

Mark 11:20-26

²⁰ Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. ²¹ And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."

²² So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. ²³ For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. ²⁴ Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*."

²⁵ "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. ²⁶ But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

1. This is the final week of our Lord
 - a. He entered Jerusalem
 - b. He's hailed as the Messiah
 - c. He clears out the temple
 - d. He curses the fig tree

2. With the Cross days away, any important lessons would be said now

- a. Perhaps lesson on
 - i. How to be a good minister
 - ii. How to preach effectively
 - iii. How to overcome the devil or cast out demons

3. Instead, He's ready to teach them about Faith

a. Have faith in God

4. it's one of the 3 foundations of Christianity

a. Faith, Hope, Love

5. Faith is confidence or trust in someone or something

a. To rely on

b. To have confidence in

c. Biblical Faith is to Place your full weight on God

d. Choosing to believe what Jesus said, not because He is physically present

i. But because I trust what He said is true

1. He cannot lie

6. Soon, faith will be all the disciples have to hold onto

a. Jesus is preparing them for the greatest challenge of their lives

- b.** The disciples will have nothing else but faith in God when they see Jesus suspended between heaven and earth
- c.** Faith in God is all they'll have when persecution hits the church from all directions
- d.** Faith in God is all they'll have when James is beheaded and Peter is in prison
- e.** Faith in God is all they'll have when a crazy man names Saul of tarsus is chasing down Christians killing them

7. 1 John 5:4 and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith.

8. This text is not a secret formula of how to get things

9. [In context] He is telling us the secret of how to live so as not to be cursed.

10. Jesus teaches all of us this is how to live

- a.** [Jewish] nation was cursed because it had lost faith in God
- b.** It had substituted instead an empty procedure, a meaningless ritual, a performance only, which had an outwardly religious glaze to it, but inwardly was unreal and hypocritical
- c.** They had lost faith in God, and so the life of God which was in them was dried up and withered. (**Steadman**)

I. Object of Faith

II. Opportunity of faith

III. Obstacle of faith

I. The object of faith

1. The object of faith is God Himself

a. Have faith in God

b. The person of God is where our faith must begin

i. He is the foundation that all truth and goodness stand on

c. Some have faith in themselves

i. I can do it attitude

1. But we are frail

2. We tend to give up

3. We are not consistent

a. Trusting in ourselves is not biblical

2. In April 1988 the evening news reported on a photographer who was a skydiver. He had jumped from a plane along with numerous other skydivers and filmed the group as they fell and opened their parachutes. On the film shown on the telecast, as the final skydiver opened his chute, the picture went berserk. The announcer reported that the cameraman had fallen to his death, having jumped out of the plane without his parachute. It wasn't until he reached for the absent ripcord that he realized he was freefalling without a parachute. Until that point, the jump probably seemed exciting and

fun. But tragically, he had acted with thoughtless haste and deadly foolishness. Nothing could save him, for his faith was in a parachute never buckled on. Faith in anything but an all-sufficient God can be just as tragic spiritually. Only with faith in Jesus Christ dare we step into the dangerous excitement of life.

a. Others have faith in faith

- i. In their own ability to believe
 - 1. Looking inward for strength
 - a. That is misguided and not biblical

b. (Wiersbe) 'If you pray hard enough and *really believe*, God is obligated to answer your prayer no matter what you ask.' That kind of faith is not faith in God; rather it is nothing but faith in faith, or faith in feelings."

3. Faith in the Christian sense is: 'We believe what is true'. We don't have faith in something to make it true, we have faith in something because it is true, God said it is true. You take God's word...

4. "Have faith in God," means that this is the way to live!

- a.** This is the way to have life full and rich and meaningful --
- b.** to trust that the living God knows what he is doing,
- c.** to believe what he says,
- d.** to obey what he commands,
- e.** and to open our life to him... (**Steadman**)

a. Because God is our good Shepherd

- i. When I wander, He is always guiding me back to Him

ii. We're here today because our good shepherd directed our steps

b. Because God is our rock

i. He is our strength and foundation

1. We can cast all our cares on Him...
2. He doesn't change

c. Because God is our peace

iii. In the middle of any storm, He gives peace and brings peace

1. He is the prince of peace

d. Because God is a loving Father who wants the best for His children

iv. God's Love

v. God's Power

vi. God's Faithfulness

5. That's why we are to put our trust in Him and nothing else

II. The opportunity of faith

1. Our life is a journey, not a destination

a. On our journey, there will be mountains in my path that need to be removed

- i. "The phrase about removing mountains was a quite common Jewish phrase. It was a regular, vivid phrase for removing difficulties." (Guzik)

b. Is a great visual because we all face difficulties

2. ²³ For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. ²⁴ Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.

3. There is a connection between what I believe in my heart and the words that I speak

a. **Luke 6:45** Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks

b. If I have faith in God, then I'm to speak to the obstacle and believe it will be removed

c. **Rom 10:9-10** ⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved

- i. I'm not just praying that God would remove it
- ii. God is giving us the authority to speak to it

4. What mountains intimidate you?
 - a. An unsaved family member?
 - b. Depression over your financial situation?
 - c. A sense of hopelessness about your future?
 - i. Have faith in God...
 - ii. Ask God to fill your heart with faith
 - iii. Begin speaking to those mountains directly
5. There are some things that I'm to wait on God for
6. There are other things I'm to speak to out loud I you can hear them
7. **Caleb told Joshua, give me the mountain...**
 - a. God already said I can have it
 - i. It's where I'll find my purpose
 - ii. It's part of my inheritance
 1. To conquer those difficulties that intimidate me
8. **Speak to your mountain in faith**

III. The obstacle of faith

1. ²⁵ "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive

you your trespasses.²⁶ But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

2. Jesus links faith to move mountains with forgiveness

a. Why?

i. Because I will continue to need forgiveness

1. If I don't forgive others, I won't be able to enjoy God's forgiveness for me

ii. Because a person who does not love or will not forgive cannot be entrusted with that kind of power (**Courson**)

1. **Gal 5:6** Faith expresses itself through love

2. Since love is the foundation for faith, unforgiveness will short circuit that faith

iii. The 2 cannot work together

3. Col 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

4. As I choose to receive God's love and forgiveness, I must extend that same forgiveness to those who offended me

5. Moses chose to forgive Miriam & Aaron

- a.** Especially when he saw her leprosy
- 6.** My choosing to forgive helps me find healing in my own heart and connected with God's heart