

Only Believe

(Luke 9:37~45)

Beloved, this morning I want to remind you of a simple, yet deeply profound truth... That being, **the access we have to the very power of God**. We have the KEY to the storehouse of the UNLIMITED Power of God! The power to do things that are humanly impossible. We are limited, there are boundaries that confine us as to what we can and cannot do. But with God, there are no limits! It is hard for us (who are so limited) to even imagine the possibility, that there is nothing that is impossible...but it's true. With God, all things are possible!

But sadly, even though we “KNOW” these things...and have access this power, sadly we continue to live “Powerless” lives. I ask you, when was the last time, that you witnessed something that could not be explained any other way, than the power of God? Keeping in mind, that if men CAN do it, then God is not needed. I ask you, how much of what goes on in the church today, is done in man's own power, rather than Gods? The scriptures declare that when Jesus returned to the Father, that He gave *spiritual gifts* unto men, referring to *the power* they needed to carry out the work of God. I wonder how much of what takes place in the average church, is done in the power and wisdom of men, rather than God?

Here we find the disciples, completely powerless, completely helpless to help this man who has come to them, in hopes of fining help for his son... And as we shall find out, it wasn't that the problem was too big for them to handle, but rather their faith was too small...

(Vs 17) Upon hearing of the inability of the disciples, to cast out the demon in this man's son, Jesus became frustrated and filled with disappointment... “*You faithless and stubborn people...how long must I be with you? And how long must I put up with you?*”

He can't “believe” their **unbelief!** How much do they have to see? How much do they have to learn? What's its going to take, to get them to have faith?

The question arises, as to who He was referring to... Was He speaking to His disciples, the nine? Or was He speaking to the multitude that had gathered in general? The fact that He says, “*O faithless and perverse generation...*” seems to suggest that His remarks are aimed at the whole multitude in general. But there's no question, that the disciples are the heart...

How many miracles had they witnessed? How much teaching had they heard? Seemingly, all of it was to no avail. He leaves for a short time, only to come back and find them as though they knew nothing of faith. Clearly frustrated with what He was hearing, He rebukes them for their lack of faith!

He then calls for the demon possessed man, and rebukes the devil that is in him, and cast it out! Afterwards, when they were alone, the disciples asked Him, as to why they couldn't do it. To which Jesus explains, was due to their **lack of faith!**

(Vs 20) ²⁰ ***Because of your unbelief...***

The reason you were “Powerless” was because you were “Faithless.”

The problem wasn't, that this was “To BIG” for you, but rather your faith was “To Small.”

(Vs 20) ²⁰ ***...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.***

The ironic thing about this teaching on faith, is that *humanly speaking*, **it's unbelievable!** To suggest that we could speak to a mountain, and it move...is ludicrous in our minds. If we'd be honest,

we have to say we don't believe it. But just because we think it's impossible, doesn't mean it is. All that means, is we'll never see it happen. Not because it's not true, but because of our "doubt." Do you think, that when the nation Israel found itself, surrounded by the Egyptian army, and standing on the edge of the Red Sea, do you think they thought it possible to speak to the waters, and have them open up, and make a way of escape?

Well here, Jesus declares to His disciples, that by faith, they have the power to move mountains! Given what He used in His analogy, that of a "Mustard seed" and a "Mountain," Jesus was using a form of teaching, commonly known as "Hyperbole." A form of teaching that uses "Extreme Examples" to make a point. He used this manner on several occasions... One is found in Matthew 5...

(Mt. 5) ²⁷*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:* ²⁸*But I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* ²⁹*And if thy right eye offend thee, **pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*** ³⁰*And if thy right hand offend thee, **cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.***

Is Jesus suggesting that the cure to "Lust" is to pluck out your eyes? Is He suggesting that if your hands cause you to sin...to cut them off? Not at all, the point is to emphasize the importance of doing whatever we need to do, to go to whatever extreme necessary, to make our hearts right before God! Jesus said this to stress the importance of turning from sin, to avoid the damnation of Hell! You'd be better off, to be an invalid, if necessary, in order to escape the eternal damnation in Hell.

(Mk 10) Jesus uses another Hyperbole... In a response to the young man who walked away grieved, because Jesus demanded that he give up all his worldly treasures, and come follow Him... Jesus said,

²³*And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, **How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!*** ²⁴*And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again, and saith unto them, **Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!*** ²⁵***It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.*** ²⁶*And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?*

Many have all but destroyed the point Jesus was making here, by trying to "Explain" that Jesus was referring to a "Gate" that led into Jerusalem. They suggest that He was speaking of a "Narrow doorway" that required you to leave everything behind, in order to get through the gate. But that is wrong for a couple of reasons. Number one, scholars can not find any such gate ever existed... And secondly, such an explanation goes against the point He is making. To understand His point, leaves no doubt that He is literally referring to trying to put a real camel, through the eye of a real needle! (Likely a rather large, tent-making needle). You may say, that's crazy, that's impossible... Right! And that's exactly the point He wants to make clear! Jesus wanted to make it clear, that any man who clung to this worlds riches, material wealth, would never, ever see the kingdom of God. You cannot serve God and Mammon. He didn't want this young man to walk away thinking, that he could hold on to his love for things, and wealth, and attain eternal life. It's better he walked away "Grieved" rather than "Deceived!" Until he was ready to give up his earthy treasures...he would NEVER have any hope of eternal life!

Again, this method of teaching is called "Hyperbole," and it refers to using "Extreme Examples" to make a point crystal clear! In this form, the examples was to be so radical, that it would leave "NO DOUBT" as to what He was saying! And that is exactly what we see here.

*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.***

No doubt, that upon saying this, Jesus was pointing to a nearby mountain... When you compare a “*Mustard Seed*” with a “*Mountain*”...the seed seems insignificant. But He wanted to emphasize the “*Power of Faith*.” His point is, With the “*smallest amount of faith*” you can do the “*seemingly impossible*.” Beloved...with faith...NOTHING is IMPOSSIBLE! There is nothing we will encounter in this life that is too big for us! By faith, we can move mountains!

What may appear to us as being impossible, something way to big for us, is possible by faith. Jesus uses the mustard seed to emphasize the fact, that if they would have had the “*least amount of faith*,” they could have cast out the devil, just as He did.

(Vs 21) Jesus adds, this is not superficial faith, but rather an earnest, genuine sincere faith. (*Prayer and fasting signifies earnestness...*)

Close... (Luke 9:43~45) ⁴³And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, ⁴⁴Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. ⁴⁵But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

Jesus closes out His instruction by exhorting them to lay His words to heart... You need to do more than just “*Hear the words I’m speaking*,” (Superficial). You need to “*Listen*” to what I’m telling you...you need to let these words sink down into your ears... You need to understand, I won’t always be with you! My time on earth is drawing nigh, I won’t be here much longer. You need to grasp what I’m telling you about faith!

What does all this have to do with us? Everything! We don’t have the option of having Jesus here with us, to go to for help for our problems. But that does not mean, that we are powerless. By faith, we have the power to move mountains! Beloved, we have access to the very power of God. I can’t move mountains, there’s a lot of things that are too big for me to handle...but not with God...

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.

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