

9/20/26

Sermon Title: Faith, the Cross, and Surrender

Preacher: Pastor Kim Soonbae

Scripture Passage: Matthew 17:14-27

Jesus Heals a Demon-Possessed Boy

¹⁴ When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him.

¹⁵ “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water.

¹⁶ I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

¹⁷ “You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.”

¹⁸ Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment.

¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

²⁰ He replied, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” ¹

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Jesus Predicts His Death a Second Time

²² When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.

²³ They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life.” And the disciples were filled with grief.

The Temple Tax

²⁴ After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma temple tax came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?”

²⁵ “Yes, he does,” he replied.

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own children or from others?”

²⁶ “From others,” Peter answered.

“Then the children are exempt,” Jesus said to him.

²⁷ “But so that we may not cause offense, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.”

What happened on the Mount of Transfiguration was truly astonishing and marvelous.

There, the face of Jesus shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as light.

Moses and Elijah also appeared, and Jesus spoke with them.

Peter and the other two disciples were overwhelmed with awe as they witnessed the glorious divinity of Jesus and the reality of the Kingdom of God.

Peter was so captivated by what he had witnessed that he did not want to come down from the mountain.

He even asked Jesus if they could build shelters and stay there.

But at the very same time, while there was such a glorious and awe-inspiring scene on the mountain, quite a commotion was taking place down below.

Jesus came down the mountain with the three disciples to where the rest of the disciples were.

Then a father came to Jesus and knelt before Him.

He began to explain what had happened while Jesus was away on the mountain.

He had heard about Jesus and had come seeking Him so that Jesus might heal his son, who suffered from seizures.

But when he found that Jesus was not there, he had asked the nine disciples who remained there to heal his son.

Yet, he told Jesus, they had not been able to do it.

¹⁴ When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him.

¹⁵ “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water.

¹⁶ I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

When we put together the accounts of Mark and Luke, we learn that this boy was his father’s only son and that he was possessed by a demon and unable to speak.

(Mark 9:17) A man in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech.

(Mark 9:18) Whenever 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.

The father said that just moments earlier, the demon had seized his son again, causing him to convulse, foam at the mouth, and injure himself.

The demon had only just left him.

(Luke 9:37) The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him.

(Luke 9:38) A man in the crowd called out, “Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only child.”

(Luke 9:39) “A spirit seizes him, and suddenly he cries out. It throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It severely injures him, and only then does it leave him.”

(Luke 9:40) “I begged Your disciples to drive it out, but they could not.”

Jesus had already given His disciples authority to drive out demons.

Yet they were unable to exercise that authority.

They had gone out with confidence, but they could not heal the boy.

Jesus was deeply displeased with the disciples' failure and told them to bring the boy to Him.

Then He rebuked the demon within the boy and drove it out.

Immediately, the demon came out, and the boy was healed.

¹⁷ "You unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me."

¹⁸ Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment.

Here, the phrase "faithless and perverse generation" does not refer to a particular minority of people, but to the entire generation of that time.

Jesus was angry with His disciples because they failed to distinguish themselves from that faithless and perverse generation.

The fact that the boy was healed when the demon came out of him confirms that his condition was caused by the influence of the demon.

After witnessing this, the disciples quietly came to Jesus and asked Him why they had been unable to drive out the demon.

In response to their question, Jesus answered firmly that it was because of their lack of faith.

¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

²⁰ He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." ¹

Ultimately, the issue was whether they had faith or not.

In light of Jesus' words in verses 17 and 20, it is reasonable to understand His statement that their faith was "so little faith" as indicating that they lacked genuine faith.

What matters is not how great our faith is, but whether we have faith or not. Even if our faith is small, God can use it to accomplish great miracles. Even faith as small as a mustard seed is enough for God to see and use to accomplish great things through His power.

Faith may be as small as a mustard seed and still produce results, but unbelief, which has no faith at all, can produce nothing. Even if our faith is as small as a mustard seed, if we continue to maintain a living relationship with God through that faith, God can accomplish, according to His sovereign will and in His own way, things that go far beyond human imagination.

Here, the "mountain" does not necessarily refer to a literal mountain. Rather, it symbolizes a great problem or difficult situation that is beyond human ability to resolve.

Jesus' words point to the power available to those who believe. They emphasize the life-giving power of faith and the unlimited possibilities hidden within it.

21 — (not found in the earliest manuscripts)

In some ancient manuscripts, an additional verse appears: "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

The Gospel of Mark records it this way:

(Mark 9:28) After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

(Mark 9:29) He replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer."

Jesus gathers His disciples together in Galilee.

As they prepare to begin their journey toward Jerusalem in earnest, Jesus meets with His disciples.

Once again, He speaks to them about the path He is about to take—the way of the Messiah.

He tells them that He will be handed over to the hands of men, that they will kill Him, and that He will rise again on the third day.

This is the second time Jesus speaks about His coming suffering.

²² When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.

²³ They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life.” And the disciples were filled with grief.

After hearing these words, the disciples were still deeply troubled and continued to show a lack of faith.

The scene now shifts to Capernaum, where Jesus speaks with Peter about the temple tax.

Through the issue of the temple tax, Jesus teaches His disciples about how they are to as His disciples.

After His first prediction of His suffering, Jesus took three disciples up the mountain of Transfiguration and revealed His true identity and theirs as His disciples.

Now, after His second prediction of His suffering, He again explains the identity of both Himself and His disciples.

Jesus and His disciples went to Capernaum.

There, those who collected the temple tax approached Peter and asked him whether Jesus paid the temple tax.

At that time, in Capernaum, a temple tax of half a shekel was collected from every Jewish male twenty years of age or older.

²⁴ After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma temple tax came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?”

Jesus tells them that, as the Son of God and the Lord of the temple, He is not obligated to pay the temple tax.

²⁵ “Yes, he does,” he replied.

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own children or from others?”

²⁶ “From others,” Peter answered.

“Then the children are exempt,” Jesus said to him.

Nevertheless, Jesus tells Peter to pay the temple tax so that they would not cause anyone to stumble.

Then, in a completely unexpected way, Jesus provides the money needed to pay the temple tax.

²⁷ “But so that we may not cause offense, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.”

Jesus, as the Son of God and the Lord of the temple, had the right not to pay the temple tax.

Yet, in order not to cause others to stumble, He willingly laid aside His rights.

And in the process, Jesus provided exactly what was needed through Peter’s familiar work as a fisherman.

The account of Jesus paying the temple tax is recorded only in the Gospel of Matthew.

Perhaps because Matthew himself had been a tax collector, he had a particular interest in matters concerning taxes.

Beloved members of Church of Godly Dreams,

Three different events are recorded in this passage.

The first is the event in which Jesus healed the demon-possessed boy whom the disciples had been unable to heal.

The second is the event in which Jesus spoke again about His suffering, death, and resurrection.

And the third is the event in which Jesus paid the temple tax, even though He was not obligated to pay it.

These three events may appear to be separate and unrelated.

Yet, together, they contain one consistent message for us: "What does it mean to believe in Jesus and follow Him?"

First, through the healing of the demon-possessed boy at the foot of the mountain, Jesus taught His disciples the importance of faith.

The disciples had already received authority from Jesus to drive out demons.

Yet when the time came to exercise that authority, they failed.

It was not because the authority they had received was insufficient.

Nor was it because the power of that authority was inadequate.

It was because they lacked a faith that fully trusted in the Lord.

The Lord does not require us to possess some great or extraordinary power.

He desires a living faith that fully trusts in Him and looks to Him.

Even if our faith is as small as a mustard seed, if it is a living faith directed toward God, He can accomplish through that faith things that we could never dare to imagine.

Jesus also did not speak to His disciples only about the way of glory.

He spoke to them about the way of the cross and suffering.

Jesus said that He would be handed over to the hands of men and be killed, but that He would rise again on the third day.

The world calls suffering a failure.

But the Gospel proclaims that glorious resurrection awaits beyond the cross.

The very way of the cross that our Lord walked is the way of life that we are called to walk.

The cross is not the end.

Death is not the end.

Beyond the cross is resurrection, and beyond death is life.

This is the Gospel.

Finally, through the event of the temple tax, Jesus teaches us about His identity and about the life of His disciples.

Jesus is the Son of God and the Lord of the temple, and therefore He was not obligated to pay the temple tax.

Nevertheless, He willingly laid down His rights so that others would not stumble.

This is the example of discipleship that Jesus has shown us.

Faith is not merely the power to solve difficult problems.

Faith is looking to Jesus, trusting in Jesus, and living like Jesus.

We must follow the example of Jesus, who laid aside His glory for our salvation and gave even His life on the cross for us.

Just as the Lord gave Himself for us, we too must offer our lives to Him.

Whatever problems may lie before us, let us look to Jesus in faith.

Whatever suffering may come into our lives, let us not be afraid.

And let us faithfully carry out the mission entrusted to us to the very end by laying down our rights and our own interests so that others may not stumble.

May you and I live as true disciples of Jesus—fully trusting in the Lord, never losing heart in the face of suffering, seeking God's will and glory above our own rights and interests, and following the Lord alone to the very end.

I bless you all in the name of Jesus Christ.