

Faith and freedom

Luke 17.5-10

When the disciples ask Jesus to increase their faith, Jesus reminds them that if they have even a tiny amount of faith they can achieve extraordinary things. Then he says that they are simply being invited to fulfil the task given to them.

Now read **Luke 17.5-10** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Jesus uses two images in response to the disciples call for increased faith to remind them that it is not the amount of faith they possess, but the power of the one in whom they put their faith that makes the difference. Jesus reinforces this message with another image of the slave who belongs to the owner – in choosing faith in God we choose to belong to God and follow God's calling in our lives.

ENJOY

Go 'forest bathing' in a local woodland. Wander slowly, enjoying the sights and sounds as you go. Stop to look around and listen. Can you see sunlight through the leaves? Do you see any animals or birds? What can you hear?



The leaves are often falling and there are wonderful colours at this time of year. Make a leaf collage. You can do this by either making it in the garden or park or bringing it indoors to make. Can your family or friends guess what your picture is? As you look at the collages you have created, think about God who created the world and each one of us uniquely – remember that we choose to belong to God and live in the way God wants us to live.

Instrumental



On 4 October, we remember St Francis, who changed his life to follow Jesus. Listen to this version of the Prayer of St Francis. <https://music.youtube.com/watch?v=aeqqi6nPkK0&list=RDAMVMaeqqi6nPkK0> Read or listen to this prayer each morning or evening and think about how you can be or have been an 'instrument of peace' today.



What or who do you belong to?

BAKE



Make cheese straws with mustard; here is the recipe <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/cheese-mustard-straws>. Think about how adding a tiny amount of mustard can enhance the flavour of the cheese straws, and how our faith in God can change our lives for the better. Every time you eat one of the cheese straws, thank God for your faith in him.

POETREE



It's National Poetry Day on 6 October. Read this poem called 'Trees' by Joyce Kilmer <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/12744/trees> – try to learn it if you can. Talk about which word or line you like best and why? What do you think the poet thinks about God?

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

Jesus' closest disciples said to him, 'Help us to have more faith.'

He replied, 'Even if your faith is only the size of a tiny mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, "Dig up your roots and jump in the sea!" and it would do as you ask.'

Jesus continued, 'Imagine you have a servant who works hard all day, ploughing the land, or looking after the sheep on the hills. When the servant comes in would you say to him, "You have worked very hard all day. Have a rest.



'Sit down and have dinner with me'? No,' Jesus said, 'you wouldn't, would you? Instead you would say, "Prepare my meal! Put on your apron and serve me my dinner. You can eat later, after I have eaten." You don't give your servant any special thanks for doing their job, do you?'

Jesus explained to his disciples, 'It is the same with you. When you have done everything you have been asked to do, you should say, "We have only done what we were asked to do. No more. We don't deserve any special thanks."'

Luke 17.5-10

Did you know?

- Jesus is making the point that a little bit of faith can achieve massive things.
- It doesn't seem very kind to be compared to a slave, but Jesus is saying that if we belong to God we should (will) do what God says!

Luke 17.5-10 (NRSV)

The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!' The Lord replied, 'If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea', and it would obey you.

'Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from ploughing or tending sheep in the field, 'Come here at once and take your place at the table'? Would you not rather

say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink'? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, 'We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!'