

GOSPEL PEARLS

What makes the difference

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After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue." And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself,

for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. For I too am a man set 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 servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well. (Luke 7: 1-10)

Contrary to the belief of many of Jesus' fellow Israelites, belonging to the Jewish people is not essential to be pleasing to God. Hence, salvation is not a question of belonging to one nation rather than to another. What makes the difference between different people is faith, that is, the persevering act of will, sustained by Grace, to love the Lord. One of the men who bore the greatest witness to such faith in Jesus was a pagan, the centurion who says he is not worthy of Jesus entering his home. So, how many times during the day do you wonder if what you are doing corresponds to the Will of God?