

A Little Faith Goes a Long Way

Matthew 17:20

He said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”

Jesus had on a number of occasions admonished His disciples for their weak faith (8:26; 14:31; 16:8). He had given them authority to cast out demons (10:8), but their doubts prevented them from healing this boy. (TLSB)

On one occasion Jesus told his disciples that a faith like a mustard seed (very, very small) could move mountains. There is comfort here. Faith that is little but not yet like a mustard seed is still Christian faith. It will carry us to the very presence of Jesus in heaven.

First, there is comfort here. Faith that is little but not yet like a mustard seed is still Christian faith.

Second, Jesus’ teaching offers a challenging invitation regarding the goal of learning how to trust Christ more. How does one come to have faith like a mustard seed? Ultimately, the answer simply must be that God grants such faith; He alone creates and sustains and gives growth to faith.

Disciples cannot improve their faith themselves, but they can turn to and rely on Jesus. They can listen attentively to the promises and teachings of Jesus, for His teaching comes with authority. As the seed of His Word is scattered around, it carries within itself the power to grow and produce remarkable fruit.

We can at times cry out like the father of demon possessed son after Jesus had healed the son when he proclaimed: **And Jesus said to him, “If you can’! All things are possible for one who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:23-24)** And, we know that the Lord will help in our weak moments.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, give me great faith, that I may receive the fullness of the gifts You have promised. Amen. (TLSB)