

Growing in Faith Summary of Fear and Faith

Mark 6:1-6

Crossroads, May 23, 2010

{NOTE: some of the points in the middle of this talk were open discussions, and thus do not have detailed notes here}

- **5 weeks: Fear and Faith**
 - o *Wrap up 4 power encounters of Christ*
 - o *Tonight – various practical thoughts on Faith*

READ Mark 6:1-6

- Pray

1) Miracles and Faith

- **Which comes first? Do miracles produce faith?**
 - o Did Jesus' recent miracles produce faith in people?
 - Some Faith: demoniac, woman healed of blood
 - Some Fear and Follow: disciples
 - Some Fear and Leave: Villagers of Demoniac
 - o Mark 6:1-6
- **APPLY:**
 - o Can we say "If God would just do X I would have faith?"
 - o Luke 16:27-31
- **Which comes first? Does faith produce miracle?**
 - o Does people faith influence Jesus' actions?
 - Some have faith: Woman, Jarius
 - Some are suffering: Demoniac
 - Some do not have faith: Disciples
 - o Mark 6:1-6
- **APPLY:**
 - o Can we say "If I just had more faith God would do x?"
 - o Mark 9:17-24
- **What is the relationship of Faith to God's Work?**
 - o Not 1 to 1 in either direction
 - o But not unrelated either

- o **DISCUSSION: What is relation**
 - Faith not static – Jesus acts on & effects it

- **APPLY:**
 - o Ultimately faith is in God and His Word ... and in Jesus – even when not understand all
 - o Example Disciples in and after storm – stay with Jesus

2) Science and Faith

- **Discussion: Is faith "rational" and "scientific"?**
- **Discussion: Is faith "blind"?**
- **APPLY:**
 - o Again, Faith is not in science, or rational thinking, or self understanding, or religion ... But in God and the reliability of His Word – not blind, but not shaken by every worldly question

3) Doubt and Faith

- **DISCUSSION: What is the source of doubt in our lives?**
- **What does faith look like in the midst of doubt?**
- **Example: disciples**
 - o In boat – not believe Jesus will save – but still in boat in future
 - o Peter, Thomas ... not understand a lot, often not have faith they should, sometimes even oppose Jesus' plan – BUT they stay with him
- **APPLY:**
 - o Can we have doubts and questions and still call ourselves a believer?
 - o Do questions and doubts lead to drawing closer to Jesus to find the answers, or to leaving, testing or killing Him

4) Unbelief and Faith

- Let's invert our question – instead of asking what faith looks like, let's **ask what unbelief looks like** in these passages
- **Mark 6:1-6**
 - o “familiarity breeds contempt” – the people were amazed, asked who this is ... but then looked around and found the answer – he is someone from the community, his parents are here, he really can not be anything too special ...
 - o A prophet is without honor in his own town
 - o Why some children of believers, pastors, missionaries struggle with belief
- **Hebrews 4:1-2**
- **Optional: Abraham in Romans 4:18-25, Hebrews 11:17-19**
- **APPLY:**
 - o Faith has to be more than awe, hero worship, miracle worker ... faith involves following a real person, or in this case the real God – accepting him as he really is with all the consequences of that ... the closer we get the more we see what that will mean ... and the more we are confronted with who we are!
 - o **What is your answer to “who is this man?”**

5) Fear and Faith

- **DISCUSSION: How does faith calm our fears?**
- **Does faith always take away fear?**
 - o It can: Jarius after girl dies, woman at end
 - o Can lead to Fear of Jesus: village of Demoniac, Disciples
- **Is faith the opposite of fear (is faith the absence of fear?)**
 - o No – they often go hand in hand
- **What is the relationship of fear and faith**
 - o Fear in this life should lead us to God
 - o Seeing God more clearly will lead to a different kind of fear
- **APPLY:**
 - o Fear is not the enemy of faith, the question for us is what we will do with our fears – do they lead us to Christ or away, to worship or deny God

6) Anxiety and Faith

- **DISCUSSION: What is the source of anxiety in our lives?**
- **Matthew 6:25-34**
- **APPLY:**
 - o How does faith effect our anxiety?
 - o **Philippians 4:4-7**

7) Growing in Faith

- (summary from Mark 5-6)
- **APPLY:**
 - o The question is not “how much faith do I have” but “Who is that faith in”
 - o The question is not “what level does my faith need to be at” but rather “am I growing in faith”
 - Even faith of a mustard seed can move mountain
 - Disciples, Jarius, Women, even Demoniac – have a level of faith, and Jesus acts, and their faith grows, and enables them to step up and do more ... continuing to grow in faith
 - And in the process seeing and experiencing more of Jesus!

Mark 6:1-6

¹Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples.
²When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles! ³Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.
⁴Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor." ⁵He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶And he was amazed at their lack of faith.

Luke 16:27-31 (end story of rich man and Lazarus)

²⁷"He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, ²⁸for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'
²⁹"Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'
³⁰" 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'
³¹"He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.' "

Mark 9:17-24 (disciples not cast out evil spirit in boy)

¹⁷A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. ¹⁸Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not."
¹⁹"O unbelieving generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."
²⁰So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.
²¹Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?"
"From childhood," he answered. ²²"It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."
²³" 'If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."
²⁴Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

Hebrews 4:1-2

¹Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. ²For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.

Romans 4:18-25

¹⁸Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ¹⁹Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. ²⁰Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, ²¹being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. ²²This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." ²³The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, ²⁴but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Hebrews 11:17-19

¹⁷By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, ¹⁸even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." ¹⁹Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

Matthew 6:25-34

²⁵"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?
²⁸"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Philippians 4:4-7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.