



# JESUS TEACHES US...

## LESSON THREE: To have faith

“**Faith** is the basic ingredient to begin a relationship with **God**. **Faith** is the assurance that the things revealed and promised in the **Word** are true, even though unseen, and gives the believer a conviction that what he expects in **faith**, will come to pass.”

**Romans 10:17** *So then, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

**2 Corinthians 5:7** *For we live by believing and not by seeing.*

**Hebrews 11:6** *And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.*

### **Read Hebrews 11**

This chapter records examples of people throughout the Bible who demonstrated faith in God. What should encourage us is that they were like us; ordinary, made many mistakes throughout their lives, and yet they are recorded as being heroes of faith.

**Abraham** – lied twice, saying Sarah was his sister, but was willing to sacrifice his only son at God’s command.

**Jacob** – he cheated his brother out of his father’s inheritance, but he wrestled with the angel of the Lord who gave him the new name of Israel.

**Moses** – he killed an Egyptian but went on to confront Pharaoh, and eventually led the Children of Israel out of Egypt to the borders of the Promised Land.

**Rahab** – a prostitute who protected the Israelite spies and because of her bravery, she and her family were saved when God destroyed the city of Jericho.

**Samson** – told Delilah the secret of his strength, but despite his blindness, pulled down the temple of Dagon, destroying the enemies of God.

**David** – he committed adultery and ensured the killing of Bathsheba’s husband in battle. BUT God described him as a man after his own heart, who united the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah and ruled them well. Jesus was, as we sing in the Christmas carol, *BORN OF DAVID’S LINE.*

When we read the Gospels, time and again, Jesus talks about faith and its importance. Many times, he commends people for their faith and at others he seems to be disappointed at the lack of faith, particularly among his disciples.

### **Matthew 8:5-13**

Here we read of the Roman Centurion who came to Jesus on behalf of his servant. In asking for his healing, the Centurion says, verse 8, *“But only speak a word and my servant will be healed”*. Matthew tells us that Jesus marvelled and said to those who followed, *“I say to you I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel”*.

- What does verse 9 tell us about the Centurion’s recognition of Jesus?
- What do verses 11-12 tell us about God’s chosen people, the Jews? Is there a lesson here for us?

### **Matthew 8:23-27**

- What do we learn about the disciples in this passage? Could the same be said of us?
- What do we learn about the power and authority of Jesus?

### **Mark 5:25-34**

- Given that this was a woman, and one who would be considered unclean, what does this passage demonstrate?

### **Luke 18:35-43**

- What words would you use to describe Bartimaeus?
- Can we learn lessons for our lives in this account?

These are only a few examples from the Gospels of people who had faith in the power of Jesus to heal and deliver. Jesus was teaching through these miracles, that with God nothing is impossible.

- Do we have the faith: complete trust and confidence, to believe that?

### **Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32 and Luke 13:18-19**

In each of these passages, Jesus teaches us one of the most important things we need to understand about faith.

*The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.*

In Matthew 17:20, Jesus said: ***“If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will tell this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”***

There are great heroes of faith in the Bible and in more recent times: William Booth, Lord Shaftesbury, Dr Barnardo, George Muller, Billy Graham, Mother Theresa, Brother Andrew, to name but a few. We may feel daunted by their achievements, however, we must learn from the teachings of Jesus that the smallest seed, the mustard seed, can be nurtured until it becomes the largest plant in the garden. The lovely thing also is that not only does it grow large, but it provides shelter for the birds. Think of William Booth who started the Salvation Army. He would not know that well over one hundred years later it would still be going strong. We still have Dr Barnardo homes that provide a safe place for children. In the twentieth century many thousands, upon thousands, came to know Jesus through the ministry of Billy Graham. Mother Theresa did an incredible work among the poor of Calcutta and her foundation continues today.

- What do you want to achieve for God?
- What are you doing about it?

For seeds to grow, they need nourishment. Your mustard seed faith, likewise, needs the same.

- In what ways are you developing your faith in God and are you then putting it to use? Are we providing shelter, nourishment, encouragement, and support for others?

**James 1:21-25** But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

- Pray, read God's word, and keep in fellowship with other Christians. All these things will help you to growth in faith and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

**Prayer: Lord, help us to trust in you; to develop our faith, and in doing so, be a blessing to others.**

