

*Matthew 17:14-21*

*14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, 15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. 16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. 17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. 18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. 19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? 20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. 21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.*

## **"THE MAGIC IS NOT IN THE FAUCET!"**

by Rev. Michael Phelps

### **INTRO:**

Thomas Edward (T.E.) Lawrence was born on August 16, 1888 in Wales. Popularly known as Lawrence of Arabia, Lawrence became famous for his exploits as British Military liaison to the Arab Revolt during the First World War.

The desert raids of British officer T.E. Lawrence and his Arab rebels tied down many Turkish troops who could have been fighting the main British armies in the Middle East. Lawrence of Arabia's struggle against the Turks during World War I was a classic of guerrilla warfare, and his personal account has become a classic of world literature. And, of course, many of you have seen the movie about the life of Lawrence of Arabia.

Lawrence wrote about his Arabian adventures in *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

During the war, Lawrence formed close friendships with many of the Sheiks of Arabia. After the war, he brought some of these Sheiks back to England to show his appreciation for their support against the Turkish domination.

They had a wonderful visit, appeared before the Joint House of Commons and Parliament, had an audience with the Queen.

On the last night of their visit, Lawrence offered them anything they wanted to take back with them to their desert homes.

They led him up to the hotel room, into the bathroom, and pointed to the faucets in the bathtub and said that they wanted to take faucets with them that would provide them with running water in the deserts.

They didn't realize that the faucets were superficial. Behind them was plumbing, a hot water heater, an energy source that heated the water, a city main that supplied the water, and from the city main went a line to an outside source of water!

- **The magic is not in the faucet! It is what is behind the faucet that gives the water!**
- The faucet can be 24 carat gold, but if its not attached to a water supply, its useless!
- The magic is not in the faucet, the power comes from what is behind the faucet! Things that are not visible to the human eye, but are there nonetheless!

- If the pump, or the plumbing, or the reservoir ever to out of service, the faucet is useless! It's what's behind the faucet that gives it its power!

**THE FIRST THING I WANT TO SAY THIS MORNING IS THIS; THE FAUCET IS NECESSARY TO GET THE WATER TO WHERE IT NEEDS TO BE.**

- I don't want to minimize the importance of a vessel! God needs faucets!
- God has always worked through human vessels.
- In fact, most of the time, God works through the most unlikely vessels!

**God Can Use Anyone**

- Moses stuttered.
- David's armour didn't fit.
- John Mark was rejected by Paul.
- Timothy had ulcers.
- Amos' only training was in the school of fig-tree pruning.
- Jacob was a liar.
- David had an affair.
- Solomon was too rich.
- Abraham was too old.
- David was too young.
- Peter was afraid of death.
- Lazarus was dead.
- John was self-righteous.
- Naomi was a widow.
- Paul was a murderer.
- So was Moses.
- Jonah ran from God.
- Miriam was a gossip.
- Gideon and Thomas both doubted.
- Jeremiah was a bullfrog;
- Just kidding -- he was depressed and suicidal.
- Elijah was burned out.
- Martha was a worry-wart.
- Mary may have been lazy.
- Samson had long hair.
- Noah got drunk, and that's not all.
- Did I mention that Moses had a short fuse?
- But God doesn't require a job interview.
- He doesn't hire and fire like most bosses,
- because He's more our Dad than our Boss.
- He doesn't look at financial gain or loss.
- He's not prejudiced or partial, not judging, grudging,
- sassy, or brassy, not deaf to our cry, not blind to our need.

**A Christian minister once said, "I was never of any use until I found out that God did not intend me to be a great man."**

### **God needs us to be faucets! John 7:38**

*38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

- God can have all the plumbing in place, have the pump hooked up, ready to pour out blessings on His people, on the world, but He needs us to be vessels! He needs a faucet!
- In many cases, the only thing that stops a move of God is the lack of a vessel.
- When Elisha was performing the miracle for the prophet's widow, and the oil was flowing freely, the Bible says:

*2 Kings 4:6*

*6 And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.*

### **The only thing that stopped the flow of oil was the lack of a vessel!**

- Now, don't ask me to explain why God decided to use imperfect vessels to accomplish His work.
- It doesn't make sense to me that this God who can do all things would choose to restrict Himself to moving through imperfect, flawed, inconsistent humanity!
- I don't know why the Creator chooses to move through His creation!
- But God is always seeking for men and women through which to move!
- At the day of Pentecost, God poured out His spirit upon all "FLESH"! Was filling vessels!

In *Isaiah 43:18* He said, "I will work, and who will let it?"

### **God needs a vessel to through which to work!**

- Ezekiel said that God was seeking a MAN to stand in the gap and make up the hedge!
- When the Lord struck Saul from his horse on the road to Damascus, He then told Saul, "Go see Ananias, he will tell you what to do!" GOD USED A HUMAN VESSEL!
- In the Book of Revelation, John says that God wept because He could find no MAN to open the book of salvation, so God Himself took on the form of man to bring redemption!
- Do you understand how important you are to the work of God! God will not move without a vessel!
- God will not pour out His spirit without a faucet for it to flow through - you are that faucet!
- God needs you and He needs me!

NOW, THE SECOND THING I WANT TO TALK ABOUT IS THIS: EVEN THOUGH GOD NEEDS US, WE CANNOT AFFORD TO TAKE THE GLORY FOR WHAT ONLY GOD CAN DO!

- I am a faucet, but I must remember that there is no magic in the faucet!
- Its what is behind the faucet that counts!
- If the power supply ever gets shut off behind the wall, this faucet is useless!
- I may still look good, may still say the same things, may still appear to be the same, but if my power supply is shut off, I am of no use to anyone!

### **Romans 7:18**

*18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

- I must understand that I am only the vessel, the conduit, the faucet!

### **2 Corinthians 4:7**

*7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

- The power is God's, I am only the earthen vessel! I can't sing well enough, I can't preach well enough to duplicate what God can only do!

### **Romans 12:3**

*3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

- No matter how much God moves through us, remember it is God and not us!
- No matter how many prophecies we give, no matter how much anointed preaching and teaching comes forth from us, we must never forget that it is what's behind the faucet that makes all the difference!
- No matter how many good things happen through me, I am only the faucet, there is a power supply behind me, and if that is ever cut off I am useless!

IN OUR TEXT THIS MORNING, JESUS IS TEACHING HIS DISCIPLES THIS VERY IMPORTANT LESSON.

- They had most likely watched Him cast out devils many times before.
- They had heard Him teach about going into the Strongman's house and taking his armor.
- They had probably watched as he sent the legion of devils into a herd of swine.

**Numerous times the scripture speaks of Jesus casting out devils, and it is probable that the disciples were witnesses to these events.**

- So, now they come across a situation that they feel very confident that they can handle!
- They have watched Jesus do this, they have observed His hand motions, listened to what He said, and how he said it!
- They have the words, actions, motions, and everything else down pat, but there is one thing missing!
- They have no power! There is nothing behind the faucet, and they fail miserably at the task at hand.

**And Jesus takes this opportunity to tell them that there is no magic in the faucet!**

- In other words, if there is no prayer and fasting, there will be no power!
- There is no magic in the faucet, its what is behind the faucet that makes the difference!

*I can:*

- Say all the right words
- Do all the right hand motions
- Use the right tone of voice
- But, if there is no prayer and fasting that has taken place behind the wall, there will be no power coming from the faucet! This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting!

**THE DANGER WE FACE IS WHEN WE TRY TO DUPLICATE THROUGH MERE HUMAN EFFORTS WHAT CAN ONLY BE PRODUCED BY GOD!**

- Preachers get into trouble when they learn how to preach!
- Singers get into trouble when they learn how to sing!
- Teachers get into trouble when they learn how to teach!

**We must never reach the point where we learn how to do what only God can do!**

- I am never going to become so smart that I don't need God!

**2312 Simpson's Most Valuable Discovery**

In the year 1847, a doctor from Edinburgh, Sir James Simpson, discovered that chloroform could be used as an anaesthetic to render people insensible to the pain of surgery. From his early experiments, Dr. Simpson made it possible for people to go through the most dangerous operations without fear of pain and suffering. Some people even claim that his was one of the most significant discoveries of modern medicine.

Some years later, while lecturing at the University of Edinburgh, Dr. Simpson was asked by one of his students, "What do you consider to be the most valuable discovery of your lifetime?" To the surprise of his students, who had expected him to refer to chloroform, Dr. Simpson replied, "**My most valuable discovery was when I discovered myself a sinner and that Jesus Christ was my Saviour.**"

**The most valuable discovery that you and I can make this morning is this:**

- No matter how smart I am,
- No matter how well I can preach,
- No matter how well I can organize
  
- **I am still just a sinner saved by grace!**
- **There is no power in me, I am just the faucet, the conduit, the vessel through which His power moves!**
- There is no magic in the faucet - **I NEED JESUS!**

Who would like to come and check their water source this morning?

Who would like to come and make sure that the pipes are not clogged?

**Consider these wonderful testimonies of ministers just like yourself who are members of**

Dear PreachIt,

*Your newsletters and web site are one of the best Apostolic sources we have available to us. Keep it coming. I often print off copies of the newsletter and pass them out to our ministerial staff. Excellent material.*

**Pastor Mark G. Cottrill**

Dear PreachIt,

*Thank you for all of the inspirational messages you include on your site. I'm sure that I am not the only one who has printed some of them out and used all or parts of them in ministering. It's good to have Apostolic resources available. Thank you again,*

**Pastor Stephen R James**

Dear PreachIt,

*Just wanted to say how much I appreciate your site. I've been accessing it for a couple of months now and it's been so helpful and uplifting! Not only do I now have Bible helps in my ministry but all kinds of sermons to read to keep me refreshed through out the week. Thanks again !*

**Rev. Mike Webb**

Dear Preacht,

*I wanted to tell you I appreciate the vision you have put into action. Potential is useless left in a bag. As a home missions pastor I have found some jewels that have kept my flame burning in times when it has been hard. It is wonderful to glean from the field of so many great Men of God. I wish I could thank each one individually for the effort that has been put forth just for me.*

**Pastor Keith Castleberry**

Dear Preacht,

*Praise the Lord!*

*I am having no problem getting into the site. Thank you very much for some great messages.*

*Keep up the good work!*

**Robert L. Nix**

Dear Preacht,

*Thank you for your inspirational website. I enjoy just reading the messages for my own devotions. These messages have moved me to preach with more fire than ever. Plus they have given me more fuel for the fire, with words that expand my ministry. May Jesus bless you with more and more givers to your website!!*

**Pastor Steven J. Dahl**

Dear Preacht,

*I can't praise God enough for what He's been giving to you! Joining your websites has been the best thing I've ever done. Keep doing the job He alone called us to do.*

**Pastor Alfredo Felix**

Dear Preacht,

*As far as I know we have never met. I wanted to let you know that this is one of the most innovative Apostolic sites that I have seen. It is a tremendous reflection of the truths of God. Your commitment to this ministry comes through each time I view your articles and the many sermons.*

*I would be interested in posting some of my messages but I am not familiar with what I need to do. Please advise.*

**Pastor Fred Parker**

Dear Preacht,

*I am enjoying your service very much. I have found some things that I feel have come from God to bless me and my ministry. Keep up the good work and may the God of Heaven bless you and give you great Revival.*

**Rev. D.L. Orange**

Dear PreachIt,

*Your site has been an awesome resource - thanks for the hard work and vision to follow through on this appreciated project!  
God bless*

**Pastor Dieter Skowron**

Dear PreachIt,

*I just wanted to let you know that your vision for this site is a big help.  
How uplifting! I received a direction for a service from one sermon and preached along the idea of the sermon.  
You know we don't have to try to preach something like someone else but we can get some great direction.*

**Thank You!**

**Pastor Mike Eller**

Dear PreachIt,

*Thank you so much for this site. I appreciate the work that you are doing. What a benefit to ministers!*

**Pastor Eric L. Garrett**

**Onalaska, Texas**

Dear PreachIt,

*I am impressed with this website. The "information age" requires specialized tools. This is one every minister needs in his "tool bag". May God Bless this Ministry.*

**Pastor John Gannon**

These are just a few of the many kind and humbling letters PreachIt.org receives daily get constantly.