

## “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!*