

“DETERMINING THE FUTURE”

Matt 17:14-21

Michael Jordan wasn't picked for Varsity team. So he worked on his game: Became the G.O.A.T. Ministry: You determine the future.

I. CRISIS

- A. Many disciples live with a disconnect between what they are now – and what they hope to be some day
1. They have wrong ideas about where a good future comes from
 - a. Attendance is enough: *In church/in the class* b. Position is enough: *They were disciples/part of the 12*
 - c. Desire is enough: *I want a powerful future* d. Good intention is enough: *I mean well...*
 2. But right now they are currently not doing what it takes to produce a good future
 - a. Here: *Faith/prayer/dominion* b. Common areas: *Evangelism/working with new converts/relationships/finances*
- B. Your future is simply the harvest of the seeds you plant today
1. *Gal 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.*
 - a. You're planting today what is going to grow in the future (or failing to plant/doesn't grow)
 2. *Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.*
 - a. A larger stage will simply be a larger version of what you already are!
- C. We see the crisis of exposure
1. *Matthew 17:16 So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."*
 - a. They were lacking what they needed – and now themselves/the devil/God all know it!
 2. *2 Kings 4:31 Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child has not awakened."*
 - a. Can be now b. Can be later: *Pioneering/Pastoring; Converts/\$/transformation...*

II. THE ESSENTIALS OF MINISTRY

- A. **Faith:** Jesus deals with the most basic issue of all ministry – faith!
1. You get what you believe for: **Matt 9:29** *...according to your faith be it unto you.*
 - a. Actions aren't enough: They prayed – but the devil knew they didn't believe it!
 1. *Matthew 17:20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.*
 - b. Faith has to be yours: You can't ride on someone else's faith *With the heart man believes...*
 2. Every person has to lay hold of the word of God and get faith for themselves *faith come hearing/word of God*
 - a. *Melbourne: I knew their unbelief was wrong/rejected it – but I didn't know why. I dug into God's word and Heb 13:8 became mine – I had it! Have done that with different issues over the years.*
- B. **Prayer:** **Matthew 17:21** *However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."*
1. Prayer is speaking to God – the ability to touch God/bring His power into your situation
 - a. Something obviously was lacking in the prayer lives of the other 9 disciples: Why?
 1. Missing prayer through lack of discipline? 2. Praying only when Jesus was looking?
 3. Not seriously pressing in personally: *Someone else will do it...*
 2. You have to learn to touch God for yourself – and by yourself
 - a. Discipline of daily prayer: Getting out of bed (or getting to bed earlier)
 - b. Pressing in to really touch God c. Times of private prayer
 1. *I have no idea if the men we send out are praying!*
- C. **Dominion:** **Matthew 17:21** *However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."*
1. Simple recognitions here:
 - a. Not all problems are the same 'size' b. Not all demonic powers are the same 'strength'
 2. Fasting: Demonstrating humility/desperation
 - a. But mostly "I will do whatever it takes to change this/overcome this"
 3. You don't want to start developing personal dominion only when you go out
 - a. *Jesus I know/Paul I know – but who are you?* b. *Something is lacking – and the devil knows it!*

III. CHANGING YOUR FUTURE

- A. The good news: God allows us to start again
1. We are doomed b/c of what we lack: We are not doomed b/c of past failure
 2. We know the disciples did get it: Later records...church history
 - a. **Matthew 17:20** *So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.*
 1. *You can see the miracle power of God – to change things in your life, and for other people!*