

The Road to Calvary Lesson 5

Help My Unbelief

A Bible Study Lesson of the Mount Zion Church
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We Have the Vision to be a LEARNING Church!



Introduction: The purpose of the following lesson is to help students understand that Jesus came to clearly identify that we can have faith in Him. As Jesus made His way to Calvary, He wanted people to know that God is true to His word and that the example Jesus (God with us) was setting proved that we can trust in every single word He said the and says to us now. Often, we allow the circumstances around us to influence how we perceive Jesus. If our lives are going well, then Jesus is worthy of our faith. If our lives are in distress, then our faith wavers. The comment Jesus makes “You unbelieving generation, how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?” is very telling in that it suggests that our lack of faith blocks Jesus’ power in our lives. We must remember that faith in a very simple sense is seeing Jesus do it before Jesus does it according to His will in our lives. If Jesus has said yes to our requests, then nothing can stop His “yes” other than our questioning of whether He can do it. As we grow in faith, we become better able to see His power over the circumstances of our lives. Further, we recognize that He is Lord overall and cares about each of us individually and collectively. This gives us an ability to speak to others about Jesus being worth of following and trusting. Today, we will understand that our need is to move beyond our unbelief!



Key Verses: Mark 9: 14-25

Supporting Verses: Proverbs 3: 5-6, Mark 4: 35-40, John 20: 31, Ephesians 6: 16, Hebrews 11: 1-6,

I. I Need Faith

Mark 9 is an oft taught chapter as it presents to us Jesus in one of the moments where He is clearly identified as the Messiah. In the early verses of chapter 9, Jesus went into an mountainous area with Peter, James, and John and he is transfigured. The word transfigured

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means that His nature was changed. In this instance, the true nature of Jesus is shown and His inner circle are able to see God's glory or the God-side of Jesus in a way that they had not seen before. In this event, Elijah and Moses appear and speak to Jesus. While the current lesson is not about the Transfiguration, students should note that Mark connects the transfiguration and the understanding that Peter, James, and John have with a lack of understanding and faith that occurs upon their journey down the mountain.

The focus of the first 29 verses of Mark 9 can be summed up in the father's plea in verse 24 "Help my unbelief!"

Why is there a necessity for faith in Jesus? As we see in Hebrews 11: 1, faith gives us an absolute assurance of the things that are ours before they manifest in the physical. Jesus promises that we will have our needs met and that the Father knows how to bless us with everything we need, but those promises do not appear all at once. Some blessings take time. Others take process. During the wait time or during the process, faith in Jesus gives us an assurance that it is before it is.

When Jesus asks about faith, calls those around him a faithless generation, or says they have little faith, He is pushing them to remember that His words have substance and meaning. Thus, if Jesus has declared something to be in His thinking it is already, whether you can physically see it and touch it or not. Our faith in Him serves as a reminder or as the proof even though we may not have what has been promised to us yet. Examples of the power of faith can be seen in Hebrews 11 as the writer Paul recounted how people moved and behaved based upon an absolute faith in what God had said to be true.

My favorite example is Hebrews 11: 8 which recites that Abraham left his home and went on a journey to a Promised Land, even though he did not know where he was going solely as an act of faith (See Genesis 12: 1-4). This act of obedience based on faith in God produced an outcome that is still being manifested today.

If you had to describe your level of faith in Jesus right now on the following scale, where are you?

Circle the one that applies: I trust Jesus for everything.

They had to decide _____ What did they choose? Fear or Faith
(circle one)

At least the disciples had enough sense to do what? _____

During the event of the journey to the other side, the disciples encounter opposition in the same way that each of us encounters opposition. Their journey was consumed by fear and concern that

overwhelmed them when they could have been in a state of reduced stress. Faith does not mean that we do not have concern in the face of danger, it does mean that we do not lose hope.

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In a storm, they should ensure they do not drown and that the boat is on track to make it to the other side. Their question of Jesus showed a level of fear that indicated faithless concern. They asked Jesus “Do you care if we survive?” Have you ever asked questions like this in your prayers? When we ask whether Jesus cares about us, we have forgotten that He cares so much that He would die to save us from the punishment of sin. So, does Jesus care if you and I perish??? YES!

The repetitive reminder to trust in God is not accidental. If we do not have faith, we position ourselves to experience the opposite of what faith is. Remember, faith is seeing that it is before it is despite the current situation. Lacking faith is seeing that it cannot be based on what is happening right now.

III. Practical Steps to Grow My Faith

How can we grow our faith? This is such a key question. It is the action step that moves us beyond simply hearing and into the doing of God’s word. Since I cannot please God without faith, it would be to our benefit to ensure we are growing our faith! Once when Jesus talked with His disciples, Philip asked Him to show them the Father. Jesus responded by asking Philip why he did not understand after all the time spent together. The writer John even explicitly states that the Gospel of John was written so that we can believe (have faith) in Jesus and know

that He is the son of God and through that belief (faith) we would experience life (John 20: 31).

Therefore, to grow my faith really means growing my knowledge of Jesus. I have to know Him more so I can have more faith in Him. This means my faith grows as I experience Him being true to His word as I step out on His word. I have to try His word and then recognize the truth of the word (Proverbs 3: 5-6). Then I have to try it again and again over time. Systematic and progressive growth in faith is not instantaneous. Ephesians 4: 11-16 speaks to this idea of a growing faith that comes from the work of those who preach and teach God's word to us. We as the listeners hear the word, put it into practice (step out on faith) and mature as believers because we become better able to resist trusting in other "gods" and ourselves. In short, as we immerse our lives in God's word our faith grows and matures.

Growth Check

1. Are you reading God's word daily for understanding?
2. Are you praying daily?
3. Are you listening to the Holy Spirit for direction daily?
4. Do you try Jesus' promises for your life consistently even in "stormy" situations?

Through the actions above, we can grow over time. There is nothing magical about it. Each day, every day, we must choose to grow our faith in Jesus. The father requested some help in His unbelief. You and I should request the same as we study God's word and live the life of a follower of Christ.

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord, please help my unbelief and mature me. Give me a sense to know that I can know you and by knowing you, I experience a stronger faith because I learn that your word is true. In Jesus name, Amen.