

14- A Servant Must Have A Growing Faith Mark 4:30-41

Hebrews 11:1 HCSB Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen. We have talked in the past about Jesus uses of parables as a method of conveying the message of God. Notice Mark 4:33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. 34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

I- Little Seed Contains a Big Tree:

Jesus used a parable to expound upon the kingdom and about faith. God sees the small seed within us and what it has potential to become. *Mark 4:30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? 31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: 32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.*

Jesus illustrated faith by a mustard seed in *Matthew 17:20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*

Faith and the Word of God is tied together in *Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* We also see that we are made right with God by faith in *Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.* It is through faith that we have peace with God through Christ. *Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: Faith gives us access to God. Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

The seed grew to be of benefit to others. The disciples said in *Luke 17:5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.* Jesus told them if they had the faith the size of the mustard seed it could do some amazing things. In the next verses in Luke He said *Luke 17:6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.*

II- Opportunity to Practice Faith:

We move to later in the day to an event that would present and opportunity for them to practice faith. *Mark 4:35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. 36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. 37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.*

They are on the sea of Galilee where storms could rise suddenly. These men made their living on the seas as fishermen. They had faced many storms before. They look around and Jesus is not among them. They search for Him. *Mark 4:38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: He was resting for a few minutes as the storm raged.*

In their worry even questioned if Jesus really cared. God is big enough to handle our doubts if we are big enough to take them to Him. They said to Jesus. *...and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?*

They were getting a chance to practice faith and they did not like the test. Most of us do not. *Mark 4:39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.*

III- What Causes Faith to Grow?

After Jesus calmed the storm He asked them why they had not had more faith. Why they allowed fear to overcome them. *Mark 4:40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? In Matthews account Jesus is recorded saying in Matthew 8:26 ...Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?... What causes faith to grow? 1- Faith grows when it is challenged.* When was the last time you challenged yourself by taking a step of faith? Jesus made a great statement of faith in *Matthew 19:26 ... with God all things are possible.* Then remember *Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

2- Faith grows when it is exercised. We quoted a few moments ago that defined faith for us. *Hebrews 11:1* The eleventh chapter has a total of 40 verses and the remaining 39 tell us about real men and women exercising their faith.

3- Faith grows by observing past events through the eyes of faith. By observing the past we can grow our faith in the future. *Matthew 6:30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*

4- Faith grows at times out of desperation. In the book of Ephesians we are told to put on the whole armor of God. *Ephesians 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* Sometimes the only thing we can do is to simply stand and cast total dependence upon God.

Notice the reaction of the disciples when Jesus calmed the storm. *Mark 4:41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?*

Now lost friend please understand that Jesus is saying to you. *John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*