

the unexpected.

what's with miracles?

"THE UNEXPECTED" WEEK 5 NOTES MAY 7

KEY THOUGHTS

- If we believe in miracles, we sit in a spectrum of whether God does whatever He wants in the miraculous, or our faith is the reason God does or doesn't do the miraculous for us. The issue is not so much where we sit, but where does God want us to sit?
- Today, is God just waiting on me to have enough faith?
- Mark 10:46-52 is the healing of a blind man. Some comments:
 - His plea was just for Jesus to have mercy on him. Sometimes our situation or so desperate we just ask for help.
 - He was told to "take courage." When Jesus is in the environment, be ready!
 - Casting aside his coach was an enormous act of faith. A blind man couldn't go back to retrieve it!
 - "Your faith has made you well." Literally translated means "saved you."
 - Again, we sit in this spectrum of how much faith plays a part in what God does in us. Does our faith cause God to act in our lives?
- Here's another passage: Luke 17:5-6 – our faith, it seems, can move trees and even mountains.
- Clearing this up about faith and the miraculous, coming from the entirety of Scripture.
- 1. In mysterious ways, faith opens doors for God's work in our lives. We can't just ignore Jesus' words here.
- 2. The reverse is also true. Mark 6:5 reveals that in some circumstances Jesus couldn't perform many miracles. Is that because His power was limited, or more likely, because people weren't bringing the sick to Him because of their doubts.
- 3. Faith is a gift from God. That is certainly true of salvation (see Ephesians 2:8-9), but also in healing faith. God gifts us with faith, and we're called to...
- 4. Exercise the faith we've been given.
 - Thomas Schreiner, *Why Doesn't Our Faith Move Mountains?* – "We're prone to think if we just had more faith, then God could do amazing things through us. But Jesus tells us something quite astonishing. The issue isn't whether we are full of faith but whether we have any faith. If we have the smallest amount of faith, God works on our behalf. Jesus stops his disciples short and asks them: Do you believe in me at all? Do you trust God at all?"
 - Kevin DeYoung, *Faith Enough to Ask* – "...there is nothing Jesus likes more in the gospels than desperate people expressing their humble confidence that he can take care of anything... Obviously, there is a danger that we take these examples, isolate them from the rest of Scripture, and come away with a theology that says God will give us whatever we want, no matter what and no matter when. Such a theology flies in the face of Jesus' experience in the garden, Paul's experience with the thorn, and real life for everyone else."
- What does exercising our faith even mean? Hebrews 11, the great chapter on faith, explains. In verses 3-31, of the 21 instances of faith, 17 of them are things people did in obedient response to the Lord. It wasn't simply asking God to do "great things". Verses 32-35a talks about blessings God poured out on His people. BUT, verses 35b-40 talks about catastrophic things that happened to people of great faith.
- As we've mentioned, great faith in the miracle-working God means:
- He knows.

- Trust Him.
- It's His story, to tell as He chooses.

SCRIPTURES

- Mark 10:46-52
- Luke 17:5-6
- Mark 6:5
- Hebrews 11:3-40

PRACTICAL & REFLECTION

- Do you recognize that God knows everything about your situations?
- Do you trust Jesus' power, His wisdom, and His love over your life?
- Have you surrendered to joyfully ask the Lord to tell His story however He chooses in your life, whether you fit into Hebrews 11:3-35a, or 11:35b-40?