



My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Truly, this week's miraculous healing of the Centurion's servant shows us how the Word of God speaks to all. We must remember that a Centurion was a reminder of the occupying Roman army, and perhaps many of the Lord's Disciples would not have taken pity on him when he cried, "*Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress*" (Matthew 8:6). However, as the All-loving Creator, our Lord did not judge the Centurion, but said, "*I will come and cure him*" (Matthew 8:7). However, what happened next was truly humbling.

"The centurion answered, 'Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man 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'" (Matthew 8:8-9). The Centurion knows that he is a powerful man, but he

does not use this power to force Jesus to perform the healing. Instead, he humbles himself. He humbles himself first, by understanding that, as a Gentile, he does not wish to cause scandal by having Jesus enter a Roman barracks. Secondly, he humbles himself by knowing that our Lord is also "under authority" from the Father. If the words of a Centurion can accomplish much, Christ's word should perform even greater things.

Even as God, Jesus is astonished by the Centurion's faith in a God who is not his own. Jesus "...said to those who followed him, 'Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' And to the centurion Jesus said, 'Go; let it be done for you according to your faith.' And the servant was healed in that hour" (Matthew 8:10-13). Let us ask ourselves, not only whether we approach our Lord with the Centurion's humility, but what we do to bring the light of Christ to our neighbors, whether they are Christian or not.

In his moment of need, this pagan turned to Christ, probably because he had heard others speak of His good and rich mercy. We must do our best to live in such a way that our kindness, charity, and mercy show the icon of Christ, to everyone we meet. In this way, by walking in imitation of Him, we fulfill His Gospel for the world—until He comes again to perform those good works Himself.

+SEVASTIANOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta