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St. Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal Church
Pentecost 2C
May 29, 2016
Luke 7:1-11

After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us." And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Sermon Notes

Setting

Sermon on the Plain, Capernaum = Jesus old stomping ground
(James, John, Andrew, Peter and Matthew all from there)

Themes

seeing vs. believing

Capon: God is a sucker for the last, lost, little and least: God goes out of God's way to find the marginalized, the sinner, the outsider to bring them to God's healing love and mercy.

Examples in Luke--Parables

Lost Coin

Good Shepherd

Prodigal Son

Story this morning

Roman Centurion (outsider) says not worthy—but believes that Jesus is full of authority and can heal the servant.

Jesus does this. Interesting:

Proformative Speech

Syrophoenician Woman's daughter

Result

Slave of the Centurion is healed without ever meeting or seeing Jesus. Jesus is just that powerful. Never sees the Centurion, but because of his belief Jesus is "amazed". Never sees Jesus yet believes—kinda like us, right?

Fallacy of our lives

We have it all together. We are worthy. We are like the Centurion, ordering people around, having authority.

Joke

Bishop dies and goes to heaven.

Our Worthiness

We are not worthy-- cannot buy or earn our way into heaven.

Admit that we aren't worthy as the first step

Jesus is a light to the world, sent to those who do not yet believe. As disciples, that's our mission.

Questions

How much belief do we have? What does it look like to worship Christ so much that we go out into the world and seek out the last, lost, little and least of the world, and bring this Good News? How do we bring that Good News out to the dark and broken world? What ways will we recognize our own unworthiness and be judged (Rowan Williams)...to be found worthy?