



**Kingdom Value**  
*Faith and Freedom*  
Matthew 17:14-27

How to Prepare

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Resources-

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/you-are-meant-to-move-mountains>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/mustard-seed-faith.html>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-sons-are-free>

Sermon Outline:

Matthew 17:14-27

1. Christ's Exasperation Shows Us That Our Faith Can Be Warped.  
Vv. 14-18
2. Christ's Exhortation Tells Us That Genuine, Growing Faith is Powerful.  
Vv. 19-21
3. Christ's Emancipation Delivers Us to a Faith That Is Free. Vv. 22-27

## **Matthew 17:14-27**

### **The Demoniac**

14 When they came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, falling on his knees before Him and saying,

15 "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.

16 I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him."

17 And Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me."

18 And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once.

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not drive it out?"

20 And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.

21 [But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."]

22 And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men;

23 and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day." And they were deeply grieved.

### **The Tribute Money**

24 When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma tax came to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma tax?"

25 He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?"

26 When Peter said, "From strangers," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are exempt.

27 However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and Me."

# Discussion Questions

**Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 17:14-27.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Here is a question or two to help introduce the topic and jump-start discussion.

**1. In what areas of life do you feel the most "free?" In what areas of life do you feel the least "free?" What part does faith in Christ have to play in all of those areas of life?**

## **UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION**

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

### **I. Christ's Exasperation Shows Us That Our Faith Can Be Warped. Vv. 14-18**

**2. What prompted Jesus to become exasperated, and who was His exasperation directed towards? What did Jesus say was wrong about their faith?**

**3. How does Jesus' response to the lack of faith in the crowd, father, and even the disciples affect the way we think about our own faith? How does His choice to still heal the boy encourage us?**

**4. What are ways that faith can be warped (misdirected or distorted) in our lives today? How should we respond when we recognize our own lack of faith? (Mark 9:24)**

### **II. Christ's Exhortation Tells Us That Genuine, Growing Faith is Powerful. Vv. 19-21**

**5. There are at least two ways of understanding Jesus' parable of the mustard seed: either He means that the disciples' faith was so small that it was not even the size of a mustard seed, or that their faith was small but had not grown the way a mustard plant grows. Either way, what is Jesus essentially saying about their faith?**

**6. What is genuine Christian faith, what makes it grow, and why is a small amount of genuine faith infinitely more powerful than a large amount of twisted faith?**

**7. What does it mean to "move mountains?" What does fasting and prayer according to God's will have to do with faith, and why doesn't God answer some of our prayers? (James 4:2-3)**

### **III. Christ's Emancipation Delivers Us to a Faith That Is Free. Vv. 22-27**

**8. What is the significance of the two-drachma tax (i.e. Temple tax), and what does it symbolize? (Exodus 30:11-16) How does Jesus' death and resurrection foretold in vv. 22-23 connect the idea of faith and the need to pay for atonement via the Temple tax and the sacrificial system?**

**9. Who are the "sons" in Jesus' analogy about taxes, and what does this reveal about a Christian's need to pay for atonement? What was Jesus' motivation for still choosing to pay the Temple tax, and why does motivation matter?**

**10. What does the miracle of the fish with the coin demonstrate about Christ's provision for our atonement and other needs in life? How does Christ's provision in every way motivate us to give generously and to do good deeds?**

## Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

**Matt. 17:14–27** Sons of the Kingdom. Through the healing and exorcism of a boy who suffers seizures, Jesus shows the contrast between defective and effective faith (vv. 14–20). Jesus also teaches that his impending death will come through betrayal (vv. 22–23) and that the OT law has no claim on him or his disciples (vv. 24–27).

**Matt. 17:15** By calling him Lord, the man shows respect for Jesus as an esteemed, righteous teacher, but he goes beyond that by believing that Jesus will show mercy and heal his son.

**Matt. 17:17** faithless. In spite of the miracles and teaching of Jesus, the majority of people did not place their faith in him as the Messiah. Twisted indicates people's distorted perception of Jesus and spiritual truth.

**Matt. 17:20** little faith. The disciples are not, of course, devoid of faith, but their faith is not functioning properly. Faith can be stronger or weaker (cf. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Rom. 14:1). Moving a mountain was a common metaphor in Jewish literature for doing what was seemingly impossible (cf. Isa. 40:4; 49:11; 54:10; Matt. 21:21–22).

**Matt. 17:22–23** to be delivered. This second prediction of Jesus' passion (cf. 16:21), has an ominous new detail: Jesus will not only be handed over to his enemies, he will be betrayed.

**Matt. 17:24** two-drachma tax. At the annual census, each person over the age of 20 was to give a half-shekel offering for the support of the tabernacle (Ex. 30:11–16), which was later applied to the temple. The religious tax collectors approach Peter, the disciples' leader, rather than Jesus himself, perhaps in deference to Jesus' esteem as a popular teacher.

**Matt. 17:25–26** Then the sons are free. Because the temple is God the Father's own house, the Son and those he has brought into the Father's family (12:48–50) are exempt from the temple tax, signaling that, with the coming of the kingdom, believers are no longer under the OT law but the law of Christ (see Gal. 6:2).