

Life of Christ

The Army Soldier's Helper

Matthew 8:1-13

Younger Verse

Humble yourselves before the Lord. James 4:10

Older Verse

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.
James 4:10

Lesson Goals

Learn that Jesus had power to heal people's sickness
Understand the importance of having faith in Jesus
Learn what it means to be humble

Welcome Time

Sing the song "I'm in the Lord's Army." Talk about how soldiers are strong and they have to stand up for what they believe in. Tell students that we will learn about an army man who was not afraid to come to Jesus for help.

Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible before teaching it. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

Jesus had been on the mountainside teaching His new followers. He taught them many things about the Kingdom of God and how to live. Last week, we learned about the last part of this teaching time. Jesus said that His followers must listen AND obey His teaching.

Many people heard about the amazing things Jesus was doing and teaching. They wanted Him to heal them. A man with a terrible skin disease came to Jesus and asked Him to heal his disease. And Jesus healed him! His disease was gone!

Jesus continued walking with His disciples. They went into a town called Capernaum. A Roman army officer came to Jesus. An officer is like a soldier, but a little higher in command. He is in charge of other people.

The officer told Jesus that his servant was at home and was very sick. He could not even walk! Jesus told the officer he would go to his home and heal his servant. But the officer told Jesus that he did not feel important enough for Him to come to his home. He knew that if Jesus just spoke, his servant could be healed!

The officer understood that Jesus had power over everything, even sickness. He explained that in the army, he had power over people. He would tell one soldier to "go" and he would go, and he would tell another to "come" and he would come. So he knew that if Jesus spoke the word, his servant would be well again.

Jesus was amazed at this man's faith! He told him to go home, that it would be done for him. And his servant was healed the same hour.

Ask: Why do you think Jesus was amazed at the officer's faith in Him?

This man was not an Israelite—he was *not* one of God's chosen people. He had not

grown up learning about how to follow God. And yet this man believed that Jesus had power from God. Many of the Israelites did not believe that! Jesus said this man had more faith than anyone He had seen in Israel!

Also, this man was a Roman soldier, and Jesus was a Jew. These two groups did not like each other. So he might have thought he would be teased or criticized for talking to Jesus.

The officer had a high position in the army. He could have been too proud to ask Jesus to help him. He showed what it means to be **humble**. He came to Jesus, admitting that he needed help. He did not think he was too good to ask for help.

Ask: Have you ever been afraid to ask for someone's help? Jesus was happy that this man asked Him to help. And He likes it when *we* ask Him for help, too!

Like the officer humbled himself and went to Jesus, Jesus also humbled Himself when He came to earth as a man. And he humbled Himself even more when He died for us on the cross.

Ask: Have you asked Jesus to save you from your sins? We cannot save ourselves. We need Jesus' help. That is why He died on the cross—to make a way for us to be right with Him. An important part of knowing God is admitting that we cannot do anything by ourselves. We really *do* need God's help.

Review Questions

1. What was the position of the man who came to Jesus? (Answer: Roman officer)
2. Why did he ask Jesus for help? (Answer: his servant was very sick and could not walk)
3. Why was Jesus amazed at the officer's faith? (Answer: The man was not an Israelite; he was a Roman soldier, and they did not like Jews.)
4. What does it mean to humble yourself? (not being proud; putting others before yourself)

Prayer Time

Thank God for sending Jesus to earth. Pray that we will humble ourselves before God and have faith in Him.

Life Application

The man in today's story cared enough about his servant to find Jesus and ask Him to heal the servant. And he trusted Jesus to heal his servant without even seeing him or going to his home. This took a lot of humility and faith.

Think of ways in our lives we can be more humble and have more faith in God.

Examples: Invite others to church, help others that no one else wants to help, be friendly to everyone

Planning for Next Lesson
Jesus Calms the Storm
Matthew 8:23-27

**Preschool Lesson
for
The Army soldier's helper**

(Bring little green army men to act out the story.)

One time Jesus walked to a town (make walking noises). This town was ruled by a king. He lived so far away that he sent an army to make sure the people obeyed the laws (show them the little green army men).

One leader (hold up one of the army men) in the army liked the people of the town and did good things for them. This man had a helper who was very sick. He loved this man and wanted to help him. The army leader had heard that Jesus could heal people, so he went to Jesus and begged Him to help the man.

So Jesus told him that He would go to his house. The man said that instead of coming to his house, Jesus only had to say the word and the helper would be well.

To show that he knew that this was possible, the army man told Jesus that when he gave orders to people, things got done. He would tell one soldier to "go" and he would go, and he would tell another to "come" and he would come. The man knew that Jesus had more power than he did, so he knew that Jesus only had to say the word and the servant would be well. Jesus was amazed and told all His friends that this man really believed and understood.

When the man finally got back to his home, he saw the helper-- he was well! Jesus had healed him. (Have everyone raise their hands and celebrate)

The army leader believed and his helper got well. Jesus made him well! Do you believe in Jesus? He loves you and cares for you.

Sing, "Jesus loves me."

**Hands-on Activities
for
The Army soldier's helper**

If the teacher has a camouflage outfit, it might be fun to wear it today for the story.

Create a paper hat helmet or use foil.

Make swords out of aluminum foil. Scrunch and shape foil into a long sword.

Act out the story (use the helmet and sword if you make them).

Make a shield out of a paper plate covered in foil. Talk about how our faith in God is our shield. This means our faith helps protect us from Satan's attacks!

Bring some long balloons and make swords. Talk about the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. We can fight temptation with Scripture!