

1/30/22

091 24 FB10

Sermon: Seeking a Sign

Scripture: Mathew 16:1-4, Hebrews 11:6

Main Message: Faith comes first when seeking the Kingdom of Heaven.

In the weekly battle to put Faith in its proper place in our hearts, I want to use the example of when Jesus was challenged by the religious authorities to perform a miracle. In essence, Jesus said, "I don't do tricks." I'll read the passage to you.

Mathew 16:1-4

Jesus had already been doing lots of miracles, but they wanted their own show. Do you think they would have believed who Jesus said He was if HE had done a miracle for them? They may have actually accelerated their plans to get rid of Jesus because they would definitely have seen the threat to their authority.

Lets unpack this brief dialogue. Jesus begins his response by talking about the weather, because you now, weather is always a good go to when you need to talk, No, it is because everyone is wise in their own mind and see subtleties from their own experience. He even said that. How is it you can see what the weather is going to do and yet not see that which is sitting right in front of you.

Well, Jesus doesn't do tricks and that is putting the miracle before the faith which never happens with Jesus. We have all wanted to see the miraculous from our faith and we tell ourselves that we will "really believe" if we could just see the miracle. Faith is a pre-requisite for everything. The miracles are there, but are not in evidence for those who have no faith or are self-serving.

What I like about this is Jesus even said that there will be a sign that they can choose to heed or ignore with regard to the prophet Jonah. Remember Jesus wants all to come to everlasting life and for none to perish. The rule is that you can't do it your way, but His way. For the situation we live in (known as dispensation) it is by faith alone that we are saved. Even more to the point is this piece of scripture.

[Heb 11:6 KJV But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

You can see that the pharisees were not striving to find Jesus or the truth, but wanted the easy-spoon-fed-path to knowledge. Who really expects to be rewarded without diligence and hard work? Proverbs has many answers about the lazy man if you want to look it up.

Faith sometimes is magnified by necessity. Here in the USA and frankly, most modern countries we have so much of everything. Even in the last couple of years we still have plenty. A never ending supply of everything is our stumbling block today. We have all the food we need, all the luxuries we want, doctors and medicines that give us hope more often than faith in Christ. This is one reason why churches are less than half full and families can't seem to find the time. Too many {sarcasm intended} worthwhile distractions are important and available. During the last couple of years many more churches closed their doors because of a lack of support and dare I say a lack of faith.

The stumbling block for the Israelites was the law by which they measured their righteousness. The stumbling block these days is abundance. People intellectually know that the ultimate fate is death, but today, they hope to linger longer and forgo the promise of eternity by bearing the yoke that is so much lighter than what this world offers. **Mathew 11:28-30**

It is enough to make a grown man cry.