

## 2007 Oct 7 Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

### Enough Faith: **Luke 17:1-10**

Years ago, many years ago there was a popular television show featuring the husband and wife team of George Burns and Gracie Allen. Gracie was always causing George grief through her confusion over the simplest things. On one of the programs, Gracie became upset because her new electric clock kept losing time. She called a repairman who immediately discovered the problem; the clock wasn't plugged in. Gracie's response was, "I know that. I didn't want to waste electricity, so I only plug it in when I want to know what time it is."

Do we do the same thing with our faith? Do we just plug in our faith when we think we need it?

It is said that -WE USE 7-10 % OF OUR BRAIN. HOW MUCH OF OUR FAITH DO WE USE?

1. In our gospel text for today we find Jesus teaching his disciples 3 things. He tells them that opportunities to stumble in our faith are bound to come.
2. We are to make sure that we don't make others stumble in their faith.
3. Not only are we to make sure others stumble in their faith; but when they do and in doing so they sin against us, we are to forgive them. We are to forgive them and keep on forgiving them even if they keep on sinning against us.

Apparently the disciples felt this was beyond them because they ask Jesus to give them more faith. Jesus then gives them good news. But I am not sure they realized it was good news.

Jesus says to them, If you have the faith the size of a mustard seed. Which is a very small seed.

- ***"If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.***

What Jesus is actually saying to them is, ***you have it***. You have the enough faith. Faith the size of a mustard seed can work miracles. Faith even the size of a mustard seed is very powerful because it has the power of Jesus.

So ***you tell me*** is this good news or not?

Is it good news to be told that you already have all the faith that you need? Is that good news or not.

I remember when I was in school my parents would come back from talking to my teacher at parent teacher night and Oh and by the way I don't know what homework they were referring to that I wasn't doing.

But besides that they would come back saying that I was smart and I should be doing a lot better.

Is that good news or not? You would think that hearing that you were smart would be good news but it really wasn't. If I was smarter, if I had ability, my parents would expect me to do better.

On the other hand, if the teacher would have told my parents I was a dummy. They wouldn't expect much from me and they would be thankful for whatever I did do.

Our reading for today doesn't spell it out, but Jesus' disciples are complaining. We can't do it Jesus. You're asking too much of us, Jesus. We are going to need more faith. We can't stop from stumbling, we can't stop from leading others astray and we especially aren't going to be able to forgive people over and over. If we are going to be expected to forgive over and over we are going to need more faith. Give us more faith.

**1 Dorothy Day** Some years ago a woman died who was considered by many to be a living saint. Her name was Dorothy Day. She started all kinds of activities: a news paper, "The Catholic Worker", houses of hospitality for vagrants, feeding programs; Christian communal farms, and on and on.. She would overhear others saying of her, "She is a saint.". She would get upset, turn to the speaker, and say: "don't say that. Don't make it too easy for yourself. Don't try and escape like that. You say that to convince yourself that you are different from me, that I am different from you. That's the easy way out. I am not different from you. I am not a saint. I am like you. You could easily do what I do. You don't need any more than you have; get kicking, please"

**Bass Mitchell says** Regarding faith: I keep a tiny acorn on my desk and up behind it on the wall a picture of a large acorn tree. Both are there to remind me that what seems small, if given, planted, watered, nurtured can be used to grow significant things.

The apostle Paul says in his first letter to the *(1 Corinthians 10:13)* ***No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.***

I always want to joke that God is continually over estimating me. Giving me more than I can handle.

That is not to say, that is not to say that we will not face difficult things very difficult things. I am saying that even if you have just a little faith it can carry you through because it is empowered by Christ.

In her letters apparently Mother Teresa felt as though she lost her faith early in her ministry. But look at all the wonderful things God did through her with the little faith she had left.

Be encouraged. You have what it takes. I know that there are many times when we would rather run away from the challenges of life. Many times that we would like to say. I can't, I'm not strong enough. But Jesus called you by name to be his hands and feet in this world. He has given you what you need to get the job done.

-"O God, I don't pray for enough faith to move mountains. I can get enough dynamite and bulldozers to do that. What I need and ask for is enough faith to move me." **Stoffregen**

May God open our eyes to see that he has given us all the faith we need in Jesus Christ our lord. Amen?