

St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups 8th February 2009

Good News – for those who feel undeserving Matt 8:5 -13



Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon

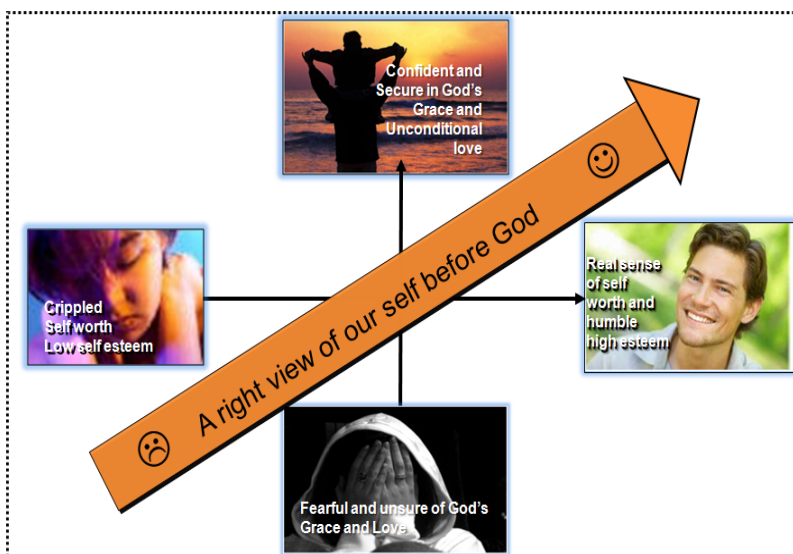
A Gentile, and to make it worse ... A Roman centurion approaches Jesus "Lord I do not deserve to have you come under my roof but just say the word and my servant will be healed" What outrage, was this centurion so used to bossing others around that he thought he could boss Jesus too? Yet he seemed to have a certain faith and a humble disposition. Was he so sure of how Jesus would react and view him that he could presume on Jesus in this way? ... How was a Jewish Rabbi to respond to this request? Jesus replied "I tell you the truth I have not found anyone in Israel with such faith ... Go, it will be done!"

This week we focus on ... A RIGHT KIND OF UNDESERVING ... Confidence with humility and strength with deference.

What does the bible say about our worth and position before God?

- We have no worth or merit before God (Rom 3:10)
- Yet God loves us unconditionally beyond our wildest understanding of what love is (Deut 7:7, 1 John 4:16)
- In Christ we can presume ... We can stand before God in confidence and high esteem (Heb 4:16)
- Yet, we are to have an honest and humble appreciation of ourselves (Rom 12:3 See Message for helpful translation)

Our journey towards Christian maturity moves us towards a place of confidence and security in God's grace and unconditional love. Furthermore it is married to a real sense of self worth, humility and high self esteem.



How does a wrong view of our self before God manifest itself?

- When we lack an empowering sense of God's love for us we end up ... **Running on empty** (2 Cor 5:14, 1 John 4:19)
- When we lack a real sense of self worth and humble self esteem we often experience the "**enough problem**". That is, we never feel good enough, strong enough, deserving enough etc. Like the disciples who looked to themselves instead of Christ when faced with a huge task ...there was never going to be enough!(Matt 10:25) but God's grace is promised to be sufficient (2 Cor12:9).
- When we lack self worth we often excuse ourselves and put ourselves aside from God's grace ...**It's ok for everyone else ...but me!** We feel left out of the action and permanently on the substitutes bench (Rom 8)



Witness: questions to discuss

Guidance: Before discussion read the Bible passage, ask God to help you discern what the Spirit wants to say to your group. Consider one or two questions below – don't feel you have to use them all! Make sure there's plenty of room for prayer and ministry.

1. **Ice Breaker/Welcome:** What is the most outrageous thing you have ever asked for? (Maybe a pony or a dog when you were a child at Christmas, or a new job when you had no chance of getting it etc)
2. How do we think God can reconcile being so hateful of unrighteousness ... Yet he love the unrighteous?
3. Do we sometimes find it difficult to value ourselves ... After all, we are always failing and letting God down (?)
4. We know God's love for us - He loves the world... But do we struggle with the fact that, that means me!
5. Part of our journey towards christian maturity means moving more deeply into a sense of God's love for us whilst moving more clearly into a sense of self worth and value. How do you see this? Where do you see yourself on the quadrant pictured above?
6. How can we be both confident in God ... yet still be humble and have an honest appreciation of ourselves?
7. Do you feel sometimes your Christian life is running on empty? How might we address this?
8. Do you suffer at all from the "enough problem"... Never really feeling good enough, strong enough, faithful enough, deserving or worthy enough. Why do we so often feel like this, what might help?
9. Why do we often think that everyone else seems sorted and ok ... BUT somehow we are not?

Closing prayer and meditation: End the evening with a meditation on the words "Lord I do not deserve to have you come under my roof ... BUT just say the word and my servant will be healed".

Reflect on what you have learnt from tonight using these headings: 1) We do not deserve God's favour 2) But we see the joy on Jesus' face as he wants and desires to "enter our home" 3) We feel overwhelmed as we dare not ask him for anything as we feel so unworthy in his radiance and presence 4) Yet... his heart is bursting with grace and favour as he want to touch and bless us!