

MORNING SERMON OUTLINE

UNWORTHY SERVANTS

Luke 17:1-10

1. Jesus' Challenge to His Disciples (Introduction) - vv.1-4

Our Lord challenges his disciples with strong admonitions

- Be on your guard for each other, not to lead one another into sin; &
- Be ready to forgive any who do sin & repent – even many times!

Later in June we will take up these themes from Matthew 18, but they form the setting for the picture & the parable that follow.

2. The Humble Response from Jesus Apostles – vs.4

“Lord, increase our faith!” a very properly humble reaction

What Jesus has demanded of *ALL* who believe in & follow Him is contrary to our fallen & sinful human nature and beyond our personal power to obey.

3. Our Lord's Encouraging Response – vs.6

The “power of faith” to do *the impossible* (mulberry bush into the sea) -

Context is all-important is understanding this figure & its promise.

Not a question of small or large faith (disciples thinking), but of the power of **true (God-given) faith**.

“Faith like a mustard seed”

That looks very small. But when it germinates it pushes roots down & stalks up and grows to become a very large bush (cf. Matt. 13:31f).

True faith is like this, because it is God-given (Eph. 2:8).

God the Spirit plants the seed of saving faith in the heart & “*impossible*” things begin:

As this faith lays hold of the promises of God, it looks to Christ for direction (from the Word) and strength (from the Spirit) – love for God & fellow Christians springs up; hatred for sin emerges;

& power to do what sinful human nature cannot do develops – even the grace to forgive others their wrongs against us.

In all of this, it is really not our faith that has the power,

but the God in whom we rest & to whom we go in faith

Who works in us by His power.

4. A cautionary parable: the Master & His Slave vv.7-10

Why this seemingly harsh parable? Jesus knows us.

What too often happens when, by God's grace, you are made able to do very good things or conquer sins in your life? **PRIDE** comes!

Using a practice that was acceptable in His day, our Lord reminds us:

We are servants of God.

If we were to do **EVERYTHING** He requires (& we don't!),

We would be doing **NO MORE** than we ought to be doing.

God will never be in our debt because we exceeded what we ought.

Is Jesus a harsh master? See Luke 12:37 & John 13:1-10).

Jesus came from heaven as the Servant – who gave His life for sinners on the cross, that we might be forgiven, cleansed, empowered to be like Him.