

## **You have enough**

Luke 17:5-6

October 6, 2013

How are you doing in the “faith” department? Do you wish you had more faith? Do you wish you had a stronger faith?

Do you believe, on some level, that God will take care of you, that God will provide for you, and yet still, all too often, you find yourself worrying or anxious or fretful or depressed or even scared? Do you want to trust God more fully? Do you want more faith?

Do you sense the presence of God in this world and in your life, sometimes, in fleeting moments, in a brief spiritual high, while most of the time, you wonder where God is, if God is? Do you want to be able to believe all of the time? Do you want more faith?

Do you intend to be faithful, to be guided by what God wants, to go where Jesus leads, and yet, to be honest, you make choices and pursue goals and plan your day with all kinds of other aims in mind? Do you want to be more faithful? Do you want more faith?

Do you want to please God, by what you do and by who you are, but must admit that, most of the time, you let God -- and yourself -- down? Do you want a stronger will? Do you want more faith?

*Make our faith greater!*

It's a good request. It's a worthy desire. Isn't it? And it wasn't just one or two of Jesus' disciples making that request, it was all of them!

Can you imagine? Can you imagine if all of us in this sanctuary stood together right now and called out to Jesus: “Make our faith greater?” Wouldn't it be wonderful? Wouldn't it be exciting?

If you had faith as big as a mustard seed, you could say to -- this mulberry tree! -- uproot yourself, and plant yourself in the ocean ... and it would! If you had faith as big as a mustard seed, you could do marvelous things! If you had faith as big as a mustard seed, you could accomplish things you never thought possible. You could speak boldly and act boldly. You could change the world!

Yeah, Jesus. That's why we want more faith! Make our faith greater!

If you have faith as big as a mustard seed ...

I changed one word in that statement. Did you notice? Most English translations of the gospel of Luke read: "If you had faith as big as a mustard seed ..." In other words: "If you had faith, you could change the world, but since you have to ask for it, you prove you don't have it." Is that what Jesus is saying to his disciples, and to you?

The verb in Greek is in the present indicative tense: "If you have faith ..." Do you? Do you have any faith at all? As big as a mustard seed?

That's all you need. That's enough. You have enough.

You have enough! You don't have to wait for Jesus to make your faith greater. You have enough! Don't worry about the faith you don't have. Use the faith you do have. You have enough! You can change the world!

You have enough.

Some of you may have read that sermon title and guessed I would be talking about money or things or stuff this morning, but this has nothing to do with money or things or stuff. This has to do with faith. You have enough faith, to be able to do ... whatever it is God wants you to do.

And yet, since this has to do with faith, and since faith has to do, not just with the religious or spiritual portion of our lives, but with our lives as a whole, this has everything to do with money and things and stuff! You have enough.

We have enough. Today we begin our 2014 stewardship campaign, and we face a daunting task. We inherit the \$23,000 deficit written into our 2013 church budget, and project next year a \$17,000 increase in spending -- for staff salary increases, health insurance premium increases, and phased out endowment subsidies. That means we will need an additional \$40,000 in income, over and above the \$232,000 pledged in 2013, if we are to avoid voting once again a budget with a significant deficit. We have voted such budgets for years, but we have done so well in recent years making our projections more precise and cutting out the wiggle room in the budget, that budgeted deficits have become real deficits. If planned income doesn't cover planned expenses, we will, almost certainly, lose money.

We have to move ahead to stay the same. We will have to have, this year, a dramatic increase in pledges, an unprecedented increase in pledges -- our pledges -- if we want to continue doing what we are doing now. If we all do

what we've always done, if we all make no change or just a modest increase in our pledges, we will no longer be able to be who we think we are.

So who do we think we are? The lion's share of our investment is in people and in programs, primarily in three areas: mission and music and youth ministry. This is who we are! These are the things God has given us passion for! This is what we believe God has called us to do: to make a difference in our community and our world, helping and helping and serving; to make beautiful music to bring God honor and us delight, and to make witness to the glory and wonder of God through music; and to serve youth, to teach and empower and nurture children and young people in our church family and in the wider community. We have invested good money in good people, people with exceptional gifts and dedication, in order to fulfill the purposes to which God has called us, but we have a daunting task ahead of us if we want to continue these ministries.

But if we do believe that God has called us to serve our neighbors, to make beauty through music, to pay special attention to children and youth, if we believe that, if we have faith as big as mustard seed, then we have enough. We don't need to wish for more faith. We have enough. We just need to use what we have.

That's the fourth mark of the followers of Jesus: using the faith you do have to change the world!

The first mark is purity of heart: wanting just one thing.

The second mark is generosity of spirit: opening your heart wide to all kinds of people.

The third mark is freedom from slavery to wealth: not having stuff, but using stuff to bring blessing and to provide help.

And the fourth mark is faith: using whatever faith you have to change the world. Let's do it!