

SAVING FAITH Luke 7:1-10

1. Hook to Start Conversation

Purpose: Spark discussion about faith as a universal human trait and its relevance to personal crises, setting the stage for relational sharing.

Prompt:

“Think about a time you had to trust someone or something completely—like relying on a doctor during an illness or trusting a friend in a tough moment. What made you put your faith in them? How did it feel to depend on something outside yourself?”

Instructions: Give everyone 1-2 minutes to share their story (or pass if preferred). Encourage brief responses to build trust and connection, especially in new neighborhood groups or youth classes.

Leader Hints:

- **Adults (Neighborhood Groups):** Encourage vulnerability by sharing your own example first (e.g., trusting God in a family crisis). If the group is new, affirm all responses to build safety, tying to the sermon’s point that “everyone has faith.”
- **Youth (Middle/High School):** Use a relatable analogy (e.g., trusting a coach’s game plan). If students are shy, ask them to pair up and share before reporting back. Keep the tone light but guide toward the idea that faith is unavoidable (Romans 1:25).

2. Passage Outline and Summary

Passage: Luke 7:1-10 (ESV) – The Healing of the Centurion’s Servant

- **Context:** Jesus, after the Sermon on the Plain, enters Capernaum, where a Roman centurion seeks healing for his dying servant.
- **Outline:**
 - i. **The Centurion’s Request (vv. 1-5):** A centurion, valued by Jewish elders for his generosity (building their synagogue), sends them to ask Jesus to heal his servant, whom he loves.
 - ii. **The Centurion’s Humility (vv. 6-8):** As Jesus approaches, the centurion sends friends to say he is “not worthy” for Jesus to enter his home but trusts Jesus’ authority to heal with a word.

- iii. **Jesus' Response (vv. 9-10):** Jesus marvels at the centurion's faith, declaring it greater than any in Israel, and the servant is healed.
- **Summary:** This passage reveals saving faith through a Gentile centurion who, in a crisis, trusts Jesus' authority despite his own unworthiness. Unlike the Jewish elders' faith in the centurion's deeds, his faith rests solely in Christ, demonstrating that true faith is not about personal merit or perfect knowledge but about directing trust to Jesus as the only Savior (Acts 4:12). From a Reformed perspective, this underscores God's sovereign grace in granting faith (Ephesians 2:8-9) and the Baptist emphasis on personal trust in Christ alone for salvation.

Leader Hints:

- **Adults:** Briefly read or summarize Luke 7:1-10 aloud to ground the discussion. Emphasize the centurion's humility as a model for gospel-centered community, where members admit neediness (Galatians 6:2).
- **Youth:** Use a whiteboard or phone to sketch the story (e.g., centurion, Jesus, servant). Highlight Jesus' amazement to capture their interest, tying to the Baptist call to personal faith.

3. Discussion Questions

These questions explore the sermon's four points (Everyone Has Faith, Faith Arises from Crisis, Faith Needs a Proper Object, Faith Admits Unworthiness) with a focus on content and application in a Reformed, Christ-centered, Baptist framework. They encourage relational sharing to build community.

1. **Content (Everyone Has Faith):** The sermon says, "Everyone has faith in something," whether in God, science, or self. How do you see people around you (friends, family, or culture) placing faith in things other than Christ? How does Romans 1:25 ("exchanged the truth of God for a lie") help us understand this?
 - **Application:** Share one area of your life where you're tempted to trust something other than Jesus (e.g., money, success, your own efforts). How can our group pray for you to redirect that trust to Christ?
 - **Leader Hints:**

- **Adults:** Encourage honesty by modeling a personal example (e.g., trusting career over God). Connect to the Reformed view that all are idolatrous apart from grace. If discussion stalls, ask, “What’s one thing our culture trusts blindly?”
 - **Youth:** Use examples like trusting social media “likes” or grades. Ask, “What’s something teens rely on instead of God?” Tie to Hebrews 10:24-25, encouraging group support.
2. **Content (Faith Arises from Crisis):** The centurion’s faith emerged during his servant’s illness. How have crises (personal or shared, like illness or loss) shaped your faith or brought you closer to Jesus? Why might God use suffering to “wake us up” (per C.S. Lewis’ quote)?
- **Application:** In your current struggles, how can you lean into Jesus rather than distractions? How can our group help bear your burdens (Galatians 6:2)?
 - **Leader Hints:**
 - **Adults:** Create a safe space for sharing crises (e.g., job loss, family issues). Reference the sermon’s Screwtape Letters point to show distractions’ power. Suggest a group prayer list to build community.
 - **Youth:** Keep stories age-appropriate (e.g., stress over exams). If reluctant, ask, “When did you feel closest to God?” Use a volunteer to pray, modeling vulnerability.
3. **Content (Faith Needs a Proper Object):** The centurion’s imperfect but Christ-directed faith led to healing, unlike the elders’ faith in his deeds. Why is Jesus the only true object of saving faith (Acts 4:12)? How does this challenge the idea that “all religions are equal”?
- **Application:** Where in your life do you need to redirect your faith toward Jesus alone? How can our group encourage each other to keep Christ as the focus?
 - **Leader Hints:**
 - **Adults:** Emphasize the Reformed doctrine of solus Christus (Christ alone). If group members differ on “all religions,”

gently point to the sermon's exclusive claim about Jesus. Suggest a practical step (e.g., daily prayer for Christ-centered faith).

- **Youth:** Use the sermon's mountain climber analogy to explain choosing the "right rock." Ask, "Why can't we just trust anything?" Encourage a buddy system to share faith goals.

4. **Content (Faith Admits Unworthiness):** The centurion confessed his unworthiness, trusting Jesus' worthiness. How does admitting our neediness before Christ shape our relationships with each other? How does this reflect the gospel?

- **Application:** Share one way you feel "unworthy" or inadequate before God. How can our group reflect the gospel by supporting each other in our weaknesses (1 Corinthians 12:24-26)?
- **Leader Hints:**
 - **Adults:** Tie to the Baptist emphasis on personal repentance and faith. Model vulnerability to encourage sharing (e.g., "I feel unworthy when I fail as a parent"). Suggest a group covenant to support weaknesses.
 - **Youth:** Simplify: "When do you feel 'not good enough' for God?" Use a fun icebreaker (e.g., "What's a skill you're bad at?") to ease into deeper sharing. Connect to group encouragement.