

HAVE FAITH IN GOD

Last week we studied the doctrine of the Godhead (trinity). By the end of the class, I realized a need to teach a practical side to the Godhead. We call it practical theology. As a pastor-teacher, it is important that I teach practical as well as dogma theology for spiritual growth momentum.

I chose a lesson text where Jesus used practical theology of the Godhead with His disciples. The background to our lesson text is important. On the previous day, Jesus had cursed a fig tree that looked like a fruit producing tree but was barren (Mk.11:12-19). The next day Peter comments, “Rabbi, look, the fig tree which you cursed has withered.” And Jesus answered saying to them, **‘Have faith in God.’**” (Mk.11:21-22)

What make this lesson text so important to me as a pastor-teacher is that Jesus was **three days** from being crucified by His people and Rome and being deserted by His disciples (Matt.26:31-35). Yet He was able to set aside His own circumstances in order to minister practical theology to His disciples – **“Have faith in God.”**

We know the state of His mind because of Gethsemane:

(Mk. 14:34) “My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death.”

But He was able to step away from it to minister to others out of His spiritual maturing (Luke 2:40, 52; John 12:27-28).

Twice Jesus used a favorite phrase to point out two practical doctrines:

HAVE (echo / p.a.impv.2pl) FAITH (pistis) IN (objective genitive) [of] GOD – “Truly I say to you” (Mk.11: 23, 24); Rom.4:21.

- The first practical doctrine was the faith cycle (Mk.11:22-23; Heb.11:6).
- The second practical doctrine was effective prayer (Mk.11:24-25).

We will study three points of the practical doctrine of the faith cycle
connected with HAVE FAITH IN GOD (Heb.11:1).

1. Jesus’ lesson began with a fig tree in Israel.

The biblical history behind this fig tree was ending with Jesus:

- Creation (Gen.1:11-13);
- Garden of Eden (Gen.2:8-9);
- Fall of Adam (Gen.2:17; 3:6-7);
- Noah’s flood (Gen.6-9);
- The promise land (Num.13:23-24, 27);
- A symbol of Israel [bad figs / reversionism] (Jer.24) [The curse of Deut.28]
- **Now** the sign of withered fig tree.

Jesus addressed it personally to show divine authority over creation (Mk.11:14).

2. Jesus changed the subject from the fig tree and Himself to the Mt. Olives and His disciples.

The biblical history behind the Mt. of Olives was beginning:

- Prayer in Gethsemane (Matt.26:30, 36);
- Ascension (Acts 1:9-12);
- Second Coming (Zech.14:4-9) [“on that day”]

3. Jesus taught that doubt hinders faith but believing cycles it

(Mk.11:23) “And does not doubt in his heart but believes that what He says is going to happen, it will be granted him.”

The test of faith is to see the promise fulfilled in the Word and Will of God - before the fact (Rom.4:21).

It is never impossible or improbable if it is God’s Will
(Luke 1:37; Matt.26:39, 42).