

## LUKE 17:5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

The Lord replied,

"If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

"Who among you would say to your servant who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field,

'Come here immediately and take your place at table'?

Would he not rather say to him,

'Prepare something for me to eat.

Put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink.

You may eat and drink when I am finished'?

Is he grateful to that servant because he did what was commanded?

So should it be with you.

When you have done all you have been commanded,

say, 'We are unprofitable servants;

we have done what we were obliged to do.'"

I don't know about you, but there are certain things in life that I feel as though I deserve.

- I deserve a nice car.
- I deserve to get 8 hours of sleep a night.
- I deserve to be rewarded and recognized for things I've done well
- I deserve to get the same # of Christmas gifts as my brother each year

After reflecting on this gospel over the weekend though, I got to thinking that maybe I don't really deserve these things at all – that none of us does – but rather maybe we have been trusted with them instead.

I'm no English teacher but bear with me for a few minutes because I'm going to try to give us a quick English lesson to highlight the point Jesus is trying to make in this gospel.

There are 2 words that I think adequately describe the point this gospel is trying to make. These words are **entitle** and **entrust**.

Here is my definition of entitle:

- an attitude that we are special and we deserve certain things just because we are who we are.

So I'll give you a few TCHS examples or where I have witnessed some entitlement:

- I deserve to wear a colored shirt because I am a senior
- I deserve to be the captain of a team because I have played the longest
- I deserve to get a diploma at graduation
- I deserve to get a driver's license once I reach a certain age.

I'm sorry to say but none of these are things that you or I deserve at all! Rather these are responsibilities we have been entrusted with.

So here is my definition of entrust:

- an attitude that we are special and humbly accept something that someone else has trusted us with.

So maybe we need to change our approach a little just like Jesus challenged the apostles to do in this gospel.

I think Jesus is shaking things up Jesus-style in this gospel and really getting the apostles to think about what they want and why they feel like they deserve it.

Because you see, the apostles started off this gospel pretty much complaining/whining – just like we so easily do when we think we deserve or are entitled to certain things.

The apostles say to Jesus **“Increase our faith.”**

They are feeling that they are owed more faith simply because they are working for Jesus. And I love Jesus’ style of teaching in this gospel – like a good teacher Jesus makes them figure it out for themselves instead of getting frustrated with them or giving them the answer. Jesus hits the apostles with a metaphor and then a rhetorical question to get them thinking.

His metaphor has to do with simply doing what we have been entrusted to do – just like the servant in this story.

Jesus reminds the apostles that back in his day servants and masters knew their roles and simply did what was required of them without expecting that they deserved more in return. If we put ourselves back in this time period a master would have expected his servants to work in the fields during the day and then prepare the evening meal before tending to the servant’s own needs. The master would not have invited the servant to the table and the servant would not have expected it. Now certainly our social dining habits have changed dramatically since then, we often invite the people who prepare our meals to share in them with us – but in Jesus’ day the servants and the masters were doing what was required of them in their roles.

Jesus uses this story to remind the apostles that faith is not something they are entitled to – but rather something they are gifted with. They can’t get extra credit “faith” points simply because they are working hard and feel that they deserve it.

Rather, Jesus uses this story to get the point across that faith is free. Faith is something we humbly accept. Faith is without boundaries, without payment, with no strings attached, with no limited warranty and deserving of no reward and recognition.

Faith just like many things in our lives is not something that is deserved but rather something we have been generously entrusted with.

So let us go back to the examples from TCHS that I used just a few minutes ago:

- Seniors – your colored shirts aren't something you deserve, but rather a responsibility you have been entrusted with because people feel that you are up to the challenge and that you can be trusted as a role model for others.
- Captains – your role as a leader on your team has nothing to do with what you deserve or how long you have played but it has everything to do with the mentorship and leadership that someone trusts you can provide to others.
- Graduation – a diploma is not something you automatically get just because you have been here for 4 years and put in “your time.” You have been entrusted to use your knowledge to the best of your ability for the benefit of others and take responsibility for your “job” as a student.

So my challenge for you this week is to rethink, like I did and like the apostles did, some of the things you think you might deserve because chances are you are not entitled to them at all. Rather, you have been entrusted with gifts, with opportunities, with responsibilities and with leadership because you are special but more importantly because someone believes you can be entrusted with the role of discipleship.