

### **OBVIOUS THINGS THAT HINDERED SPIRITUAL PROGRESS**

1. A number of things prevented the Disciples from making good progress in their Discipleship program
2. Some were identified earlier
  - a) They had not utilised their spiritual ears to hear as well as they should  
Mark 4:13, 23-25
  - b) They are responsible for their response to the Word of God (The kingdom parables)    Mark 4
  - c) The problem of fear and a lack of faith    Mark 4:40-41
  - d) Hardening of the heart    Mark 6:52; 8:17

### **OTHER PROBLEMS**

1. Fear of addressing the problem of a lack of understanding    Mark 9:32
  - a) Fear of rebuke
  - b) Fear of embarrassment
  - c) Problems not addressed will remain and will hinder spiritual growth
2. Hidden agenda
  - a) The Disciples were disputing among themselves who was the greatest  
Mark 9:34
  - b) This was in anticipation of the decease of the Lord Jesus
3. Teaching about true greatness
  - a) If anyone desires to be first    Mark 9:35
  - b) This was not condemned

c) The paradox of greatness

i) He shall be last of all

ii) He shall be servant of all

#### 4. Receiving of a child

a) Receiving Jesus

b) Receiving God who sent Jesus      Mark 9:37

c) Humbling of self      Matthew 18:4

#### 5. Additional lesson (Luke)

a) Reasoning in their heart

b) The least among you all will be great      Luke 9:48

#### 6. Additional lesson (Matthew)

a) Open discussion now

b) Converted (turned around)      Matthew 18:3

c) Danger identified

### **POEMS BASED ON THE GOSPEL OF MARK – Charles Tan - Poem # 7**

#### **HELP MY UNBELIEF**

A father dreams of having a fine and healthy son by his side,  
The birth of a little boy had brought so much joy and pride.  
But soon that joy faded and grief had come to stay,  
A demon possessed the boy, keeping happiness at bay.

The ordeal of being possessed spanned many painful years,  
Each episode of demonic attack caused the family to shed tears.  
The father had heard that Jesus and His disciples were close at hand,  
With hope in his heart the father brought his son for Jesus to attend.

But Jesus was not there and His disciples seemed powerless,  
The father struggled hard between faith and feeling useless.  
Jesus understood his dilemma and urged him to believe with all his heart,  
The man responded, "I believe," but deep within unbelief was tearing him apart!

"Help my unbelief" was the plaintive cry the father uttered in anguish,  
How he wished that he could just have the faith, all his fears to banish!  
Jesus commanded the demon to leave the poor boy alone and to depart,  
His command made it clear that he could never return and cause anguish of heart.

Unbelief can be dealt with and banished forever more,  
The individual must be honest to deal with the problem at the core.  
Unbelief is a grave and deadly sin that must not be allowed to prevail,  
Through exercising focus on the Lord Jesus faith will then avail!

Inspiration: Mark 9:24

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