

FASTING AND PRAYER
CURE FOR UNBELIEF
MATTHEW 17:14-21

1. **Matthew 17:14-21** 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. ¹⁶I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him." ¹⁷"O 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." ¹⁸Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment. ¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" ²⁰He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, 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." ²¹**Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.**

2. The New Covenant

- a. How do we receive from God in the New Covenant, How do we get our prayers answered.

First - Decide what we want from God, find the scriptures that definitely promise us these things. Get the promises firmly fixed in the heart, not just in the mind.

- a. **Mark 4:14-16** The farmer [God] sows the word. ¹⁵Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.
 - b. **Luke 12:31** But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.
 - c. **1 Corinthians 3:21-23** So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, ²²whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future--all are yours, ²³and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

Second - Ask God for the things we want and believe that we have received them. Believe the Word of God. Know that this is a battle.

- d. **2 Corinthians 10:5** We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.
 - e. **Luke 8:10-15** He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, . . . ¹¹"This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹²Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.
 - f. **Mark 11:23-24** "I tell you the truth, . . . ²⁴Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.
 - g. **Hebrews 10:23** Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Third - Thoughts are governed by observations, associations, and teachings. Meditate and fast

thinking on the promises upon which we base the answer to our prayer. Do not forget that we have asked God for something that you have need of.

1. **Romans 8:16-17** The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.
¹⁷Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
2. If I am an heir, then why do I have some times struggle to get my need met?
 - i. **Galatians 4:1** What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate.
3. So why do I fast and meditate?
 - a. **1 Corinthians 9:26-27** ²⁶Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. ²⁷No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.
4. I fast, Deny my body something it wants, and spend the time meditating on the Word of God. When I do this, I am telling my Body that the Word of God is more important to me that its needs.
 - a. Are there examples of this in the Bible?
 - i. FASTING

Prophet Ezra	?	Sin put down in Israel
City of Nineveh - From the Prophet Jonah	?	Spared judgment of God
Church at Antioch	?	Spirit worked for them
Prophet Daniel	1	Received a revelation
Israel	1	Gained a victory
King Darius	1 night	Daniel delivered
Apostle Paul	3	healed and baptized in the Holy Spirit
Paul and 276 men on a sinking ship	14 days	delivered from death
Jesus	40 days	received a revelation and power

5. What about modern day events

- a. Washington, D.C. March 30, 1863

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
 A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the Supreme Authority and just Government of Almighty God, in all the affairs of men and of nations, has, by a resolution, requested the President to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation.

And whereas, it is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to

recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

- b. November 15, 1985 - National Day of Fasting and prayer for hunger relief on Sunday, November 24, 1985, as declared by Congress and the President of the United States.
 - c. March 27, 2003 National day of fasting and prayer?
The house has passed a resolution "designating a day for humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the United States. To seek guidance from God."
6. So Fasting and prayer is something that should be a part of the church. The Catholic Church practiced fasting for many years when they fasted meat on Fridays and only ate Fish. Many people would have done this without realizing what they were doing, this would have done nothing for them. As Jesus said, there are two parts to this act, Fasting and Prayer.
- a. What should I meditate on
 - i. **Galatians 4:5-7** Jesus came to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. ⁶Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.
(1) Before the Fall of Man, man had no needs.
 - (a) But when Man was under the Law, breaking the Law brought attack from Satan.
 - (i) What is he [Satan] about?
 - 1) **John 10:10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
- Fourth Make every prayer relative to what we have asked. A statement of faith instead of unbelief. We can say "I do have faith" or "I do believe that I have what I have prayed for" just as easily as we can make statements of unbelief. Do not except "No" as an answer. What you prayed for is something that God has promised. It will come. It is yours now, so accept it and it will become a reality.
- 1. We need positive confession!
 - a. I am SAVED.
 - i. The confession is made often, but what does it mean?
 - (1) **Speaking about Jesus while He was on the cross. Matthew 27:42** "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him."
 - (a) The Greek word saved here is **sozo**, to save, i.e. *deliver* or *protect* (literal or figurative) :- heal, preserve, save (self), do well, be (make) whole.
 - (i) This is an ongoing Work of God, He continues to deliver us, He continues to protect us, He continues to heal us, He continues to preserve us, He continues to save us, He continues to make us do well, He continues to make us whole.
 - (2) Why do we continue to look at these terms in Greek? Because God had the New Testament written in Greek because it is the most precise language there is.

(3) Allow me to give you an example.

(i) **John 21:15-18** When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "**Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?**" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "**Feed my lambs.**" ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "**Simon son of John, do you truly love me?**" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "**Take care of my sheep.**" ¹⁷ The third time he said to him, "**Simon son of John, do you love me?**" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "**Do you love me?**" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "**Feed my sheep.**"

1) In English it sounds like Jesus ask Peter three times the exact same question, "do you love me"

a) In Greek the first love - (philos); to *be a friend to* (*fond of* [an individual or an object])

If you have this love then you can feed by lambs.

b) The Greek for the second love - (thumos) of the *heart* specially to *kiss* (as a mark of tenderness) :- kiss, love. -family love

If you have this love you can take care of my sheep.

c) The Greek for the third love - [Agpa] to Love as God Loves

If you have this love you are qualified to feed my sheep.

2. Let us go back to our verses for today.

a. The disciples had been sent out by 12, the demons and sickness was subject to their power. They came back with great joy because demons and sickness had to go at their command.

b. Then the 70 were sent out, the same thing happened\

c. So what is the problem here?

i. You do not have the faith to accomplish this.

(1) When they went out by 12 and 70 they were operating under the authority of Jesus.

(2) Here the man had come to them.

(a) Seeking their authority to do something.

ii. How are we going to get the FAITH to take care of the things that want to fight back. The living organisms that do not want to submit to a Holy God? Demons, Principalities, Cancer, a dying heart.

(1) These only come out with Fasting and Prayer.

d. First we are going to look very close at this scripture!

i. We know that Jesus is just returning from the Mount of Transfiguration.

ii. He comes to the crowd and He sees a disturbance.

iii. A man had a complaint

(1) 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."

- (2) The problem has been stated.
 - (a) Something is out to Kill my son.
 - (i) He often falls into the fire.
 - 1) Can you see what this young man must look like? He has been burnt many times.
 - (ii) He often falls into the water.
 - 1) This is the person that we say will hurt them selves, they require constant watching, constant recuing.
- (3) What was the man answer to his problem?
 - (a) ¹⁶I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him."
 - (i) No dought this man had seen or heard that the disciples had done this type of thing before.
 - 1) One thing I would like to mention here, the three disciples that were closest to Jesus were not in the group of men that the son was brought to. Peter, James and John had been with Jesus. The scripture starts by saying they.
- (4) At this point Jesus has something to say. What was it. Who is He addressing His remarks to?
 - (a) ¹⁷"O unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?"
 - (i) Who is Jesus upset with.
 - 1) We would say that the father did the correct thing, bring his son to the disciples to be healed.
 - (ii) But Jesus is saying, "all you people out there, don't you get it, God loves you' Take control of your lives.
- (5) Again, And I will say again, no matter how upset Jesus was with all those that did not need a doctor, for the one who needed Him, He was there for him.
 - (a) **Bring the boy here to me."**
- (6) Now what did Jesus do?
 - (a) He did not pray!
 - (b) He spoke to the problem!
 - (i) ¹⁸Jesus rebuked the demon
- (7) What was the result?
 - (a) , and it came out of the boy,
 - (b) and he was healed from that moment.
- (8) Now the disciples have a question.
 - (a) If we would be just as honest today as they were then.
 - (i) Today, most church goers would have said a short prayer, when it was not answer immediately they would have said; "It is not God's will", "Driving out demons is not for today", 'my church don't really believe in healing' 'What do we have doctors for?' 'Signs and wonders stopped after we got the Bible, it is not needed any more"
 - (b) Hear the question they asked!
 - (i) ¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"
 - 1) They knew that they should have been able to take care of the

- problem.
- 2) They knew how to take care of the problem.
 - a) Drive the demon out", just like Jesus did.
- (9) Jesus know gives instructions on how to handle this demon
- (a) You could not handle it because you had to little faith.
 - (b) All demons, sickness and the works and powers of Satan are not the same.
 - (i) ²¹**Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.**
 - 1) **Daniel 10:12-13** Then he [an angel, a messenger of God] continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. ¹³But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, [The Arc Angel of God, POWER] one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.
 - 2) **Ephesians. 6:12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.
- (10) Now Jesus is going to instruct them and us on how to have the Faith that will get this accomplished.
- (a) **I tell you the truth, 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."**
 - (i) Now we need to go back to the parable of the secret to the Kingdom
 - 1) God plants a seed in us; His Word, a Promise, Something He wants us to have.
 - 2) We all have a measure of Faith.
 - a) **Romans 12:3** For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.
 - b) This case, the ability to drive out demons.
 - 3) Are we going to allow Satan to come along and steal this Word from us?
 - 4) Are we going to allow testing of our faith, give up on the promise when it does not happen as soon as we want to take away this seed?
 - 5) Are we going to allow life's worries [I can't trust God for this, it is to important] , riches [I am self sufficient now, I don't need God] and pleasure, [I want to rule my life, I don't want a Lord] to chock out the place for God's Word in our life.
 - 6) Or are we going to take care of this seed until it starts to mature, this little seed will grow into such a large plant that birds can build their nests in it and be secure. The crop is the Promise fulfilled.
 - a) And what will this do for the believer?
 - b) But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a

- crop.
- c) It will produce the crop that the Holy Spirit wanted.
- 7) How do I take care of this seed, this plant.
 - a) By water and cultivating.
 - b) Prayer and Fasting.

May we all Pray and Fast to produce the life that Jesus purchased for us, and the life that the Father has for us.

A Men