

# DAY SIX

# MOUNTAIN-MOVING FAITH

## DAY 6 - JESUS ON MOUNTAIN-MOVING FAITH AND PRAYER

### SAT JUNE 11: MATTHEW 17:14-20 – MOUNTAIN-MOVING FAITH

**MATT 17:14** When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. <sup>15</sup> “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. <sup>16</sup> I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

<sup>17</sup> “You **unbelieving** and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.” <sup>18</sup> Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment.

<sup>19</sup> Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

<sup>20</sup> He replied, “Because you have **so little faith**. Truly I tell you, if you have **faith as small as a mustard seed**, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

Jesus had just experienced possibly the highest point of his ministry. His glory had become obvious, and his Father had expressed his deep love for and pleasure in him. Then he came down the mountain to this. Back to reality. His disciples were struggling over an exorcism gone wrong. They just couldn’t budge an evil spirit in the suffering boy.

There were three types of faith that Jesus described in his response. First there was *unbelief* (17:17). This didn’t apply to the father (he was desperate for help) or the disciples (they had some faith), so Jesus must have been referring to the gathered crowd. By this point in Jesus’ ministry, there were a lot of critics in the mob. Some were religious leaders who were jealous of Jesus. Others were ordinary people who were not satisfied with Jesus’ trajectory. To Jesus, the crowd was typical of this generation of Jews. They completely lacked faith in him.

These unbelievers were pleased with the disciples’ lack of spiritual authority. It confirmed their theories about Jesus. The crowd was probably critiquing and heckling the disciples as they desperately tried to help the boy. Despite all the evidence of Jesus’ authority, all they had seen and heard, they remained unbelievers. It was so frustrating for Jesus. What more could he do?



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Second, there was the “*little faith*” of the disciples (17:20). We have already come across this term in Jesus’ description of Peter’s faith (14:31). It wasn’t little in terms of its size. Peter walked on water. That takes big faith. It was little because of its inconsistency. This is how Jesus described the disciples’ problem - so little faith. Jesus had previously sent them out on a mission to drive out evil spirits and heal every disease (10:1) and they had been very successful. So the disciples were experienced exorcists and healers. But this time, they just didn’t believe. Maybe it was the critical crowd. Maybe it was a really tough demon. Maybe they were exhausted. Maybe they weren’t praying (Mk. 9:29). But their faith wavered. They doubted. We’ve all been there. So confident of Jesus’ power to work one moment and plagued by doubts and past disappointments the next. That’s little faith.

Third, there was *tiny faith* (17:20). A mustard seed (about 1mm in diameter) was a tiny seed. That’s the size of the faith the disciples needed to move a mountain. I wouldn’t get too carried away about moving mountains. Jesus didn’t literally do it and as far as I know no-one else ever has. Moving mountains just represents a complete impossibility. So according to Jesus, the size of your faith doesn’t matter. That’s a welcome relief. What matters is whether it’s placed in the authority of Jesus and doesn’t waver. That’s it. That’s the way the impossible becomes reality. Small but steady faith in the authority and power of Jesus. The size of your faith is immaterial. It’s the unswerving focus on Jesus that counts.

## FAITH-FILLED PRAYER FOR REVIVAL

***Personal Revival:*** That I will have a vigorous and secure hope in God’s promises and God’s future.

***Church Revival:*** That God will work in power among us through the preaching of the Word and prayers of the church.

***National Revival:*** That the Spirit will bring unity and peace to our nation. That criticism and division and arrogance will be overwhelmed by the grace of Jesus.

