

THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS – p. 39

“Have Faith in God”

Mark 11:20-26

The Message

The message is straightforward – “Have faith in God.”

-Faith in God’s power, answer, and work.

Two observations about “Have faith in God” – Command and Contrast

-Command –

-This is an imperative command meaning there is a certain amount of urgency behind it –

-Having faith in God is essential to being a follower of Christ –

-Having faith in God is what it means to follow Christ!

-Contrast –

-Having faith in God contrasts with what was going on in the temple –

-The temple was a place of faithlessness –

-They were not living by the promises of God and the purpose of God for the temple was not fulfilled.

-Instead of sincere worship of God there was corrupt commerce going on in the temple.

-The temple had become a monument of unbelief –

-Like the fig tree, it didn’t do what it was created to do!

-The contrast is also seen in prayer –

-The temple was supposed to be a place of prayer for the nations.

-Having faith in God is very much about prayer – as we will see.

Pattern	11:23	11:24	11:25
Form of Request to God	Truly, I say to you, whoever says to the mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’	Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer,	And whenever you stand praying,
Faith Action	and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass,	believe that you have received it,	forgive, if you have anything against anyone,
Promise of Fulfillment	it will be done for him.	and it will be yours.	so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

-Eric Redmond, *Focus on the Bible Commentary*

1 – Have faith in God’s power – v. 23

-What are we to make of this mountain moving promise of Jesus?

-v. 23 – “Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.”

-Jesus, once again, is using the rhetorical expression called “hyperbole” –

-Hyperbole = Making a point through exaggeration.

-Jesus used this back in 9:42ff

-If your eye offends you, pluck it out! If your hand offends you, cut it off!

-Meaning, take radical action to not sin!

- This is hyperbole to say that God is awesome – His power has no limits –
 - Trust in Him, believe in Him, live by faith in your great God!
- The mountain moving hyperbole also fits with what we know about the temple –
 - Herod moved a mountain to build the temple complex – At least partially
 - But it took years and thousands of workers putting in tens of thousands of hours of work.
 - God could do this instantly if He wanted – He has that kind of power.
- Illustration of the power of God through faith...
 - Faith gives power over disease –
 - Not that your body is healed, but that disease becomes your servant to accomplish something eternal!
 - 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
 - Faith gives power over death –
 - Not that your body won't physically die, but that you have eternal life!
 - This is what Jesus was getting at when He told His disciples, as recorded in John 14, that they would do "greater works" –
 - A greater work than the miracle of someone's body being healed is the greater work of eternal salvation!
 - The Apostles would do some signs and wonders as Jesus did, but they would do much greater works than healing of a body...!
 - Ephesians 3:20 – *"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us."*

2 – Have faith in God's answer – v. 24

- v. 24 – *"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."*
 - Whatever you ask = request or petition
 - You have received it, and it will be yours = God's answer
- Faith says that the way God answers is best –
 - However He answers, it is right, it is good, it is best!
- This passage about prayer must be taken with everything the Bible says about prayer –
 - We pray in God's will, not selfish motives –Matt. 6:10, Rom. 8:27; James 4:3
 - We pray for the glory of God, not the glory of self - 2 Cor. 1:19-21
 - We pray mainly for spiritual things, not merely physical -The Lord's Prayer – Matt. 6; Luke 11

3 – Have faith in God's work – v. 25

- v. 25 – *"And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."*
- Like prayer, we understand what Jesus teaches about forgiveness in light of all the Bible says about forgiveness –
 - Forgiveness is a two-part transaction than leads to a three-fold promise –
 - Ask and grant forgiveness
 - Promise to not review with you, others, or myself!
 - While forgiveness is only possible with confession and repentance, a spirit of forgiveness should always be our heart's posture.
- Why should and how can a Christian forgive?
 - All forgiveness is based on the forgiveness we receive through Christ –
 - Ephesians 4:32 – *"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."*
 - We forgive by faith in the sufficient and finished work of Christ –
 - By faith we believe He paid the full penalty for our sin and for all those who are in Him.