

Can Faith and Unbelief Be Mixed?

I sure hope so or I'm in big trouble. Sometimes I find great encouragement in my Bible footnotes. I have to remember that those footnotes in my Bible are not inspired like the holy scriptures printed above them. Still they help.

For example, there's the gospel story where Jesus comes down from the glorious mountaintop transfiguration only to find everything in chaos. The disciples failed to heal a disturbed young boy. The boy is in torment, Jesus is exasperated, the disciples are embarrassed, the crowd is restless, and the boy's father is desperate. Here is what the dad says to Jesus:

"...if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."
"If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed,

"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mk 9:22-24).

The encouraging footnote suggests: *"The question was not whether Jesus had the power to heal the boy but whether the father had the faith to believe it. A person who truly believes will set no limits on what God can do."* And then this balancing statement: *"Since faith is never perfect, belief and unbelief are often mixed."*

That has been my experience as well. As I reach out to God, at times in desperation, I am deeply aware how inadequate my faith is. God knows this. Jesus knew this. Although he challenged the boy's father to have greater faith, his limitations did not limit the Lord's power. Jesus saw the pitiful condition of this boy, heard this father's desperate cry and healed his son.

Our flawed efforts aren't the focus, faith in God's power is. Yet our efforts show the content of our heart. Like everybody else there that day, Jesus saw the heart of this frantic father and responded. Prayer, pleading, desperation, outstretched arms, crying out—these are indications of what's inside. This is especially true in our private prayers where there is no one seeing us but God. In such moments, it is freeing to exclaim in prayer, **"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"** You will be heard.

Mark

Fellowship Meal NEXT SUNDAY, Jan. 15th:

The theme will be a ***Housewarming Party*** for Rich and Sandie Fabi, organized, decorated and main entree by Tina Gonzalez (thanks, Tina!). **Bring a side-dish or dessert that reminds you of home.**

Also, there is a list on the bulletin board of items that the Fabis still need for their new home. Please put a check-mark by one that you can bring them as a gift (note: some items could use more than one check-mark).

The NEW "Hospitality Teams" are Posted:

The list is up on the bulletin board. The new **Team 4** will serve and clean-up for next Sunday's luncheon.

Children's Church Today: taught by Sandie Fabi & Sue Ross.

"New Visions" Breakfast for the Homeless: is coming up **Tuesday, January 24th**. See **Brenda** if you would like to help.

Cathedral Kitchen for the Homeless: Tuesday, January 31st, 3:30-5:30. See Vivian to help.

Haircuts for Missions is this Saturday, Jan. 14th

Our January "Prayer & Fasting" Calendar is up!

Sign up with an anonymous check-mark on the day you will pray and fast. This is the BEST way to start the new year. God is just waiting to bless us!

Spring Ladies' Retreat: Ladies, it's time to think SPRING, which means our annual retreat on **April 7-9** in Cape May! An initial planning meeting will be held **this Saturday, January 14th**, 9 AM at **Becky Finn's home**. A light brunch will be provided. Come if you would like to help us plan!

Adult Volunteers Needed for Friday's Sr. Youth Group "Lock-In": Once a year our Teens have a chaperoned "Lock-In" overnight at the church building. The Schoener's have bravely volunteered to run this activity, but they need help! If you can cover even part of this overnight it would be great. It is this Friday, January 13th from 7:30 PM Friday to 7:00 AM Saturday. **See Scott or Chris with any questions or to help out.**

Hello Baby! Bob & Kim English Are Grandparents... make that first-time grand-parents. Their daughter Brielle and husband Kiernan had their baby daughter, Kaiden, just 2 days before Christmas. What a gift! Mother and baby are well.

Today's Worship Leaders

Worship Leader: Dave Williams
Welcome & Scripture: Bret Goen (Psalm 33:8-11)
Opening Prayer: Nelson Nuñez
Lord's Supper: Scott, Tony Sr., Lee Graves, Tommy Walker
Scripture Before Message: Jon Jon Cook (Romans 8:31-34)
Announcements & Closing Prayer: Rick Boyle
Greeters: Jack Swinehart, Tim Jones, April Jones, Elaine Firman

Nursery Norma & Layla Next Week: Margaret & Nina
Orange Cleaning Team Jan. 11-14 **Tony & Fay** Coordinate

<u>OUTREACH/MINISTRY</u>	Worship Total 100
Mark Finn – Preacher	Bible Class..... 53
Church Office- (856) 854-0197	Wed. PM
<u>ELDERS:</u>	
Rick Boyle (856) 986-4876	
Tony Ceraso, Jr. (856) 278-6276	Contribution \$1,847
Bret Goen (856) 996-5267	Budget Goal \$4,260
Chet Churchill (609) 560-7179	
Howard Mansdoerfer (609) 790-9969	

15-Minutes Daily with GOD: 21

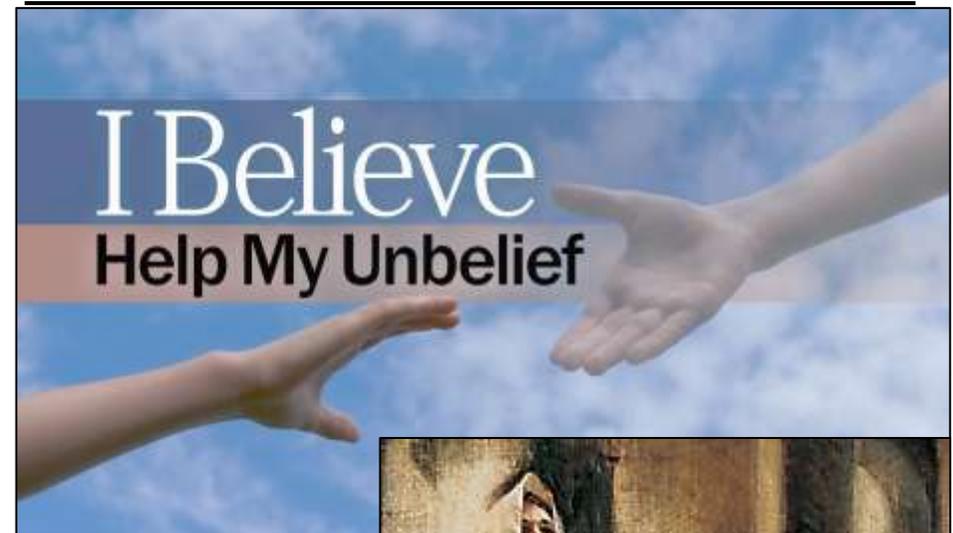
Collingswood Church of Christ

Church Website: www.ccc123.org

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“Now faith is being **sure** of what we hope for and **certain** of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)



Prayer & Fasting:
 Where our
 imperfect faith
 meets

God's POWER

