

LESSON 3***“Because of Your Unbelief”***

[Jesus] gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father. Galatians 1:4

Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection was to not only deliver us from our sins and future punishment in hell, but also to deliver, protect, and provide for us in this *present evil world*—this physical world right now. Not only that, but, this is the *will of God . . . our Father*.

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Introduction:

Matthew 17:14-21 Jesus casts out a demon, which His disciples could not cast out.

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless (unbelieving) and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

Why could they not cast out the demon?

- They knew it was God's will to heal. They knew they had authority and power to cast demons out (Matt. 10:1, 8).. They knew that in the past they had cast demons out (Mk. 6:13; Lk. 9:6).
- It wasn't because they didn't believe they could, otherwise, they would not have tried. So, they were confused and asked, ***Why couldn't we cast out that demon?***
 - The very fact that they asked, indicates that they believed that God was willing, and that they had believed that the demon would go out.
 - Most people who don't believe that God is willing to heal spend much time wondering "Why doesn't He heal me?"
- They believed, but Jesus said that they had "unbelief"!
- In Mark 11:23 where Jesus on another occasion used the mountain moving explanation He said, ***For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.***
 - Believe AND not doubt!

- It is possible to have faith and to doubt at the same time.

Parallel passage to Matt. 7:14-21

Mark 9:20-24 *Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"*

- The father felt exasperated and frustrated. He finally asked Jesus "If you can do anything, help us".
 - He had begun to doubt and despair.
 - He was thinking, "Jesus, I don't know if You can even handle this."
 - Instead of accepting all of the responsibility for this healing on Himself, Jesus turned back to this father and declared, *"If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes."*
 - Now, look at the father's response, *And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.* Mk. 9:24
 - Jesus didn't rebuke him and say "Well, that's stupid, if you truly believe, you can't have unbelief. If you have unbelief, then you don't really believe."
 - Jesus cured the boy, so, the father must have had belief and Jesus helped his doubt and unbelief.
 - These passages show that it's possible to have faith, and yet have unbelief, at the same time!

Believing and Doubting at the Same time Cancels the Effect of Faith

Imagine a team of horses hooked up to a wagon. Normally, as they pulled together they would have enough power and be able to move that wagon. But if you hooked an equal team pulling at the same time in the opposite direction, the net effect would be zero. The wagon wouldn't move because the two teams would cancel out each other.

- That is what Jesus was saying in our text.
 - He didn't say "It's because you don't have enough faith." He said, "It's because of your unbelief. Your unbelief canceled out the faith that you had."
 - They had faith before. They had seen demons cast out, people healed and set free.
 - This time they did the same thing as they usually did, and nothing happened. They had believed, that's why they were confused and asked, "Why couldn't we force the demon out?"
 - Jesus said, *"because of your unbelief."*

Faith Negated

- Story of Andrew Wommack's experience of raising a man from a wheelchair. * Pg. 7
- Story of Smith Wigglesworth's experience on stage. * Pg. 8
- Smith was often criticized as being harsh and hard. The word "hard" in reference to our emotions means cold, insensitive, unfeeling, or unyielding to what other people think.

The difference between Smith and Andrew wasn't that Wigglesworth had more faith. He had less sensitivity to people's criticism. He was hardened toward what others thought. He wasn't responding to anybody or anything except what God had told him. Andrew said that he was still too dominated by people's opinions, by the physical realm, and what he could see, taste, hear, smell, and feel. So the difference wasn't that Smith had more faith; it was that he had less unbelief.

- On four occasions we see the negative influence of unbelief around us. In 2 Kings 4:33 when Elisha raised the Shunammite woman's child, Matt. 9:24-25, Mk. 5:40 and Luke 8:54 Jesus raised the dead, they put all doubters and unbelievers out of the room before they raised the dead to life.
- When the father brought his son to Jesus, the demon put on a display: *immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.* Mark 9:20.
 - I believe this is what caused the disciples' unbelief.
 - An epileptic seizure is a frightful experience.
 - I think when the disciples started to pray for the boy, this evil spirit put on a hair raising epileptic seizure display like he did before Jesus, and fear moved in.
 - When this happened to Jesus, he, like Smith Wigglesworth had zero unbelief to counter His faith.
- Decrease Your Unbelief
 - Most people don't understand this truth. When they pray for something, but don't immediately see the desired result, they often think, "I just don't have enough faith."
 - So, they start trying to build and increase their faith. It is a misconception that they need to have a huge faith.
 - They need to get rid of any doubt and stay in faith.

Doesn't Take Huge faith. Faith the Size of a Tiny Mustard Seed Will Move Mountains

If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matt. 17:20

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. Luke 17:6

- Even if your faith is tiny, it's enough to cast a mountain or a tree into the sea.
 - You don't need big faith, you just need a faith that is not canceled out by doubt or unbelief pulling in the opposite direction.
 - Jesus is saying, "It's not that you didn't believe. It's that your unbelief negated your faith."
- Jesus said that if they would spend time in prayer and fasting it would remove the counter negative stronghold.
 - He was saying, "you don't need big faith. What you need is a pure faith that doesn't have anything contradicting, counteracting, or negating it. You need a faith that doesn't have anything pulling it in an opposite direction."
 - Most do not deal with unbelief. Instead, they try to build faith.
 - Unbelief comes in the same way faith does.

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Rom 10:17

- Faith comes when we focus our attention to the right information from the right Source and it becomes our stronghold.
- Unbelief comes in a similar way, but from the opposite. It comes when we listen to and focus our attention on all the negative information from:
 - ◇ From people: family, friends.
 - ◇ From doctors and medical reports
 - ◇ From the media.
- So, the key to a successful Christian faith life isn't learning how to develop a huge faith, it's learning how to decrease the amount of unbelief in our life.
- We often sabotage our own efforts by taking one step forward and two steps back.
 - We spend an extra hour a day in the Word trying to build up our faith.
 - We then wash it down with two or three hours of bad news, internet research on our ailment or our investment, and going over the doctor's or the financial advisor's report and recommendation.
 - We then wonder why our faith isn't working.
 - The problem is dilution and cancelation!
 - You don't need **huge** faith, you just need **pure** faith that isn't negated by opposite and opposing information.
 - An extreme example: Lester Sumrall knocked on Smith Wigglesworth's door and asked if he could come in to visit. Smith told him he could come in, but the newspaper under his arm had to stay outside. Smith never read the newspaper and refused one to be brought into his house.

Abraham Was not Skeptical

When everything was hopeless, Abraham believed anyway, deciding to live not on the basis of what he saw he couldn't do but on what God said He would do. And so he was made father of a multitude of peoples. God himself said to him, "You're going to have a big family, Abraham!" Abraham didn't focus on his own impotence and say, "It's hopeless. This hundred-year-old body could never father a child." Nor did he survey Sarah's decades of infertility and give up. He didn't tiptoe around God's promise asking cautiously skeptical questions. He plunged into the promise and came up strong, ready for God, sure that God would make good on what he had said. Romans 4:18-21 TMSG

- Abraham didn't consider his own condition, nor Sarah's. He didn't consider anything that was contrary to what God had said.
- Sarah, after the initial shock and amazement, also focused on what God promised rather than on her age, her barrenness, or her husband's impotency.

It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise. And so a whole nation came from this one man who was as good as dead—Heb. 11:11-12a NLT

The Effectiveness of Your Faith Depends on Your Level of Unbelief.

- Romans 4:19-21 KJV *And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform.*
 - The level (amount) of active, effective, faith is determined by how much unbelief you have mixed with your faith.
 - If you have a lot of unbelief, then you are effectively weak in faith. If you have little unbelief, then you're effectively strong in faith.
 - Just saying you have little faith or big faith isn't the whole picture.
- We need to get to where Abraham was. He didn't even consider his own body, now dead, nor the deadness of Sarah's womb. This enabled his faith to be strong.
- The key to victory in the Christian life isn't necessarily having huge faith, it's having a simple, pure, childlike faith the size of a mustard seed—that isn't canceled out by unbelief.

Three Causes of Unbelief

- Ignorance
 - A lack of knowledge
 - Don't know what God has promised to them.
 - Never heard the truth before

- Wrong doctrine
 - Been taught wrong.
 - Taught that God doesn't do miracles today.
 - Taught that the Abrahamic blessings are not for us.
 - False information is harder to overcome than ignorance (not knowing).
 - The answer to wrong information, false doctrine and unbelief is to receive the truth of God's Word.
- Unbelief based on what we see in the natural.
 - We have been conditioned to trust what we see, taste, hear, smell, and feel as final.
 - After prayer, nothing immediately changes and we assume "It didn't work.
 - This information from our senses is contrary to God's Word and creates unbelief.

No time for doubt

- The difference between Jesus and the disciples in the casting out the demon from the epileptic son was that when the disciples saw the seizure, which was contrary to what they were praying and believing for, it caused them to doubt and fear.
- When Andrew Wommack experienced the first person he raised from the dead, he had just walked into the hospital room and was standing in front of the man before he realized he was dead. He heard the man's wife crying, "Oh, God. bring Everett back from the dead." That was the first time he even thought that the guy was dead. He just immediately looked at the man and commanded, "Everett, in the name of Jesus, come back into your body." Then Everett just sat up. It was that simple.
 - Andrew said that it would have been much more difficult if he would have had thirty minutes to think about it and see Everett dead. He just didn't have time to doubt or to think about anything else!
 - The disciples' five senses saw the physical manifestation of this demon, which was contrary to what they were praying and believing for, and it caused them to fear. Their five senses sent thoughts of unbelief that countered their faith.

This will change your life:

- Unbelief occurs when our thoughts of faith are confused and diluted by running into counter thoughts of opposite information which has already previously settled in the spirit of our mind.
- The people with the most difficulty to be healed are those of the medical profession.
 - They have been drilled with medical facts such as "when a tumor is at this state, the person will die. They will have so many weeks to live, and that's it."
 - So much unbelief negates their little mustard seed of faith.

- The more we focus on what God has promised us, the stronger our mind holds to it.
 - Starve your unbelief and feed you faith with God's promises.
 - Unbelief is like a leech or a fungus has to be fed and nourished.
 - Separate yourself from the world and give yourself to fasting, praying, and focusing your attention on the Lord and His Word.
 - This starves and weakens your unbelief while feeding and strengthening your faith.
 - Fasting and praying doesn't cause God to give you more power; it just diminishes the unbelief that is pulling in the opposite direction.
 - *Once you believe the truth that God wants you well, then all you have to do is starve the unbelief until your mustard-seed faith starts producing the results your desire.*

*** Because of Your Unbelief supplement.**

- **Andrew Wommack's experience of raising a man from a wheelchair.**

After Andrew Wommack had seen a person raised from the dead, he believed that blind eyes could be opened, deaf ears could hear and people could be raised out of wheelchairs. He was holding a service in Omaha, Nebraska. There was a man there in a wheelchair and Andrew was excited to believe that God would raise him up.

After his message, Andrew went over to him, grabbed him by the hand, and declared, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" When he yanked him out of the wheelchair, the man came up, over, and then fell flat on his face.

The audience was shocked and filled with gasps and groans. Andrew was shocked, embarrassed and humiliated. He thought, "Look what I've done to this man, and what must the audience think of me. I hope he doesn't sue me."

He got down, grabbed the guy around his chest, and wrestled him back into the wheelchair.

Back in his hotel room he tried to analyze what had happened. He knew he had faith. It wasn't that he didn't believe God. You just don't grab a paralyzed man and yank him out of his wheelchair unless you believe he is going to walk.

Andrew said that it took about three years for his lightning-fast mind to finally figure this out. The Lord showed him that he did have faith, but that he also had unbelief. When the people responded in shock, Andrew panicked, and the unbelief set in. He was more concerned about what the people said than about what God had said He would do. He was worried about what the people thought of him. He was as much swayed by what the people thought as by what he thought.

- **Smith Wigglesworth's experience.**

Smith Wigglesworth used to start each one of his meetings by standing up on the platform and boldly declaring, "Whoever gets up here first will be healed of whatever disease you've got." Then he would minister to them and see them healed. This would get everybody's

attention and then he would teach on how it happened. Afterward he'd have a prayer line and pray for multitudes of people.

A couple of women in the front row knew his pattern, so they came up as soon as he made this invitation. Between them they held an elderly friend who was so weak and frail that she could not stand by herself. She had a large stomach tumor which made her look nine months pregnant. So, they stood on the platform, holding up their friend.

Wigglesworth looked at them and said, "Let her go."

At first, the ladies explained to him, "We can't let her go. She's too weak, and can't stand up on her own."

As Wigglesworth was known to do, he yelled at them, "I said let her go!" So they did. That woman fell flat on her face on top of that tumor, and let out a loud groan of pain.

The audience gasped, full of shock and unbelief, which was the same response Andrew received when he pulled that man up out of his wheelchair. Andrew was thinking "Lawsuit." How did Wigglesworth respond? He said "Pick her up." So, they picked this woman up and once they had her standing between them, Smith said, "Let her go." It didn't faze him one bit. He wasn't moved off of his faith.

The two ladies answered him, "We will not let her go! We can't let her go. She'll fall."

He yelled at them again, saying, "Let her go!" So they let her go. A second time this lady fell on her face on top of that tumor. The people in the audience were shocked. Moans and groans of unbelief rippled throughout the entire audience. Wigglesworth wasn't fazed; he said, "Pick her up." So they picked her up. Then he said, "Let her go."

These women protested, "We will not let her go!" He yelled, "You let her go!"

A man in the audience stood up and said, "You beast! Leave that poor woman alone!"

Wigglesworth answered, "I know my business. You mind your own. "Then he turned back to those ladies and roared, "LET HER GO!" They let her go. She started to fall, but then caught herself. That tumor fell right out of her dress onto the stage, and she walked off perfectly healed.

Andrew Wommack said, "The Lord showed me that Smith Wigglesworth didn't have any more faith than I had. (Romans 12:3.) He didn't get any better results that first time he ministered to this woman than I got when I pulled that man out of his wheelchair. She fell flat on her face, just like he did. What was the difference? Smith didn't have any more faith, he just had less unbelief. He didn't care what people thought about him."

In fact, the record states that Smith was often criticized as being harsh and hard. Do you know what the word hard means in reference to our emotions? It means cold, insensitive, unfeeling, or unyielding to what other people think. The difference between Smith and Andrew wasn't that Wigglesworth had more faith. He had less sensitivity to people's criticism. He was hardened toward what others thought. He wasn't responding to anybody or anything except what God had told him. Andrew was still too dominated by people's opinions, by the physical realm, and what he could see, taste, hear, smell, and feel. So the difference wasn't that Smith had more faith; it was that he had less unbelief.