For several days, Jesus had been on the
mountainside teaching people about God’s ways.
When he came down from the mountain, he
entered a town on the north shore of the Sea
of Galilee. Even though Jesus spent time in
this town, and would have been known around
the town for his teaching and healings, it was a
surprise when a centurion approached him.

The disciples stiffened. What did a commander
of the Roman guard want with Jesus? The sun
glinted off the centurion’s sword hanging at his
side, a reminder of his power and position. But
Jesus saw the man was clearly worried.

“Lord, my servant is lying at home and he can’t
move. He is in a lot of pain,” the centurion said
to Jesus.

Without another word, Jesus said, “I will come
and cure him.”

Now the disciples were stunned. A centurion
was asking for Jesus’ help! He must have heard
what was being said about Jesus, seen the men
and women he had healed; but this man was
puzzling. He had the power of the Roman
army, yet he came to Jesus. He could have other
servants, yet he cared so deeply for this servant
that he asked for help.

The centurion lowered his head and replied,
“Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under
my roof.”

The disciples were confused. What was this
man, who certainly had position and power,
saying? Did this commander of the Roman
guard really truly understand who Jesus was?

The centurion stood straight again and said,
“Only say the word, and my servant will be
healed. I too am a man under authority, with
soldiers under me; I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he
goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and
to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and the servant does
it.”

Jesus was amazed. This man recognized that
Jesus was from God and had God’s power
and authority. “Only say the word . . .” Jesus
thought to himself and smiled.

Jesus turned to those around him and said, “I’ve
never seen this kind of faith in all I’ve met, and
yet you are the very people who are supposed to
know all about God and how God works.”

Then Jesus turned to the centurion. He wanted
to embrace him, but he knew that would be
too much for the soldier. So, with tenderness in
his voice, Jesus said, “What you believed could
happen has happened. Go and see.” At that
moment, the centurion’s servant became well.
Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

**Recognizing God’s Grace**

- Read and enjoy the story with your family members—imagine and wonder.
- The centurion believed Jesus could heal his servant. He didn’t have to see it. Do a trust walk. Take turns blindfolding someone and leading them around your home, careful not to bump into any obstacles. Consider how it feels to trust without seeing.
- Wonder together why Jesus was amazed at the centurion’s faith.

**Responding to God’s Grace**

- Make a Venn diagram using two intersecting circles. In one circle, list the things that describe the centurion. In the other circle, write things that describe Jesus. In the area where the circles intersect, write words that describe both the centurion and Jesus.
- Research a Roman centurion. Draw a picture. Why were the disciples surprised that a centurion would talk with Jesus?
- The centurion understood that what Jesus said would be done because of Jesus’ authority, like his own as a leader of soldiers. Play a game like “Simon Says” or “Mother, May I?” Like the centurion, we can trust what Jesus says.

**Celebrating in Gratitude**

- Jesus was amazed by the centurion’s faith. Do an amazing science experiment. Place a wide circle of candy-coated fruit chewy candies on a white plate. Pour milk in the center of the candies until it reaches halfway up the candies. Watch what happens. (Nothing much happens.) Repeat the experiment with water instead of milk. Be amazed!
- Watch for acts of amazing faith this week. Write them down or draw a picture. Post these where your family can celebrate these acts of faith.
- Pray this prayer each day this week:

  Dear God, may we have amazing faith like the centurion, believing what you say. Amen.