

## Matthew 17:14-27

### A hint of urgency



Even if Jesus' conversation with Moses and Elijah had been about his forthcoming "departure" (Luke 9:30-31), those men at least "got it". Returning down the mountain, Jesus re-enters a world (or "generation" (17)) that clearly *didn't* "get it". Even the remaining nine of his closest disciples seem terribly unprepared for that "departure", which starts to loom ever closer. The stress he feels, it would seem, shows in Jesus' words. **Jesus starts to feel the urgency of the approaching cross, but still makes time to answer needs great and small.**

#### ◆ Care for the Child (14-20)

The youngster would probably nowadays be diagnosed with severe epilepsy, but we learn a little later (18) that there is also a spiritual aspect to this affliction. Practical question: if we still think there is a difference, how can we tell in any particular situation?

What tone of voice do you read into Jesus' words in v17? Exasperation? Anguish? Exhaustion? Desperation?

Jesus' diagnosis is that his "generation" is "faithless and twisted" (17) – and it looks as if he is distressed that some of his disciples, even, still seem to be of that generation, too. How would you characterise *our* generation? And how much are *we* children of it, in our actions or our attitudes?

How much faith do you feel you have? Does it really matter if it feels like *little* faith, so long as it is in a *great* God?

(note: no v21 in the ESV – very unlikely to have been in Matthew's original document)

#### ◆ the Call of the Cross (22-23)

Notice that the pace is quickening: in 16:21, it is "must" ... while here, it is "about to be".

#### ◆ Cash for the Collectors (24-27)

So what's the implication if we are "sons" - royal visitors of a different kingdom (Philippians 3:20-21)? But what local rules are we still to subject ourselves to, and why?