

**The Roman centurion is a significant figure mentioned in the Gospels, particularly in Matthew 8:5-13 and Luke 7:1-10. A centurion was a commander in the Roman army, typically responsible for overseeing about 100 soldiers. Despite being a Gentile (non-Jew), the centurion demonstrates remarkable faith in Jesus.**

### **The Story of the Centurion's Faith:**

**In the account, the centurion approaches Jesus, asking Him to heal his servant who is paralyzed and suffering terribly. When Jesus offers to go to his home to heal the servant, the centurion humbly replies:**

**“Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.”**

***(Matthew 8:8)***

**The centurion explains that he understands authority, comparing Jesus' spiritual authority to his own command over soldiers. He believes that Jesus can heal simply by speaking, without physically being present.**

### **Jesus' Response:**

**Jesus is astonished by the centurion's faith and says:**

**“Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.”**

***(Matthew 8:10)***

**Jesus then declares the servant healed, and at that very moment, the servant recovers.**

### **Why This Story Matters:**

- **Faith Without Boundaries – The centurion was not part of the Jewish community, yet his faith surpassed many of those who were. This shows that God's grace and power are accessible to all people, regardless of background.**
- **Authority and Humility – The centurion's recognition of Jesus' divine authority and his humble approach reflect the kind of faith that trusts completely in God's word.**

- **Inclusivity of the Kingdom – Jesus’ praise of the centurion foreshadows the inclusion of Gentiles in the Kingdom of God, a major theme in the early Christian church.**

**This story highlights how righteousness and faith can exist outside expected religious or cultural boundaries, reinforcing that God looks at the heart, not status or ethnicity.**

**For someone who embraces Christianity without needing to undergo sanctification or major personal reform but is still deeply moved by the scriptures because they resonate with their heart – how does salvation apply to them? Is baptism required as a prerequisite?**

**This touches on deep theological themes about salvation, grace, and the role of baptism. The essence of Christianity, as revealed in Scripture, suggests that salvation is ultimately a gift of God’s grace through faith in Christ—not necessarily through external rituals or reformation from a sinful life.**

### **1. Salvation and the Condition of the Heart:**

**In Ephesians 2:8-9, Paul writes:**

**“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”**

**This passage emphasizes that salvation is not earned by deeds or through the extent of one’s reformation. Rather, it comes through recognizing and accepting the grace of God, often stirred by the movement of the Holy Spirit through Scripture, even in those who already live righteous lives.**

**Romans 10:9 further clarifies:**

**“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”**

**This highlights that salvation is a matter of the heart’s belief and confession, not necessarily tied to how much one needs to change.**

## **2. The Role of Baptism:**

**Baptism, while deeply significant in Christian tradition, is generally viewed as an outward sign of an inward grace—a public declaration of faith and participation in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.**

**Mark 16:16 states:**

**“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”**

**However, belief is highlighted as the primary requirement. Consider the example of the thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43) who, without baptism or time for reformation, was promised paradise by Jesus because of his faith in that moment.**

**Thus, baptism is important but not always seen as an absolute prerequisite for salvation. For those who feel spiritually moved but have already lived righteous lives, baptism can symbolize union with Christ rather than necessary sanctification from sin.**

## **3. How Salvation Plays a Role for the Righteous at Heart:**

- Recognition of Christ – Salvation is less about how “sinful” or “righteous” someone was before encountering Christ and more about recognizing Christ as the embodiment of truth, love, and salvation.**
- Fulfillment, Not Correction – For someone already living righteously, coming into Christianity may feel like stepping into the fullness of God’s grace rather than needing correction.**
- Spiritual Growth and Deeper Communion – Salvation opens the door to deeper communion with God, allowing the person to grow in faith and participate in the spiritual community of the Church.**

## **4. Is Baptism Necessary?**

- For many denominations – Baptism is a sacrament, and while it’s seen as a step of obedience, salvation isn’t always contingent upon it.**

- **Grace is Sovereign – God’s grace can operate beyond human rituals. Baptism is a profound experience, but God’s mercy is not limited by it.**

**In Summary:**

- **Salvation comes through faith in Christ and God’s grace.**
- **Baptism is a meaningful act but not always a prerequisite for salvation.**
- **For someone already living a good and righteous life, salvation through Christ may feel more like an affirmation and fulfillment of their spiritual journey than a radical transformation.**

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