**

Read [Matthew 8:5–6](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt8.5-6).

This officer challenges our stereotype of a typical Roman soldier. He was obviously a caring person. He paid attention to those in his household and was willing to make a petition on their behalf. The officer was even went as far as humbly pleading or begging Jesus—Someone subject to the very empire the officer represented.

Something about what the Roman officer knew or had heard about Jesus caught his attention. He appeared to know who Jesus was and came looking for Him just as He came back into town. Though he surely had come to Israel with his own ideas about religion, it’s possible that what he heard about Jesus changed that. As we’ll hear after reading more, the officer recognized Jesus for the powerful person He was.

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| **QUESTION**What do you think the disciples might have been thinking when they saw the Roman officer approaching Jesus? |

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| **QUESTION**If the soldier had asked your advice about his situation before Jesus came into town, what would you have told him to do? |

**Jesus Is Amazed**

Read [Matthew 8:7–10](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt8.7-10).

Jesus heard the officer’s request and offered to go to his home to help the servant. The officer’s response to Jesus’ offer actually amazed Him. Jesus’ authority over illness didn’t require that He even go to the home. Jesus only needed to say the word.

The officer’s position helped him understand how authority like this worked, and he recognized it in Jesus. The Roman officer had authority over others due to his submission to the power of the Roman Empire. Similarly, Jesus also operated under the authority of God the Father ([John 5:19–21](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn5.19-21)). This relationship was key to the authority Jesus walked in during His time on earth as He constantly helped everyone who came to Him with needs. The officer recognized Jesus as someone with great power who could also be trusted, so he boldly trusted Jesus for help, regardless of Jesus’ distance from the servant.

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| **QUESTION**Does this officer’s faith surprise you? Why or why not? |

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| **QUESTION**If you had been present at that moment, how would you have predicted this story would end? |

**Great Faith Is Rewarded**

In this passage, we see that Jesus interacted with all who came to Him, not just the people of Israel. Even though more than two thousand years have passed since this incident took place, our faith can be challenged and strengthened by the events that happened that day.

Read [Matthew 8:11–13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk8.11-13).

The officer’s bold faith in Jesus resulted in his servant being healed. We sometimes wonder if faith depends on how hard or how often we pray or believe for something miraculous to happen. This passage of Scripture reminds us that faith has less to do with what we say or do, and much to do with what or who we actually put our faith in. The centurion just made one simple request, fully recognizing and believing that Jesus had all the power to heal his servant. None of those present that day even went to where the sick person was. The officer believed in and asked Jesus to heal him from far away. Jesus was and is faithful and true, and brought healing to the sick servant. Like the officer, we can always trust and remember the great power of Jesus, placing all our faith in Him.

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| **QUESTION**What question would you like to have asked the centurion? |

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| **QUESTION**How is the Holy Spirit challenging you about faith in Jesus? |

**Reflect**

**Believe in the authority and power of God to provide the impossible.**

In this session, we have looked at a time Jesus honored a man’s strong faith. The officer somehow knew of Jesus’ great power. Through spending time reading the Bible, talking to God in prayer, and learning from others who walk with Him, we can also know how great Jesus’ power is, and how much we can trust Him to do incredible things. As we get to know Jesus more, we see that nothing is impossible for Him. We learn to stand firmly in our faith and believe boldly.

**Listen to God**

Let’s pause and listen to what God might want to say to us about what we have read and shared. Be silent for a few moments and reflect on the following questions. Respond to the one that most resonates with what God is saying to you now. Then complete the others during Day 1 of your devotion time this week.

**Personal Reflection Questions**

*Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.*

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| **QUESTION**How does the centurion’s life and story challenge you? |

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| **QUESTION**What do you sometimes put your faith in beside God? |

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| **QUESTION**Which people in your life need spiritual or physical healing from Jesus? |

**Activate**

Consistently remembering how powerful God is takes some time. We read the Bible often, and we also watch and actively remember what God does in our own life and the lives of those around us.

**Challenge**

This week, make a list of prayers that God has answered in your life. Some people place strips of paper with answered prayers in a box or jar, and others might keep a list in a notebook or on their computer. Keep it somewhere that you can see often. It doesn’t take long for the number of answered prayers to become impressive. When we purposefully remember answered prayer, we won’t quickly forget how often God moves in our life. It builds our faith to look back and remember God’s power and help.

**Prayer Requests**

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| Note any requests from the group and pray together. Also remember to pray for them during the week. |

As we walk with Jesus, we see Him do wonderful things in the Bible and in our life, helping us to become bold and strong. We learn and grow both in community and on our own. In the devotions, we’ll look at more instances in the Bible where people remembered the great power of God.

**Live on Your Own**

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| *Before you begin each devotion, pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.* |

**Day 1: A Roman Officer Shows Impressive Faith**

Read [Matthew 8:5–13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt8.5-13).

Look back over Live in Community and complete your responses to the Personal Reflection Questions. Plan how to complete the Activate component if you haven’t already done so. If time permits, reread the Scripture too.

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| **QUESTION**What is God saying to you about believing in the authority and power of God to provide the impossible? |

**Live on Your Own**

**Day 2: A Future King Remembers**

Read [1 Samuel 17:1–37](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Sa17.1-37).

Before David became a great king of Israel, he was known as the youngest son of Jesse, who faithfully watched his father’s flocks. It’s possible, based on imagery in many of the psalms he wrote, that David wrote or was inspired during his time in the fields. He learned about the beauty and majesty of God’s creation ([Psalm 23](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps23); [42](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps42)). He recognized that the great God of the vast universe was also very personal and nearby. In the daily routine of life, David took time and effort to focus on God and to get to know Him.

When the big fight against a literal giant came to David’s life, he remembered the Lord who rescued him from the lion and the bear. David recognized God’s presence and power everywhere and knew that He would be with him in this seemingly impossible situation, too.

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| **QUESTION**How does this story about David inspire you? |

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| **QUESTION**How are you learning to recognize God’s presence in your own daily routine? |

**Live on Your Own**

**Day 3: A Servant Girl Remembers**

Read [2 Kings 5:1–15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ki5.1-5).

This passage is filled with lessons for us today. God had revealed himself to the nation of Israel, so they could show the rest of the world what it looked like to walk with Him ([Deuteronomy 11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Dt11)). As with people today, some of God’s people remembered Him and some didn’t. The king of Israel didn’t have an answer, and he appeared to have forgotten how to appeal to God’s power. On the other hand, a young servant girl remembered the goodness and kindness of God, so much so that she was glad to help even the people who took her captive.

God regularly encouraged His people to remember all the things He had done, so they could be a blessing to others when needed. We can learn both from this young woman who simply believed God and from Naaman who learned about trusting God’s power. We can be like both of them and share with others the goodness and power of God.

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| **QUESTION**What questions would you have liked to ask this servant girl about her life and faith? |

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| **QUESTION**Who could you share God’s goodness with this week? |

**Live on Your Own**

**Day 4: A Son Remembers**

Read [Luke 15:11–24](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk15.11-24).

This parable of Jesus is so encouraging because He revealed to His listeners about the great father’s heart God has. Jesus' listeners may or may not have been surprised that a young man would want to take his inheritance from his father and waste it. Not many would have been surprised that the son remembered how much better his life was in his father’s house and wanted to go back home. But some may have never heard of a father who was watching and waiting for his wayward child to come back, so he could hug him and throw him a party. But in this story, Jesus revealed that’s exactly how God feels about every person who returns home to Him. He isn’t thrilled to punish us or leave us out on our own. He is watching and waiting and has done everything to make it possible for us to be with Him ([John 3:16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn3.16)). Our faith and love for God should grow as we remember His kindness and mercy.

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| **QUESTION**How does this story challenge your idea of God and His love for you and others? |

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| **QUESTION**Who in your life would benefit from hearing this story of God’s fatherly heart? |

**Live on Your Own**

**Day 5: A Disciple Remembers**

Read [1 Corinthians 11:17–34](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Co11.17-34).

This passage from the apostle Paul’s letter to the Corinthian church is a powerful reminder of the night before the Crucifixion ([Luke 22:14–22](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk22.14-22)). Jesus knew what He was going to do, so He shared a last meal with His closest followers. During the meal, He gave them instructions, which Paul repeats, to celebrate Communion together often. This can be a powerful part of our Christian community. When we share the bread, we remember the way Jesus’ body was broken for us and our healing ([Isaiah 53](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Is53)). When we share the cup, we remember how His blood was shed to take away our sins ([Matthew 26:26–28](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt26.26-28)).

Jesus himself encouraged us to frequently remember His powerful work on the Cross, so that we can keep life in perspective. When we remember that Jesus defeated death, we know that nothing at all is too difficult for Him. When we remember that He’s already won the war against evil, none of our daily battles will be able to knock us out of the race.

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| **QUESTION**What is something powerful that God has done in your life recently? |

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| **QUESTION**How is your faith being strengthened in your life right now? |