



SERVICE TIMES:

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:30 AM
5:00 PM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

ELDERS:

Todd Cox
Jimmy Griffith
Bryan Tacker

DEACONS:

Derek Anderson Travis Everett
Ryan Griffith Dan Harbin
Craig Hecht Danny Meek
Phil Parker Jason Stannard
Travis Starling Steve Turquette

EVANGELIST

Paul White

CEDAR PARK CHURCH OF CHRIST



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Feb 2, 2020

Sometimes It's Just Hard

There's a misconception that can sometimes be present among Christians, or at least one I had while younger. That misconception is that once you become a Christian, everything's going to become automatically easier. Dealing with the challenges of life, difficult people or just the daily temptations we face will suddenly become simple. My faith in God and His promises will allow me to handle anything without wavering. Then, as Paul Harvey used to say, we are faced with the rest of the story. We face challenges unlike previous ones. We see sin take hold of people we looked up to and they give up their faith. Our lives may not turn out the way we had always envisioned. We can even begin to question how God could allow these things to happen. We may even begin to wonder, am I the only one to have these questions? Everyone else's faith in God seems to be perfectly strong, why isn't mine? When dealing with this doubt and fear we can tend to tell ourselves the biggest lie of all: It's just me. I am all alone. No one else could possibly understand.

We see several examples in scripture of those that had similar thoughts. In Psalms 73, Asaph openly discusses how he had moments where things occurring in his life didn't make sense to him. The wicked prospered and the righteous suffered, (Psalms 73:3-5). He doubted God's justice until he came into the sanctuary (the place of worship). "Then I perceived their end" Psalms 73:17. His faith in God then grew stronger. He then understood that

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the end of the wicked was different than the end of the righteous and boldly proclaims, “whom have I in heaven but you?” Psalms 73:25.

But Asaph wasn't alone in having times of weak faith. Look at the following passages, where Jesus describes His own apostles as having “little faith”:

- Matt 8:22-27 – “...why are you timid you men of little faith...” when Jesus calmed the sea
- Matt 14:22-33 – “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” when Peter attempted to walk on water
- Matt 16:5-12 – “...you men of little faith...” when the disciples were concerned because they had forgotten bread
- Matt 17:14-20 – “...unbelieving and perverse generation...” when the disciples were unable to heal the epileptic

Contrast the above with the following verses where Jesus commends someone for their great faith:

- Matt 8:5-13 – centurion described as having greater faith than in all of Israel
- Matt 9:1-8 – those that brought the paralytic to Jesus
- Matt 9:18-22 – the woman that touched Jesus' garment
- Matt 9:27-31 – the two blind men made well

What differences do you see between these examples? I think we can summarize a few. Little faith focuses on fears, the things of this world and what the created can do while great faith focuses on our dependence on God, the eternal, and what our creator is able to accomplish. We can tend to have many of these same issues, so how do we deal with them? Do we give up and walk away or do we, like the apostles and Asaph, try to draw closer to Jesus and gain a better understanding of His will?

When we're in the midst of a challenging time and the obstacles we face seem overwhelming, let's learn from what we read and work to grow our faith. Let us not get so down on ourselves and think we're the only ones. Hey, even the apostles struggled with “little faith” at times. Rather, let's go into God's

sanctuary to worship. Let's spend time where the answers are – in God's revealed word. Let's put our focus on our Creator and understand the care and concern He has displayed for each of us. Let's focus on what our God can and will do for us. Let's focus on the eternal instead of the temporal. It's not always easy, in fact it sometimes just hard. But when we do that, the cares and concerns of this life tend to go away, and we too will have “Great Faith”.

“Lord I believe, help my unbelief”

- Travis Everett

SMALL CAUSE, BIG DAMAGE

One of the strangest incidents in the history of our nation's space program occurred when the space shuttle Discovery was grounded, not by complex technical difficulties, but because of woodpeckers.

Some yellow-shafted flickers had pecked the insulating foam on the shuttle's external fuel tank. This foam is critical to the shuttle's performance. Without it, ice forms on the tank when it is filled with super-cold fuel, and can later break free and damage the spacecraft. And so the mighty shuttle was rendered inoperative by the damage done by a little woodpecker!

Have you ever considered, how small things can do big damage? A few words that should not have been spoken can leave hurt for a lifetime. Criticism, neglect or simple lack of consideration can inflict great harm on a marriage. Schedules that are too busy to allow time for the things of eternal importance can result in a lifetime of wasted opportunities. That list can go on and on.

We must be very careful that we not allow these “little things” to do damage to the really big things in our lives.



Hard work pays off later. Laziness pays off now.