

Monday, 3 April 2017 Mark 6:1-6

He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

He could do no mighty work there. Not that He would not, He could not. The unbelief (the unwillingness to trust and have faith in) of Nazareth was sufficient to inhibit the healing power of the Lord of the universe.

Fast forward to today. Is the sickly and weak prayer practices of our churches a consequence of our unwillingness to trust Him? Our unwillingness to stand against the culture around and among us? Is it no wonder that prayers are not answered?

Lord, heal Your Church.

Tuesday, 4 April 2017 Mark 9:20-23

So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth. "How long has this been happening?" Jesus asked the boy's father. He replied, "Since he was a little boy. The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if You can." "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes."

How many of our prayers are couched in a weak and flabby language that sounds holy and an appropriate way to address the LORD, God, the Almighty? It is right and proper to acknowledge that the LORD's will in a situation often differs from my desires. But He tells me to pray in

accordance with His Word. If I have examined the Word and to the best of my understanding, am asking in line with that guidance by the Holy Spirit, then pray, John, pray. And pray, secure in the knowledge that His response will far better than anything I could have asked or imagined.

Wednesday, 5 April 2017 Mark 9:24

The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"

I think the father's love for his son is powerfully conveyed by one word, 'instantly.' Instant conviction, instant trust, coupled with the realization that his weak and fallen nature needed help.

There is no weaseling about if You're willing; he knew immediately that he was in the presence of the only One who could heal his precious son.

Thursday, 6 April 2017 Mark 11:22-25

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours. But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too. "

Let's see. Since I will need to go see my children who live a few miles to the west, it can be a nuisance to have to drive over Huntley Mountain, why don't I just asked the LORD to toss it out into the Atlantic. Nothing wrong, right? Just about everything! I'm told not to test my God. (Matt 4:7). Jesus is not talking about a causal, off the cuff belief, but a transforming conviction that He is Lord. I'm sure that a prayer offered to satisfy a whim comes dangerously close to taking the LORD's Name in vain. And lastly, the comment about forgiveness is a reminder that I need to be in a state of obedience to His Word in all things.

Friday, 7 April 2017 Mark 11:24

I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've

received it, it will be yours.

Ok, everything in place? Not a test or a whim, something I believe will advance the Kingdom, a favorable answer will glorify Him. Check! Now for a system check, everything in order on the obedience board. Check! Cleared for prayer, knowing that He will answer in His time; in a way that will be for His glory and imminently pleasing to me.

Saturday, 8 April 2017 Mark 15:31-32

The leading priests and teachers of religious law also mocked Jesus. "He saved others," they scoffed, "but He can't save Himself! Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down from the cross so we can see it and believe Him!" Even the men who were crucified with Jesus ridiculed Him.

Praise the Lord, He didn't come down.

Lord's Day, 9 April 2017 Psalm 119:141

I am small and despised, yet I do not forget your precepts.

But I do forget Your precepts and need to be forcefully, even painfully, reminded of the truth and righteousness of Your Law. Thank You, my Lord, for those lessons.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



April 3-9, 2017

Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: Ephesians 1:18a, 19b-21

I pray also that (incomparably great power) ... is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

LORD, God the Almighty whose incomparably great power is directed towards and made available to us, those who are called by Your name, has been proven and made manifest through the resurrection of Your Son. Hallelujah!

It is beyond my comprehension, LORD, to grasp the degree to which You have exalted Him. He is seated at Your right hand, above and beyond any measure I can name, above and beyond all temporal authority, above and beyond all earthly titles. I must acknowledge Him as Lord and Master, the only begotten Son of the Living God.

Amen

Creational Theology hint for the week--Think of a meal that you had in the last few days. think about the interplay of colors, textures and flavors as another way that God expresses His sense of beauty.

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