

THE GOSPEL OF MARK "have faith"

FIG CURSING PART II

- *Tree was dead dead!!!
- *Jesus last miracle.
- *Fig Tree Sandwich and the temple in the middle, illustrating the temple was dead.
- *Must see the drama of the moment.

"HAVE FAITH"

- *Jesus is claiming himself as God.
- *This is the way to live a full meaningful life.
- ***It is not how much faith I have but who I have my faith in.**
- *Faith Defined: Confidence, trust, belief
- "Faith is being sure . . . Certain"
- *Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 11:6,
2 Corinthians 5:7, James 1:6, Romans 10:17.

"THIS MOUNTAIN"

- *Literally to move a real mountain? Or the Mount of Zion which the temple sat on? Or obstacles that seem like mountains?
- *This saying together with the concept of God doing the impossible raises sharply the problem of unanswered prayer.
- * A simplistic reading of the passage attributes unanswered prayers to inadequate faith on the part of the one praying. But this must be set against the fact that the will of God is not necessarily the same as that of the person praying.
- ***Faith believes enough to ask, and asking is rooted in the conviction that God intends that His 'will be done on earth as it is in heaven'** Matthew 6:10.
- *Faith is more certain of God's steadfastness than of human inabilities and uncertainties.
- *The expression reflects 'Semitic thought' in which the certainty of a future act, based on a trustworthiness of God, can be referred to in the past tense.
- *Both faith and prayer stand in continuity with God's character and in conformity with his will.

It is not that God doesn't answer prayer but it is the "Inconsistency" of the answered prayers. Yancy

Mark 11:20-26 (NIV)

⁽²⁰⁾ In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. ⁽²¹⁾ Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!" ⁽²²⁾ "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. ⁽²³⁾ "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. ⁽²⁴⁾ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ⁽²⁵⁾ And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. ⁽²⁶⁾ "

Mark 11:20-26 (MSG)

⁽²⁰⁾ In the morning, walking along the road, they saw the fig tree, shriveled to a dry stick. ⁽²¹⁾ Peter, remembering what had happened the previous day, said to him, "Rabbi, look—the fig tree you cursed is shriveled up!" ⁽²²⁾ Jesus was matter-of-fact: "Embrace this God-life. Really embrace it, ⁽²³⁾ and nothing will be too much for you. This mountain, for instance: Just say, 'Go jump in the lake'—no shuffling or shilly-shallying—and it's as good as done. ⁽²⁴⁾ That's why I urge you to pray for absolutely everything, ranging from small to large. Include everything as you embrace this God-life, and you'll get God's everything. ⁽²⁵⁾ And when you assume the posture of prayer, remember that it's not all *asking*. If you have anything against someone, *forgive*—only then will your heavenly Father be inclined to also wipe your slate clean of sins." ⁽²⁶⁾ "

- *Prayer is like a guy in a boat going toward the dock. He uses the engine and the rudder to position the boat to get to the dock not to bring the dock to him. The louder he reeves the engine will not bring the dock to him. So **in prayer we should draw ourselves to God and not try to pull God down to us.** Jesus example in the Garden . . . He boldly asks God but it is His will that is submitted too.
- *We are to pray confidently. This is not about attempting magical miracles or using Jesus as a magic wand to get what we wish for.
- *Prayer is not an engine by which we overcome the unwillingness of God.
- *Prayer is to be founded on the goodness of God as a loving Father who wants the best for us, even though we can't see what that is from where we are standing.
- *The secret is not that you have to 'believe' that the thing is going to happen for it to happen. Now you need to believe for if you don't then why pray but JUST because you believe doesn't guarantee an answer.

FORGIVENESS

- *Conditions of effective prayer. Matthew 5:23-24, 18:21-35, 6:14-15, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13
- *Effectiveness of prayer has nothing to do with the temple or its sacrifices or its temple taxes. Relationship with God is based simply on faith and forgiveness.

WHAT HAPPENED TO MARK 11:26?

- *v.26 is absent from the earliest and most important manuscript tradition and was not part of Mark's original text. Its appearance in the later manuscript tradition is best explained as an insertion by copyist in imitation of Matthew 6:15

NOTES:

Why Prayers go unanswered

- **Inappropriate Prayers**
 - * Wrong Motives—James 4:2-3
- **Sin in our lives**
 - * Adam and Eve * David—Psalm 51 * King Saul—1 Samuel 28
 - not seeking justice for orphans and widows Isaiah 1:15-17
 - break marriage vows through adultery and divorce Malachi 2:13-16
 - who pay exploitative wages Malachi 3:5
 - who treat illegal immigrants badly Malachi 3:5
 - holding back finances – Malachi 3:6-12
 - not taking care of the poor Proverbs 21:13
- **Contradictory Prayers**
- **Built in Limitations of Prayer**
 - Human Freedom
 - Refusal to coerce (mental rape)
 - Dark powers contending against God's rule
 - Planet plagued by sin (and everything that goes with that)
- **Blessing of Unanswered Prayer**

Prayer Checklist

1. **What do I really want?** Am I being specific, or am I just rambling about nothing in particular?
2. **Can God grant this request?** Or is it against God's nature to do so?
3. **Have I done my part?** Or am I praying to lose weight when I haven't dieted?
4. **How is my relationship with God?** Are we on speaking terms?
5. **Who will get the credit if my request is granted?** Do I have God's interests in mind?
6. **Do I really want my prayer answered?** What would happen if I actually did get that winning lottery number or that woman/man I desire?
David Mains