

## The Dynamics Of Faith And Love

by JRW Dubois

It takes great Faith to realize our unworthiness. It takes great Love to be brave enough to ask Jesus to heal a friend, even though we're not worthy.

So, how does that work? If we are not worthy, what makes us think Jesus will help us or our friend? The answer is found in the first ten verses from Luke's Gospel, chapter 7. This is the story of the centurion who's slave was dying. He heard about Jesus and sent elders of the Jews to Him. The elders of the Jews agree and, approaching Jesus said, "He deserves to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation and he built the synagogue for us."

Jesus agrees and went with them. Then we read the most familiar section of this Gospel, "... but when he was only a short distance from the house, the centurion sent friends to tell him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof. Therefore, I did not consider myself worthy to come to you; but say the word and let my servant be healed."

"When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him and, turning, said to the crowd following him, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.", and Jesus heals the slave.

The centurion had more faith than anyone in Israel? So, how does that work? Let's look at the dynamics of this Gospel.

The centurion has a slave, but, "... he was valuable to him", which really means that he loved his slave. They must have had good relationship over a long period of time building up trust and affection for each other. That's not a typical dynamic between a centurion and his slave.

The centurion sent elders of the Jews to approach Jesus. That's another atypical dynamic for Romans and Jews, but, the elders of the Jews tell Jesus, "He deserves to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation and he built the synagogue for us."

Now, let's look at the dynamics between Jesus and the centurion. Typically, a Roman would never consider nor be seen working with and especially not working for the Jews. But this centurion loved their nation and built their synagogue and also truly believes that Jesus can heal his slave. This is atypical because, the centurion is, "... a person subject to authority, with soldiers subject to (him)."

This amazes Jesus! Why? Because, it's the atypical dynamics of Faith and Love which drives the centurion to act against the ways of his people and turn around and help God's people.

John 15:13 says, "The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them". The centurion isn't giving his life, but he is risking his life by helping the Jewish nation, and he's doing this for his slave.

The centurion avoids even meeting Jesus face-to-face. Is it because he's afraid he'll be caught working for the Jews, or because Jesus will punish him? No, it's because he did not consider himself worthy, not for Jesus to enter his home, nor for him to go to Jesus. Yet, this did not stop the centurion from acting. He found a way. He found Jesus' way.

The dynamics of Faith and Love have a way of turning us around from our unworthiness and our occupations within this world. Are we risking our lives and livelihoods with atypical dynamics to help out a friend?

"When the messengers returned to the house, they found the slave in good health."

When we love with God's Love and turn around in Faith to help a friend, we're being atypical and we're being dynamic. We're being worthy.