



## The Language of Faith

**Read:** Matthew 17:14-20

In this week's gospel we hear that Jesus is amazed by the people's "lack of faith." At times we all struggle with our faith. But how can we combat disbelief?

When I was in high school I made the conscious decision to take French. In the beginning it was difficult. I had to be very aware of proper pronunciation, grammar, conjugation and all the rules that went along with learning a new language. I remember going home and complaining to my mom that I hated French and no longer wished to continue. My mother encouraged me to be patient, reminding me that it would get easier over time. After a while it did and I soon discovered that I no longer had to be as mindful of the rules. The language just came naturally. The sad thing is that once I graduated I lost my ability to speak French because I didn't have a chance to use it and a community to speak it with.

Discipleship is a lot like learning a new language. First, we must make the conscious decision to follow Jesus. Second, it takes time to get accustomed to a new lifestyle. Following Jesus is a challenge. The Father wants us to be more like his Son, so he places us in situations where our character can grow. That means we have to start letting go of bad habits and start integrating more Christ like behaviour into our lives. After a while we start to learn the language. Gradually we become more like Christ and are formed into his disciples. In fact, discipleship brings with it a great sense of purpose, peace and joy. Yet we can lose it if we fail to practice it. That is Christ's warning in the gospel; he can't accomplish "mighty deeds" in our lives if he's not part of our lives.

So how do we combat disbelief in our own lives? 1. Make the conscious decision to follow Christ. 2. Stick with it even when it becomes difficult. 3. Remember that the reward is worth the struggle. 4. Stay connected to a community so you don't lose your faith. Belief in Jesus is a life long investment, which is well worth the reward.

**Reflection:** Which of the four steps do I need to take in order to overcome my disbeliefs?