

# Matthew 17:19-21. Christ Speaks to His Disciples on the Power of Faith.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in the power of God for believers to overcome difficulties and perform miracles.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 17:19, Romans 7:24, Philippians 4:13, James 4:7, 1 John 5:4

**Topics:** "Faith And Prayer", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the importance of faith in overcoming obstacles, using the disciples' struggle to cast out an evil spirit as an example. The hindrance to success was not in the father or the situation, but in the disciples' lack of faith in God's power. Jesus emphasizes that even a small amount of genuine faith can move mountains and perform miracles, highlighting the disciples' duty to believe in God's promises and the need to pray and fast to increase faith.

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## Transcript

It was very right in the disciples to inquire why they could not cast out the evil spirit. Whenever we have been foiled in an attempt to overcome sin, we ought to inquire what is the reason of the failure, and we shall find that the cause was the unbelief of our hearts. Perhaps before the Lord came and showed his power in casting out the spirit, the disciples thought that the obstacle to success was in the father. But it had been clearly proved that the father was in a fit state of mind to receive the mercy he implored. The hindrance was in the disciples' hearts--they had not faith enough in the power of God to enable them to exercise the miraculous gifts that had been bestowed upon them.

The Lord, after having told them of their unbelief, added these remarkable words--"If you have faith, as a grain of mustard-seed, you shall say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." It is supposed that our Savior in this declaration made use of the words of a proverb, well understood among the Jews. A mustard-seed was a term used to represent a very small quantity; because a mustard-seed is the smallest of all seeds, in proportion to the size of the tree it produces. A mountain was a term used to represent a very great difficulty; because a mountain cannot be removed by the power of man. The meaning of our Savior's words appears therefore to be this--"If you have even a small degree of real faith concerning the gifts that I have bestowed upon you, you will be able to perform astonishing miracles." It was the duty of the disciples to believe that God would help

them to work miracles. And why was it their duty? Because Christ had promised to enable them to perform them. Faith is the belief of God's promises. It is not our duty to believe that God will help us to work miracles. And why not? Because God has not promised to give us that power. But he has given us other promises, exceedingly great and precious; and if we possess true faith, which, like a mustard-seed, will grow continually, we shall at length be able to overcome every difficulty that stands in the way of our salvation.

What difficulties has God promised to enable us to overcome? He has promised to enable us to overcome the world. "Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4.) He has promised to enable us to overcome the body of death, that is sin. Paul said, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 7:24, 25.) He has promised to enable us to overcome the devil--"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." God will fulfill all his promises to us, if we have faith. And how is faith to be obtained, and increased? By prayer, and, in some cases, by fasting also. It appears the disciples had neglected to pray and fast. The evil spirit that possessed the youth was of a peculiarly malicious and violent kind, but still even that kind might be cast out by prayer and fasting. Let us therefore never complain that we cannot overcome any sin; for if we prayed earnestly we should obtain help according to our need. There is nothing too hard for God to do, and there is nothing too hard for believers to do, when called and assisted by the Lord. Paul declared, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me."

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Source:

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