

Tuesday's Touch ...#14

...from Pastor Ed ...April 28, 2009

Increased or Unleashed?

And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'" Luke 17:6-10

If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. John 14:14

²²And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Matt.21:22

In Luke 17, following an extended period of teaching in which our Lord spoke of some things difficult to embrace and do, the disciples ask Jesus to increase their faith. I think most of us would consider the request reasonable. The greater the challenge the more need for increased faith- right? So they ask him, thinking, no doubt, that he had the power to sovereignly bestow such a gift. However the Lord's response clearly cuts across all their perceptions about the nature of faith.

Rather than praying for them to receive greater faith, or laying his hands upon them, or some such action, Jesus teaches them. We are reminded that all true faith comes only through hearing the Word of God (Rom.10:17). But more importantly as regards this specific request, while they had asked for a greater faith, Jesus speaks to them of the least measure of faith- tiny faith- the mustard seed of faith. His point is this. If we are 'in the faith' at all, then what we need most is not an increasing of our faith, but an unleashing of our faith. And so, after declaring the mighty power of the smallest faith, Christ goes on to teach them how it is that this power of faith is unleashed.

He points them immediately to the humble faithful servant. The servant

must be about his master's business first and foremost. He must be concerned about the master's personal well being before his own. He knows that the primary portion of his reward awaits the time appointed by the master. He realizes that to do what is commanded is its own reward, for now, and deserves no special accolades. In so doing the servant will find that he has enormous power and authority in accomplishing the master's purposes.

Yet how quickly we are prone to adopt the mindset that faith is given (or worse, that we can work it up) so that it can serve us in satisfying all our own wants and desires. Faith becomes a kind of heavenly currency that we can use to 'get stuff' from God.

In John 14:11-15 Jesus integrally ties one of the greatest promises of answered prayer in scripture (vs.13) directly to the obedient doing of his work to the glory of the Father. It is as the humble servant of Christ that any tree, mountain or other obstacle will be cast into the sea. If we ask anything according to the will of God it shall be done (1 John 5:14-15), and nothing shall be impossible (Matt.17:20).

My Glorious Master,

Should we do all that is commanded, we would only have done our duty. Forgive us that we are so quickly puffed up when we accomplish some small, obscure portion of all that you have appointed us to do. Forgive us for trying to steal the very resource of power you have given for your service in order that we might expend it on our own desires. Let us know that in all such use of faith we exchange the true power of faith for a cheap counterfeit. Make us humbled, obedient servants with power to do all things as you command us.

Awaiting the Glory,

Amen

To comment, add a friend, or to ask more information about the salvation offered to us in Christ, please respond to: [Tuesdays Touch@SpringwoodChapel.com](mailto:Tuesdays_Touch@SpringwoodChapel.com) or [pastored@ SpringwoodChapel.com](mailto:pastored@SpringwoodChapel.com)

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