

The Disciples Valley of Disappointment

Matthew 17:14-23

(Mark 9:14-32; Luke 9:37-45)

I. The Disciples' _____ (vs. 14-16)

- a. This passage parallels Moses on Mount Sanai (cf. Ex. 32)
- b. Matthew's Gospel was written first (40-45 AD), Luke was written second (55-60 AD), and Mark was written third (60-63 AD).
 - i. Although Mark's Gospel is shorter, many of individual accounts are longer because Peter added his eyewitness observations to Matthew and Luke's Gospels
 1. See Mark's Thesis for more details
- c. The large crowd included scribes who were arguing with the other 9 disciples (Mark 9:14-15; cf. Luke 9:37)
- d. A father pleads for his son who is a ***lunatic*** = ***selēniazomai*** (***σεληνιάζομαι***) = "moonstruck" (***selēnē*** = moon)
 - i. He did not suffer with epilepsy; he was demon possessed (Mark 9:17-18; cf. Luke 9:39, 42)

II. The Savior's _____ (vs. 17-20)

a. Jesus' E

- i. Jesus is talking primarily to his disciples, but also to the crowd (not to the father)
- ii. He is paraphrasing Moses' Song in Deuteronomy (cf. Deut. 32:5; Matt. 12:45; 16:4)
- iii. ***perverted*** = ***diastrephō***, (***διαστρέφω***) = which means "to lead astray, to pervert, to mislead." (cf. Luke 23:2; Acts 13:8, 10; 20:30; Phil. 2:15)
- iv. Jesus' two questions were not formulaic or hyperbolic
 1. He was genuinely concerned about His fast approaching exodus and how much longer could he be patient with His disciples
 2. ***anechomai*** / ***ἀνέχομαι*** = "be patient with, put up with, endure, bear with" (cf. Mark 9:19; Luke 9:41; 1 Cor. 4:12; 2 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:13; 2 Thess. 1:4)

b. Jesus' E

- i. Jesus has complete and utter authority over demons!
- ii. "***If You can?***" was a question of surprise (cf. Mark 9:20-27)
- iii. The overarching lesson of this passage is "***All things are possible to him who believes***"
- iv. The fact that Jesus says mustard seed sized faith can move mountains means that our Lord is not limited by our limited faith! (cf. Matt. 7:7-8; 21:22; Luke 11:9-10; John 14:13-14; 15:7; 16:24; 1 John 3:22; 5:14-15)
- v. "***help with my unbelief***" is an honest cry from every honest Believer's heart
- vi. The ultimate way to cast out a demon and forbid him reentry is the sealing of the Holy Spirit at salvation.

c. Jesus' E

- i. In other words, the overarching lesson is that if we abide in Jesus, all things are possible (cf. John 15:4-5ff)
- ii. Jesus is NOT giving instructions on how to cast our demons (verse 21 is not found in any of the earliest manuscripts of Matthew and therefore its inspiration is suspect cf. Mark 9:29)
- iii. Jesus gave His disciples authority to cast out demons in chapter 10 and they were apparently very successful until here, why?
 1. I contend that they allowed their faith to become more in themselves and their God-given gifts than in the God who gave them those gifts.
 2. Its why so much of organized Christianity becomes dominated by rituals, techniques, and superstitions.
- iv. Jesus healed many people who had NO faith!
 1. He heals and chooses not to heal according to His will and good pleasure (yes, that means sometimes God doesn't want the demon cast out or the person healed cf. John 9:1-3)
- v. Once again Jesus highlights the disciples "***little faith***" (cf. Matt. 14:31) and teaches that it's not about the Quantity of our faith; it's all about the Quality of our faith!!!!