

# THE CENTURION

## LESSON TEXT

Matthew 17:20; Luke 7:1-10;  
Hebrews 11:1

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will define faith as described in Hebrews 11:1.
- The students will explain how the centurion's faith was shown by his actions.
- The students will list three things they will pray faithfully about during the week.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

*For each student:*

- pen or pencil
- 6 strips of white paper, 1" x 3"
- 1 sheet of construction paper, 12" x 18" (or 2 sheets of construction paper, 9" x 12")

*For the teacher:*

- 1 large sheet of poster board
- markers
- tape
- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world
- extra Bibles
- magazines with different types of pictures
- rubber cement
- scissors (optional: pinking shears can be used)
- several rulers

*Reproducible Pages:*

- Page A, 1 copy for each student
- Page B, 1 copy for each student
- Page C, 1 copy for each student

## LESSON PLAN

### Getting Ready

Faithful Instruction  
Teacher Focus  
Teacher Tips  
Preclass Activity: Mountains of Faith  
Starting Up  
Welcome and Singing  
Opening Prayer  
Victories  
Good News from the Kingdom

### Getting into God's Word

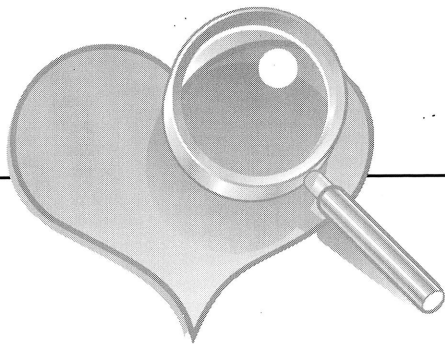
Story: "Heroes of Faith"  
Scripture Study  
Activity: Faith Boxes

### Getting It to Others

Scripture Memory: Hebrews 11:1  
Weekly Challenge and Snack Time  
Conclusion

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.  
Hebrews 11:1



## FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

### TEACHER FOCUS

Pray before preparing the lesson. Read and meditate on Matthew 17:20, Luke 7:1-10 and Hebrews 11:1, asking God to help you understand and apply the passages. Do you have courageous faith? Make a list of your prayers that God has answered. How did receiving these answers impact you? Your faith will have a great impact on your students as well.

### TEACHER TIPS

Be sure to allow time in your schedule to make several "Faith Boxes" to show the students in the Activity section. Also, you will need to spend some time gathering different types of pictures from magazines. Be sure to have some that would appeal more to boys and some that would appeal more to girls.

Making the "Faith Boxes" will take a good bit of time. If you typically run short on time, you may want to skip making the boxes, but still have the students write their prayer requests on the three strips of paper. They will need these for their weekly challenge.

## PRECLASS ACTIVITY

### MOUNTAINS OF FAITH

The students will list circumstances that challenge their faith and rate them on how much faith each requires. (Reference Jesus' statement about mustard seed faith in Matthew 17:20.)

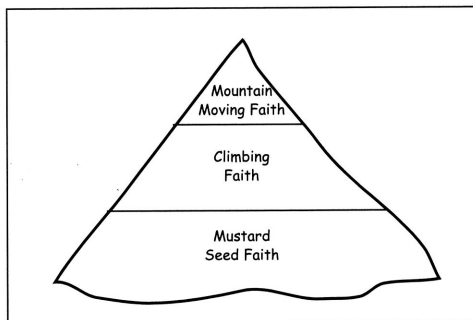
#### MATERIALS USED

For each student:

- pen or pencil
- 3 strips of white paper, 1" x 3"

For the teacher:

- 1 large sheet of poster board
- marker
- tape

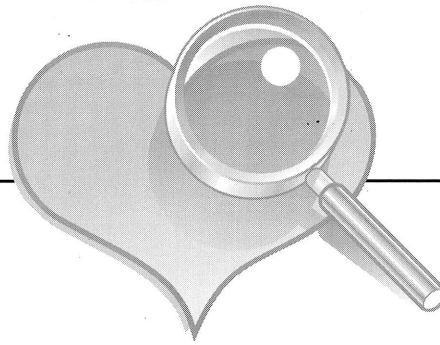


#### PREPARATION

1. Using the diagram above as an example, draw a mountain on the poster board.
2. Label the bottom section "Mustard Seed Faith," the middle section "Climbing Faith," and the top section "Mountain Moving Faith."

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. As the students arrive, give each a pen or pencil and three strips of white paper.
2. Tell the students to think about situations in their lives that require great faith. Have them write down three of these challenges, one on each strip of paper.
3. Next have the students rate these three challenges to their faith from 1-3, from the one that requires the smallest amount of faith (1) to the challenge that requires the greatest amount of faith (3).
4. Have the students attach pieces of tape to each of their slips of paper and place each challenge on the "faith mountain." Those challenges rating a "1" will go at the bottom of the mountain in the "Mustard Seed Faith" section. Challenges rating a "2" will be placed on the middle section in "Climbing Faith." Finally, challenges rating a "3" will be taped to the top of the mountain in the "Mountain Moving Faith" section.



5. When all the students have added their slips of paper to the mountain, discuss the different amounts of faith that different circumstances require. While it may be easy for some students to have the faith to get an "A" on a math test, other students may need "Mountain Moving Faith" to believe they will do well.
6. Remind your students that, while God wants us to be excellent in all areas of our lives, some of our wants and desires are not his will. However, if we constantly add to our faith through Bible study and prayer, he will reward us in ways we may not even imagine.

## STARTING UP

### WELCOME AND SINGING

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

### OPENING PRAYER

*Who would like to say a prayer to start today's time together?* Let a few students lead the prayer. Encourage the students to mention missing students, special church activities, illnesses and to be especially thankful that God is always faithful to us.

### VICTORIES

Take the time to have the students share about the challenges they were given at the end of last week's class. *Did everyone complete their challenge? How did it go? What fears did you face as you met the challenge to put the lesson into practice? How did everyone do with having consistent quiet times? Who would like to share something they learned?*

Praise and encourage all the students' efforts, especially noting any area of significant growth. Offer help and suggestions so they can have even more victories in the coming week.

### GOOD NEWS FROM THE KINGDOM

#### MATERIALS USED

*For the teacher:*

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world

#### INSTRUCTIONS

*Now let's take a few minutes to share "Good News from the Kingdom."* Be excited as you read about what is happening around the world. Have a globe or map ready, pointing out the location as you share. Remind your students that the kingdom of God is worldwide and the victories of our brothers and sisters on other continents can inspire us and spur us on.





## STORY

### "HEROES OF FAITH"

This is a story about Gregg and Shelley Metten's decision to go into the mission field and the challenges to their faith this decision posed. But, primarily, it is a story of triumph, as they pushed forward in faith and were blessed by God.

#### MATERIALS USED

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Distribute copies of Reproducible Page A ("Heroes of Faith") to the students.
2. Read the story to the students.
3. Discuss the following questions:
  - *What might Matt and Jennifer have been thinking about going to India?*
  - *How did it test the Mettens' faith to go to India?*
  - *In what ways did Shelley show the strength of her faith?*

## SCRIPTURE STUDY

#### MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles

To begin the lesson, read Hebrews 11:1 aloud to the students. Discuss this definition of faith and how the students can apply it in their own lives.

Have the students turn in their Bibles to Luke 7:1-10. Ask two students to read the passage divided as follows:

- Luke 7:1-6
- Luke 7:7-10

Discuss the following:

- *Does anyone know what a "centurion" is? (Give the students a chance to answer or to guess.) A centurion commanded a "century" which consisted of eighty to one hundred soldiers. Centurions were the backbone of the Roman army and in charge of discipline. Usually they had risen from the ranks and were chosen for their courage and reliability.*

- *Did the centurion have the type of faith we read about in Hebrews 11:1? (Yes)*
- *How did the centurion show his faith in Jesus? (sent elders of the Jews to ask Jesus to come heal his servant / felt unworthy of having Jesus come into his house / understood that Jesus could heal the servant without even being able to physically touch him)*
- *Why was it amazing that the centurion sent the Jewish leaders to get Jesus? Do you remember how the Roman soldiers felt about the Jews? (He "lowered" himself to ask the Jewish leaders to go get Jesus because the soldiers generally did not have respect for the Jewish people. / He believed in Jesus and his power even though he was not a Jew and would have been brought up not believing in the one true God. / Remember also that Jesus himself was a Jew. The centurion was asking him for help—the Jews were captives of the Romans.)*
- *Because of his military background, what did he understand about the power of Jesus? (He knew what it was to have authority. Soldiers were to do what they were commanded to do by their superiors. And they were to respond without question. / He knew that all Jesus had to do was to give the command and that the power of God would work a miracle.)*
- *Webster's Dictionary defines "courage" as "mental or moral strength to venture and withstand danger, fear or difficulty." How can we tell the centurion had a courageous faith? (He put himself out on a limb by asking Jesus publicly to heal his servant. He could have talked with Jesus in private. He was willing for others to know that he believed Jesus had the power to heal his servant. That took true courage. / He took a risk of the other soldiers making fun of him or saying that he shouldn't be leading if he was going to get involved with the Jews and their religion.)*
- *Why is it that sometimes we don't ask God for something? (We don't believe he will answer by saying "yes." / We don't believe he can do what we ask. / We are afraid to ask for something and then look foolish if we don't get it.)*
- *In your life, what does it take courage to believe?*

Reread verses 9-10. Once again: *Why do you think Jesus was amazed at the centurion's faith? (He*



# GETTING INTO GOD'S WORD

stepped out in faith and publicly asked Jesus for a miracle. / He believed Jesus didn't even have to be present to do the miracle. / In a way, he shared his faith with others.)

- *When is it hardest to have faith in God's and Jesus' power to answer your prayers? Why?*
- *What is something you can do to cause Jesus to be amazed by your faith?*

## ACTIVITY

### FAITH BOXES

The students will make special boxes in which to place their prayer requests. (If you think you will run short on time, see Teacher Tips for another suggestion.)

#### MATERIALS USED

*For each student:*

- pen or pencil
- 3 strips of white paper, 1" x 3"
- 1 sheet of construction paper, 12" x 18" (or 2 sheets of construction paper, 9" x 12")

*For the teacher:*

- magazines with different types of pictures
- rubber cement
- scissors (optional: pinking shears can be used)
- several rulers
- markers

*Reproducible Pages:*

- Page B, 1 copy for each student

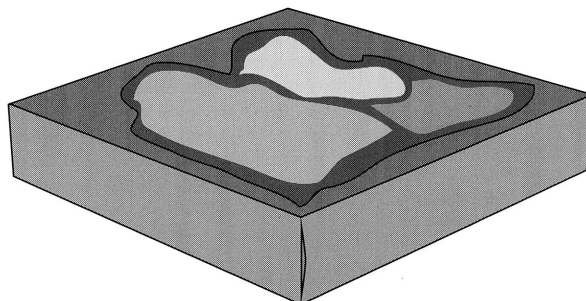
#### PREPARATION

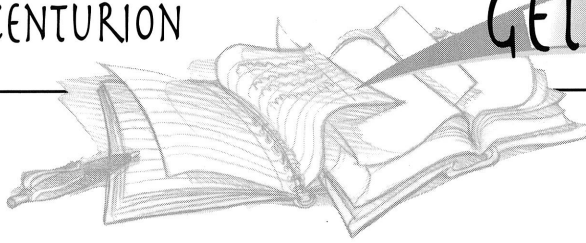
1. Gather magazines with colorful pictures. Be sure to have a varied selection of magazines with pictures that would appeal to both boys and girls.
2. For each student, cut two pieces of construction paper (same color). Cut one to measure 8" x 8" and the other, 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>".
3. Following the directions on Reproducible Page B (Faith Boxes), make a couple of examples to show the students what the finished product looks like.

NOTE: Initially this project may seem difficult; but once you understand how to make the top and bottom, it is simple. It's extremely important for the teacher to have it mastered before the class!

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Give each student an 8" x 8" piece of construction paper and a matching 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" piece.
2. Have them each choose and cut out a picture that is approximately 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" x 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" to glue on the top of their boxes when they are finished making them. (They can cut them out with straight edges or wavy edges.)
3. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page B (Faith Boxes). Ask them to follow the directions to make a faith box.
4. After the tops and bottoms of the boxes are completed, have the students glue their pictures on the tops of the boxes and write their names.
5. Have each student write on the three strips of paper their prayer requests to God and put them in the box. (*What are three things you would like to see happen that take courage to believe? Write them each on a piece of paper and put the papers in the box.*)
6. Suggest to the students that they take the boxes home and put them in a special place so they can add to the box any additional prayer requests.
7. Discuss with the students how they can have the courage of the centurion when they trust God with their requests.





## • SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1

### MATERIALS USED

*Reproducible Pages:*

- Page C, 1 copy for each student

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Hand each student a copy of Reproducible Page C (Memory Verse).
2. Have the students pair up and practice the scripture together until they have it memorized.
3. Discuss with the students how we respond to a situation when we are "sure and certain" and how we respond when we are "unsure and uncertain."

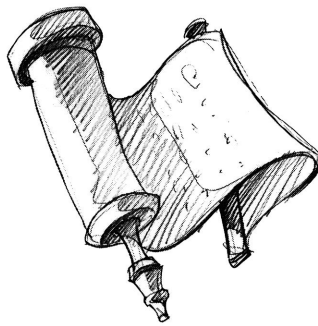
## WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack allow them to eat while you explain to them the challenge for this week.

The students are to pray faithfully every day for each of the three requests they placed in their faith boxes. Then they are to look for answers to those prayers and be ready to share them at the next class.

## CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer.



## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Pray faithfully every day for each of the three requests that you placed in your prayer box. Look for answers to those prayers and be ready to share them at the next class.

# THE CENTURION

## LESSON TEXT

Luke 7:1-10; Hebrews 11:1-2

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will explain why Jesus was amazed at the centurion's faith.
- The students will understand that God always blesses great faith.
- The students will list at least three things they will pray faithfully about.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

*For each student:*

- pen or pencil

*For the teacher:*

- extra Bibles
- blindfolds, 1 for every 2 students

*Reproducible Pages:*

- Page D, 1 copy for each student

## LESSON PLAN

### *Getting Ready*

Faithful Instruction  
 Teacher Focus  
 Teacher Tips  
 Preclass Activity: An Amazing Scavenger Hunt  
 Starting Up  
 Welcome and Singing  
 Opening Prayer and Review  
 Great News Sharing

### *Getting into God's Word*

Scripture Study  
 Activity: Blind Faith Walk

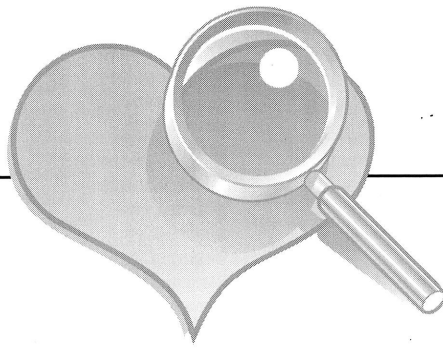
### *Getting It to Others*

Scripture Memory: Hebrews 11:1  
 Weekly Challenge and Snack Time  
 Conclusion

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1



## FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

### TEACHER FOCUS

Pray before preparing the lesson. Read and meditate on Luke 7:1-10 and Hebrews 11:1-2, asking God to help you understand and apply the passages. Is your faith the type that is described in Hebrews 11:1? Are you sure and certain of what and in whom you believe? Do you trust in God without question in all situations?

Consider how your students are growing in their own faith. They need your solid faith as an inspiration and an example on which to model their own. Be sure to share examples of times when God has come through for you in unexpected and incredible ways and how your faith grew during these times. Your sharing will inspire your students to see the ways that God is working to bless their faith in him.

### TEACHER TIPS

If your students are having a difficult time seeing God working in their lives, be sure to point out the things that you see. Sometimes it is not easy to understand how God is working for our good when he is not answering our prayers exactly as we had hoped. Point out situations both inside and outside your classroom which show God responding to the faith of your preteens.

As you prepare your room for the Blind Faith walk, be sure that you have made it somewhat challenging but safe enough for your students to walk through without chance of injury.

## PRECLASS ACTIVITY

### AN AMAZING SCAVENGER HUNT

The students will hunt through the Gospels looking for situations when Jesus blessed a person's great faith.

#### MATERIALS USED

*For each student:*

- pen or pencil

*For the teacher:*

- extra Bibles

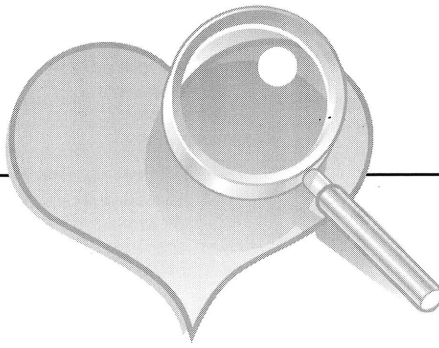
*Reproducible Pages:*

- Page D, 1 copy for each student

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. As they arrive, give each student a pen or pencil and a copy of Reproducible Page D (An Amazing Scavenger Hunt).
2. Tell the students that they must look up each of the scripture references listed. As they do this, they will be led on a scavenger hunt through the Gospels.
3. As they find each scripture, have the students write down the person who showed great faith and how Jesus blessed that faith.
4. When all the students have finished the worksheet, discuss the situations with the class, asking the students to give examples of people they know who have demonstrated great faith.





## STARTING UP

### WELCOME AND SINGING

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

### OPENING PRAYER AND REVIEW

- Open with one of the students praying for everyone in the class to have great faith as they seek to please God each day in their lives.
- Have one student recite the memory verse for this lesson: Hebrews 11:1.
- Have a student briefly review the previous lesson (Core Lesson).

### GREAT NEWS SHARING

Allow several minutes for the students to share great news about their lives. This could be about a family member who became a disciple, someone healed from an illness, someone studying the Bible, great grades, etc. Remind the students to be brief so that as many as possible can share.



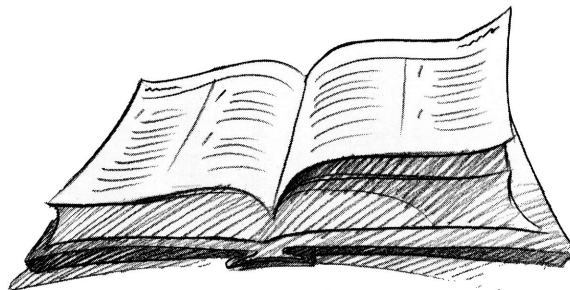
## SCRIPTURE STUDY

Ask the students to take out their Bibles and turn to Luke 7:1-10. Read the passage to the students.

Discuss the following:

- *Roman soldiers had the legal right to force local residents to work. The centurion could have ordered Jesus to come. Knowing this, how can you tell that the centurion was humble? (He was concerned for his servant. / He felt he did not deserve to have Jesus come under his roof. / He felt unworthy to come to Jesus face to face.)*
- Ask a student to recite the memory verse, Hebrews 11:1. Then have a student read the next verse (v2). *Who were the "ancients"? (the heroes of the Old Testament—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Esau, Moses, etc.—also unnamed people who were persecuted for their faith in God) Have the students look down through the list of names in Hebrews 11 and suggest that they read the chapter later.*

- *Why were these people commended? (because they had faith in God even when they couldn't see or know what would happen and how God would work)*
- *What did Jesus say that commended the centurion's faith? (Luke 7:9—"When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, 'I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.'")*
- *What might have been even more amazing about his faith than the faith of the heroes listed in Hebrews 11? (They were Jews and had seen God work in their lives and in their history. But this man was a Roman pagan and did not grow up believing in the one true God.)*
- *What actions can you take this week to show you have faith? (continuing to pray / sharing prayer requests with others / being obedient / putting into practice what you have learned)*





## ACTIVITY

### BLIND FAITH WALK

By participating in an obstacle course, the students will understand how faith is manifest in humility, courage and trust.

#### MATERIALS USED

*For the teacher:*

- blindfolds, 1 for every 2 students

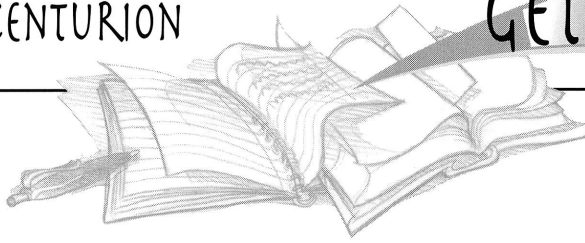
#### PREPARATION

Before the students arrive, set up an obstacle course in your room. The course should be challenging, but easy enough so that your students can describe to their partners how to get through.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pair up students for this activity.
2. Have the students recite the memory verse.
3. Give each pair one blindfold. Have one student in each pair be the leader. Have the leader blindfold the other student.
4. Have the leaders verbally lead the blindfolded students around the designated area. They cannot touch the followers, but may simply give verbal directions. Then have them reverse the roles.
5. Make sure the leaders give clear, careful directions.
6. Come together after all have finished. Discuss how they felt participating in the blind faith activity:
  - *How did you feel being the leader? Follower?*
  - *What characteristics are needed to be a good follower? (faith, humility, courage, trust)*
  - *How can practicing humility, courage and trust help your faith to grow?*





## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1

### INSTRUCTIONS

Staying in the same pairs as in the Blind Faith Walk, have the students quote the memory verse in the following fashion: student #1 says the first part of the verse and student #2 finishes it; then they switch places and quote it again.

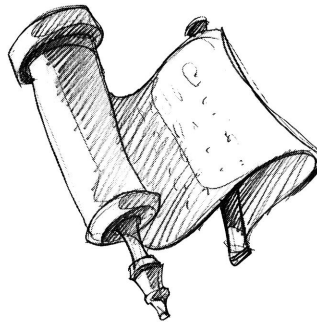
## WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you remind them of the challenge for the week.

The challenge is to pray daily for the requests they wrote out on strips of paper in their last class. If they made prayer boxes, they placed those requests in the boxes. (Some may not have made the boxes because of lack of time.) Encourage them to persevere in all their requests to God and to be faithful (sure and certain).

## CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer.



## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Pray faithfully every day for each of the three requests that you placed in your prayer box. Look for answers to those prayers and be ready to share them at the next class.

## HEROES OF FAITH

Gregg and Shelley Metten left for Bombay, India, with their two children (Matt and Jennifer) and several other people to start the church in that country. Their commitment and their faith were evident in the decisions they made before leaving for this third-world country. Shelley wrote the following:

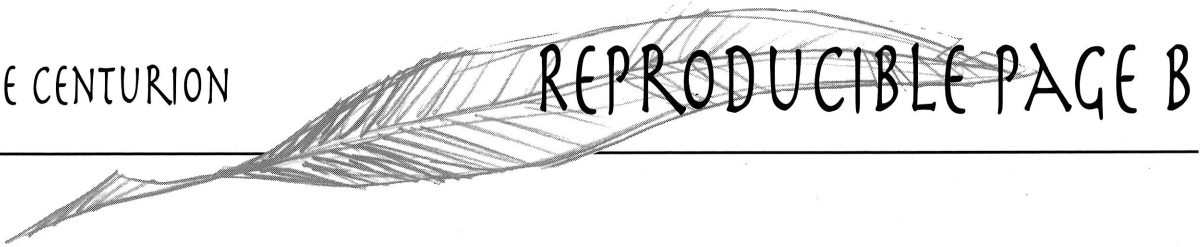
"All the plans were set. We had taken the kids out of school and made arrangements to educate them at home using an international correspondence course. We had even prepared ourselves for physical dangers by talking about what we would do if someone got sick in our family and how we would continue to hold on to the commitment we had made to God to teach the Indian people about him. Little did I know that on the second day we were there, I would face the most intense spiritual and emotional challenge of my life. The team ventured out for the first time on the local train to celebrate the birthday of one of the children on the team, totally unaware of how different trains were in Bombay. They were old, crowded with people, insensitive to the needs of those getting on and off them. There were men's compartments separate from the women's compartments—a fact we discovered just as we were getting on the train. I ran with our daughter, Jennifer, to get into the women's compartment and mistakenly thought our son, Matthew, was with his dad.

"As the train began moving out of the station, I looked back and saw my nine-year-old son hanging onto a handle on the side of the train screaming, "Mommy!" There was absolutely nothing I could do as I watched him fall from the train. I realized Matthew was probably dead. Other women on the train had also seen him fall and everyone began to cry. But in my heart I thought about God and the promise he had made that the little children would be with him. Even in the midst of a terrible tragedy, I felt so much comfort from God and my trust in his word.

"Aware of what had happened, Jennifer became hysterical. As we got off the train at the next stop, I knelt down in front of her and held her tight and told her Matthew was possibly dead—but that he would be with God and that was good. Then I told her that no matter what happened that night, we were not leaving India. This was where God wanted us to be and we needed to trust God.

"As it turned out, Dan Allison, another member of the team who had seen Matthew fall, was able to save his life. During the next five years living in India, there were numerous tough times, but that moment on the train prepared me for anything because I learned what it meant to trust God."

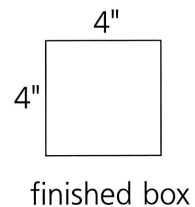
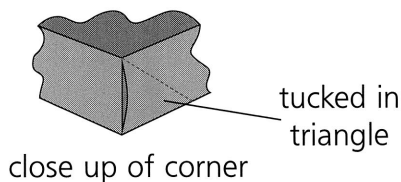
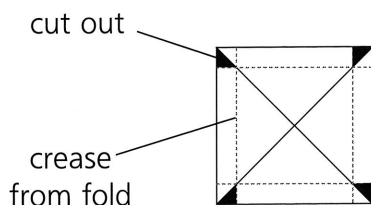
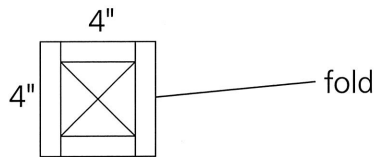
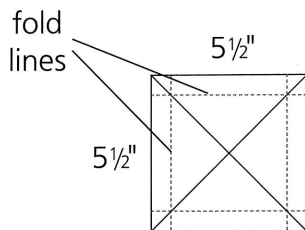
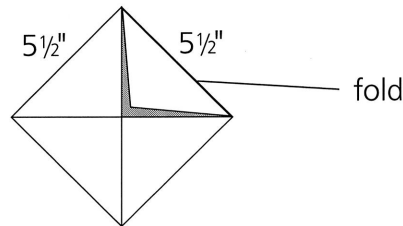
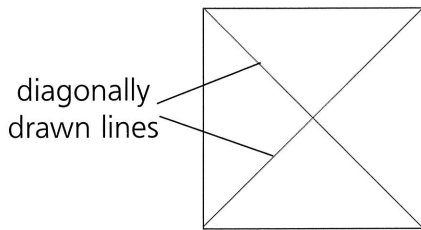
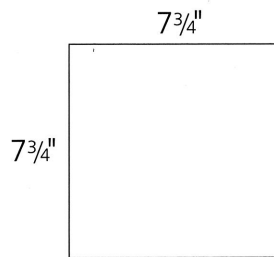
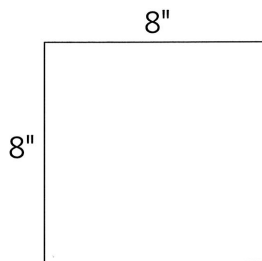
Shelley Metten, "Eyes Fixed on the Unseen," *UpsideDown* January 1992: 18. (excerpt)

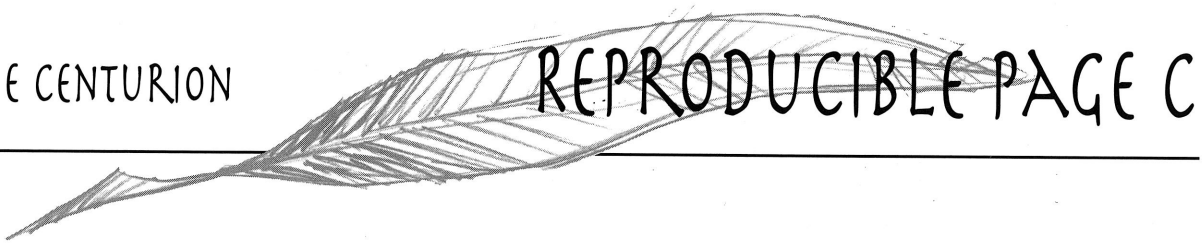


## FAITH BOXES

Instructions:

1. Cut one 8" X 8" square for the top of the box and one 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" square for the bottom of the box.
2. On one side of the 8" X 8" square, draw a line from opposite corner to corner, making an "X."
3. Fold each corner to the middle point of the "X" as shown on the diagram.
4. Measure from the outside edge on each side <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" and mark a fold line.
5. Fold in each of the edges (toward the center of the "X") <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"
6. Cut out one of the small triangles in the corners as shown on the diagram. (Make sure not to cut out the other triangles in each corner.)
7. Tuck in the remaining triangle under the joining edge to create the three-dimensional box top or bottom. Glue triangle as you tuck to reinforce (if desired).
8. Repeat 2-7 for the other half of the box.





SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

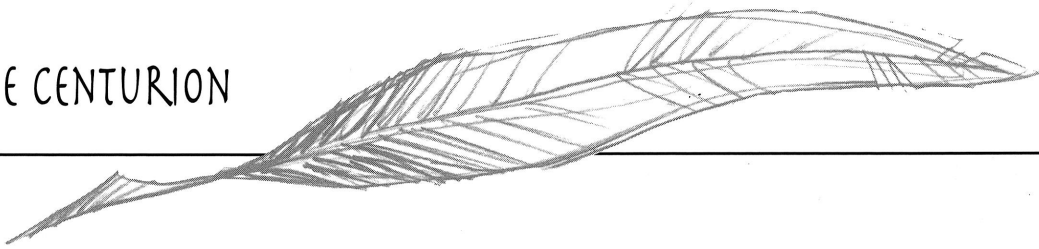
Now faith is being sure of what  
we hope for and certain of  
what we do not see.

FAITH

HEBREWS 11:1

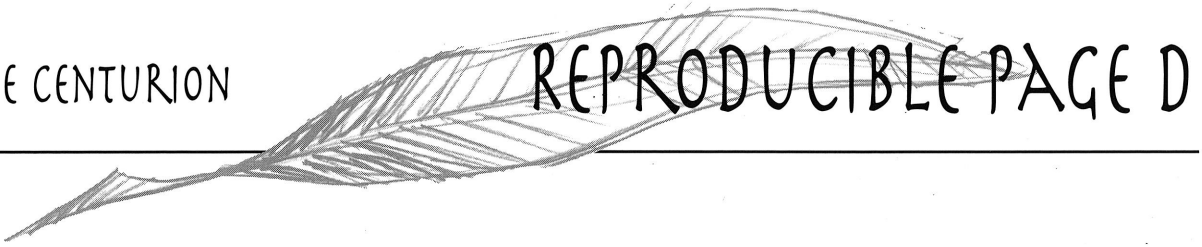
WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Pray faithfully every day for each of the three requests that you placed in your prayer box. Look for answers to those prayers and be ready to share them at the next class.



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## AN AMAZING SCAVENGER HUNT

Directions: Look up each of the passages in the order they are given. On the line next to each scripture reference, write the person whose faith impressed Jesus and how Jesus rewarded that faith.

1. Matthew 9:2 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Matthew 9:22 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Matthew 15:28 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Mark 2:5 \_\_\_\_\_

5. Mark 10:52 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Luke 7:50 \_\_\_\_\_

7. Luke 17:19 \_\_\_\_\_

8. Luke 18:42 \_\_\_\_\_

