

# "The Kingdom and Faith"

## Matthew 17:14-27

**Pastor Justin Bell**  
**Mobil Ave. campus**

**Intro: What is faith? Faith is responding to God with an attitude of dependence which results in actions of obedience.** Faith involves confidence in Christ, rather than faith in "faith." A growing faith is evidence of a growing relationship with Jesus. A growing faith results in increased trust in God's power, promises, and provision. And produces increased peace in Christ. Would you like more peace in your life?

**Subject: Faith in Christ**

**Object: Be Confident in God's Power, Promises, and Provision**

### **I. Power (v.14-21)**

- v.14 kneeling - sign of reverence and humility. The power of faith begins with humility and dependence.
- v.15-16 - epileptic - not the most accurate translation and Greeks most likely didn't anything of epilepsy, Gk word can also be translated at moon struck or lunatic
- disciples could not heal, speaks of persistency that this man doesn't give up. Faith is persistent.
- Perhaps many "experts" had told this concerned father his son would never be well.
- v.17-21 disciples had been with Jesus and didn't have the faith to heal. This grieved Jesus. Our unbelief also grieves Him.
- Where in your life do you struggle to trust God?
- Fasting and Prayer - two disciplines that deepen our faith. They also represent the importance of closeness with God and denying ourself for His glory.
- Share about social media fast - running to social media to bring comfort when frustrated or entertainment when bored - I can run there instead of the Lord.
- Maybe you are missing out on the power of faith because you haven't been close with the Lord and haven't been denying yourself.
- Gospel - we don't pray and fast to please God, but to draw close to Him.
- How can you draw closer to God in prayer this week? Share about Prayer T/O
- Is there an area God is calling you to fast or deny yourself so you can draw closer to Him?

### **II. Promises (v.22-23)**

- v.22-23 - This is 2nd time Jesus has predicted death and resurrection [Matt 16 was first]
- This promise should have been comforting to the disciples, but instead they are filled with sorrow. It was all a matter of perspective.

- Asher - consequence of not getting a cookie for not listening
- Max Lucado - old man prized white horse, disappears and returns with a dozen horses, son trains and broke both legs, town went to war and son stayed back, all others died.
- No matter how hard life can be on earth, we can rejoice if we are in Christ because our sins have been forgiven.
- God in His sovereignty is working out all things for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). - What promises do you need to cling to?
- **“For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.” - 2 Corinthians 1:20**

### III. Provision (v.24-27)

- v.24-26 Half a shekel or silver to maintain temple - Tax generally believed to only be paid by men 20 years or older
- Jesus didn't have to pay since He is the Son of God, but does anyway
- Tithing is an act of faith, trusting that God is the One who provides for our needs.
- Friend - sharing struggle of wondering what he could do with tithe money each month.
- God provides for us for our needs and wants, but also so we can give back to God and give to others.
- v.27 This may give us insight into the poverty of Jesus
- Peter - large fisherman used to using a net, not a line and hook - this would be humbling for Peter (T-Woods using play school clubs)
- When we pray “Give us our daily bread” we humbly confess that our provision comes from God and God alone.
- If you have plenty this morning or if you are lacking, do you realize all of your provision comes from God?
- Operating with an “I deserve this” attitude leads to bitterness, entitlement, and emptiness. Realizing all we have is grace produces an attitude of gratefulness, joy, and dependence.

Communion: The greatest motivation to confidently trust God's power, promises, and provision is to consider the cross and the extent of God's love (and the resurrection).

**Pastor Bruce Zachary**  
**Lewis Rd. campus**

**Intro. What is faith? Faith is responding to God with an attitude of dependence and actions of obedience.** Faith involves confidence in Christ, rather than faith in “faith.” A growing faith is evidence of a growing relationship with Jesus. A growing faith results in

increased trust in God's power, promises, and provision. And produces increased peace in Christ. Would you like more peace in your life?

**Subject: Faith in Christ**

**Object: Be confident in God's power, promises, and provision**

**Context:** The disciples affirmed that Jesus is the Messiah [Ch.16], and discovered that He is God in the flesh [Ch.17 Mt of Transfiguration].

### **A. Power [14-21]**

**1. A powerless and faithless life grieves the Lord [14-17]** And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, <sup>15</sup> "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. <sup>16</sup> So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."<sup>17</sup> Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." Jesus descended the Mount of Transfiguration, along with Peter, James, and John, and returned to the remaining disciples. A crowd was waiting for Him [14]. A man approached Jesus and knelt before Him as a sign of humility and respect. His son suffered with seizures that were connected to demonic torment [14,18]. Presumably much suffering and torment in our world is likely connected to emotional, spiritual, as well as physical causes. The disciples were unable to help [16]. Jesus rebuked the disciples as faithless (lacking trust in God) and perverse (distorted spirituality) [17]. You sense the Lord's frustration about their lack of faith and understanding [17].

**2. Power to overcome is available to believers [18-21]** And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.<sup>19</sup> Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" <sup>20</sup> So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. <sup>21</sup> However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Jesus rebuked the demon, it came out, and the child was immediately cured [18]. The disciples went to Jesus privately to discover why they couldn't cast out the demon [19]. It is Mark who records Jesus' words to the father, "If you believe, all things are possible to him who believes." And the father cries out with tears, "Lord I believe, help my unbelief!" Then Jesus displayed His power and healed his son [Mk. 9:23-24], and helped him believe. The Lord intervenes in our lives to grow our faith. Jesus affirms that a small faith can overcome great obstacles [20]. The disciples had been given authority to cast out demons on their first missions trip [10:18]. The power was and is available. The problem was and is unbelief [20] [Mt. 13:58]. Prayer and fasting [21] represent self-denial and seeking God, and refer to a lifestyle more than a particular moment [Phil. 3:10, 4:13].

*It is good to come to Jesus to discover your weakness and His power.*

**B. Promises [22-23]** Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, <sup>23</sup> and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

**1. God’s promises should comfort us in difficult sorrowful circumstances.**

Jesus again predicted His betrayal, death, and resurrection [Matt. 16 was 1<sup>st</sup>]. They became exceedingly sorrowful as they contemplated His death. Yet, the promised resurrection should have reduced their sorrow, and comforted them.

**2. God’s promises are sure as Jesus’ death and resurrection:** Just as Jesus rose as predicted, all God’s promises should comfort us in difficult sorrowful circumstances. The degree of comfort is directly proportional to our trust in Christ.

**C. Provision [24-27]** God provided for the temple tax:

When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the *temple* tax came to Peter and said, “Does your Teacher not pay the *temple* tax?” <sup>25</sup> He said, “Yes.” And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?”<sup>6</sup> Peter said to Him, “From strangers.” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. <sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

**1. God will provide so you can support the house of God:** The temple tax [24] (a half shekel of silver [Ex. 20]) was paid by all Hebrew males over 20 years old to help maintain the temple. Those who received the tax asked Peter whether Jesus paid the tax [24]. Jesus remarks to Peter that a king doesn’t make his own sons pay taxes, but taxes citizens (strangers) [25-26]. Thus, Jesus as the Son of God doesn’t have to pay the temple tax because it is His Father’s house. Yet, Jesus limits His rights to avoid causing a conflict, and instructs Peter to cast a line and hook and take the first fish. In the fish’s mouth will be a coin to pay the tax for Peter and Jesus [27].

**2. God will provide for your needs** Peter was a big fisherman who fished with a large net not a line and hook. Culturally, that would be humbling for Peter. Yet Jesus uses this to humble Peter to realize that God is the one who provides for his needs. Jesus wants us to know that God will provide for our needs. Do you view the tithe as a “God tax” or an opportunity to advance God’s kingdom and earn treasure in heaven?

**Communion:** The greatest motivation to confidently trust God’s power, promises, and provision is to consider the cross and the extent of God’s love (and the resurrection).

### Study Guide Qs

1. How might the idea that Jesus is grieved by a powerless and faithless life motivate a Christian?
2. How have you (or someone you know) experienced Christ’s power to overcome?

**a. Reflection: consider an area of your life where you would like to overcome in this season of your life.**

**3. Describe a time when God's promises provided comfort in difficult circumstances.**

**4. How might Christ's followers love God and neighbors better if they knew that God would provide sufficient resources for their needs, and to support the house of God?**