

Which Faith Will You Choose?

Matthew 17:14-20

Introduction:

- The average person makes _____ conscious or remotely conscious choices daily.
 1. Your choices affect _____ and those _____ you.
 2. Your choices can affect society and even the w_____.
- Jesus uses a situation to teach about faith.
 1. The situation
 - a. A father brings his ailing son to the nine apostles to cure him of his condition described by the Greek text as “m_____ struck.”
 - 1) It was believed up into the 1800’s that epilepsy, seizures, and bipolar conditions were directly caused by the moon.
 - 2) This condition was more than a disease, for the boy would often go into fits around w_____ and f_____.
 - b. The apostles were _____ to cure the boy.
 2. The lesson – which faith will you choose?

L_____ of faith (17)

- The problem
 1. From the father’s standpoint
 - a. His son is _____
 - b. The apostles could not heal him.
 2. From Jesus’s standpoint – that generation was un_____ and crooked.
 - a. The word translated, unbelieving, literally means “no f_____.”
 - b. Demon-possession would never happen if everyone trusted in Jesus (review sermon on demon-possession).
- Today’s generation
 1. Why is there so much evil in our world today? – l_____ of faith in Jesus as God and Savior.
 2. What is the solution to the evil in our world? – t_____ Jesus to be God and Savior.

L _____ of faith (19,20a)

● A teachable moment

1. Jesus recognized that the boy's condition was due to a d_____ and so cast it out.
2. Jesus later told the apostles that they could not cast the demon out because of their l_____ of faith.
 - a. The apostles were s_____ that they could not cast the demon out since they were 100% successful before.
 - b. The apostles took God's power for granted and ministered in their own _____ and so failed.

● Application

1. When church ministry operates on littleness of faith
 - a. Pastoral duties – when it becomes a c_____
 - b. Teaching a bible lesson (Sunday School, VBS, etc)
 - 1) When the emphasis is on the t_____
 - 2) When workers suffer from b_____
2. When parents raise their kids on littleness of faith
 - a. When you fail to p_____ for your kids.
 - b. When you trust in behavioral modification to c_____ your kids. This can change their behavior, but it cannot change their h_____.
3. Other areas that may suffer from littleness of faith – marriage, dating, sexuality, education, vocation, etc.

L _____ faith (20)

● The point of the illustration of a mustard seed

1. The point is not the s_____ of the seed.
 - a. It would be nonsense for Jesus to blame them for their little faith and then instruct them to h_____ little faith (as small as a mustard seed). The NIV and NASB translate it wrong.
 - b. The Greek text reads, *faith as a seed of a mustard plant*.
2. Therefore, the point is the n_____ of the seed, not its size.
 - a. The mustard plant was a garden plant used for its o_____ (had medicinal and nutritional value).
 - b. The seed (although extremely small – see Matt 13:31,32) produces a plant ready for use in 30 – 60 days. The plant could grow _____ feet tall.

c. Faith as a mustard seed is faith that is highly p_____.
It is depending on God to do His work through you as He determines.

1) If you have living faith AND say to a mountain
“move over there” it will move.

2) BUT if God does not d_____ it, you must
not command it.

●Application of living faith

1. Ministering to one another according to the f_____ given you (Rom 12:6-8) – bathe what you do in p_____, asking God to use you to build up another (serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, showing mercy).
2. Parental responsibility of raising children (Eph 6:4; Deut 6:7) – obey God’s instruction, asking Him to change your children’s h_____).
3. Daily living – ask God to use you to make a d_____ in everyone you encounter and in everything you do.

Conclusion:

●When you leave here today, which faith will you have?

1. Lack of faith
2. Littleness of faith
3. Living faith

YOU CHOOSE