

The force of faith in the Name of Jesus Christ

In Luke chapter 9 and Mark chapter 9, we read about a father coming up to Jesus asking for mercy for his son. There has been much discussion about the boy's actual condition or problem. Luke's version of this healing event describes the symptoms the boy was experiencing [Luke 9:39]. Both Luke and Mark attribute the boy's problem to a demonic spirit [Mark 9:17]. In Matthew 17:15, based on Greek translation, we read that entire family were moon worshippers.

The ancient Greeks believed that a person who had epilepsy or a mental illness was under the influence of the moon. The King James Version of the Bible written in 1611 translates this Greek word as "lunatic", due to the Latin influences on the English language. Note that "luna" is Latin for moon.

The father also reports to Jesus that his disciples were unable to cure his son [Matthew 17:16]. When the father told Jesus about the disciple's inability to heal the boy, he wasn't **pleased**. In response to the father's statement Jesus said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? "Bring him here to me" [Matthew 17:17].

The Message Bible reads, "How many times do I have to go over these things? How much longer do I have to put up with this?" Jesus was speaking these strong words to his disciples, not the great multitude standing by [Mark 9:14, Luke 9:37].

It is obvious that the boy's condition was a difficult situation.

The father tells Jesus, "wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid" [Mark 9:18]. In Matthew 17:15, the father says, "he often falls into the fire and often into the water". Jesus asked, "how long has this been happening to him?" The father replies, from childhood [Mark 9:21-22].

The father was struggling to have faith due to the longevity and severity of the boy's affliction. The father asked Jesus, if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." [Mark 9:22]. Jesus could have been merciful and simply healed the boy. He did this in other cases [see Chart of Merciful Healings].

In Mark's Gospel, we see that Jesus required a **statement of faith** from the father "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes" [Mark 9:23]. The father's statement of faith was, "**I believe**". The English word believe in this passage is the Greek word πιστευω pisteuō. According to Thayer's Lexicon of Greek Words, **pisteuō** means to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, and to place confidence in.

The Cry of faith by the child's parents – "Help my Unbelief"

Then the father says, "**help my unbelief**" [Mark 9:24]. That is a legitimate request for anyone. You can ask God to assist you in becoming more confident in Him. This father had faith but he also had unbelief. The father at least recognized his unbelief. The disciples didn't [Matthew 17:19-20].

Some would say that the disciple failed to heal the boy because their usual methods of healing weren't working. Actually their usual methods of healing were working well. The disciples had been having great success in casting out devils and healing people [see Mark 6:13, Luke 9:6, and Luke 10:17]. But they needed to have faith [confidence] to remove the mountain or problem for the boy to receive his healing.

Praying and fasting will not move a mountain. Praying is about your relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Praying will increase your confidence about your relationship with God. Praying is how you receive from God [Matthew 7:8, Matthew 21:22].

Fasting food doesn't move God, it moves you. **Faith moves God** [Hebrews 11:6]. Fasting food takes you out of the natural realm and helps you to be sensitive to the spiritual realm of God. Fasting forces your flesh to submit to your spirit man. God becomes your total source. You live by the Word of God alone. Fasting makes your body listen to your spirit man. You tell your body to line up with the Word of God and it obeys you. Your spirit man dominates your body or fallen flesh. Pray does the same thing. Prayer disciplines your flesh to submit to your spiritual man. You pray to God, who you can not see, hear, taste, smell, and touch. Prayer trains your flesh to submit to your spiritual man. Pray and fasting are spiritual disciplines.

Pray and fasting [Matthew 17:21, Mark 9:29] will move you into a more confident [faithful] position to speak to the mountain [Matthew 21:21, Mark 11:23].

Dealing with a mountain or problems in life

Jesus recognized and dealt the mountain or problem. In this case, the problem was a demonic spirit. Jesus did not cast out demonic spirits every time he healed someone. But, in this case, Jesus recognize the demonic component to the boy's illness. The demonic spirit was being a barrier or hindrance to the boy receiving his healing. The demonic spirit even tried to distract Jesus by causing the boy to have a convulsion while Jesus tried to talk with the father [Mark 9:20].

Jesus wasn't perplexed like the disciples were. He calmly talked to the father while the child had a seizure in front of them [Mark 9:20-22]. Jesus talked to the Father for awhile, then said, "I command you to come out of this child and never enter him again" [Mark 9:25]! In Matthew 17:18 it says that, "Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour".

Jesus could have knelt down on the ground and prayed to the Heavenly Father to heal the boy. Jesus could have prayed something like this, "Father, is it really your will that this boy be healed? Does this boy and his father need to learn some more lessons?" Jesus could have had the disciples hold the boy on the ground while he attempted to anoint the boy with oil and lay his hands on him.

But the boy would **not** have been delivered and healed till Jesus spoke to the mountain or problem. In this case it was a demonic spirit. In Matthew 17:19, the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out"? It is obvious from this statement that the disciples had some understanding of this principle. Jesus had been training the disciples for

several years in the principles of healing and deliverance [Matthew 10:1, Mark 3:14-15, Mark 6:7, Luke 9:1, Luke 10:1, and Luke 10:9].

The disciples did not ask Jesus why they could not heal the boy, but why they could not cast out the devil. They lacked confidence in this area. We know they lacked confidence because Jesus said their problem was “**unbelief**” in [Matthew 17:20]. The actual Greek word Jesus used was απιστια apistia.

The “a” before the word pistos, means “without”. The disciples were literally without faith or confidence in this area. Faith failures are caused by doubt and unbelief [James 1:6, Matthew 21:21, Mark 11:23, Matthew 17:20]. Jesus gave us (believers) instructions on what to do when a mountain or problem hinders or stops the believer.

It is the believer’s responsibility to:

1. To **believe that you receive** when you pray [Mark 11:24, Matthew 21:21]
2. To **speak** to the mountain or problem you have; rebuke, give directions to the problem, and cast out the problem from you body, circumstances, or environment [Mark 11:23, Matthew 21:21, Matthew 17:20, Luke 17:6, Mark 16:17, Luke 11:20, Matthew 12:28].
3. To **say** what you want to come to pass, into existence [Mark 11:23]. It shall be done , according to God’s Word [Matthew 21:21]. O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire [Matthew 15:28]. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, be it done unto thee [Matthew 8:13].

Religious Talks, Traditions and Doctrines of Man

If you listened to some **religious people**, you might think that the power of God to cast out demons or for miracles is NOT for the church today. In Matthew 17:20, they would conclude – Jesus said something like this to his disciples;

“Oh this special dispensation is starting to pass away. I always told you, that you had better make the most of this unique time in history because it will not last long. You are already seeing the diminishing effects of the supernatural authority and power to cast out devils, heal the sick, and do miracles. I guess I had better heal this one myself. Remember I am God and you’re just humans. The Heavenly Father doesn’t want you getting used to this supernatural power”.

“It’s probably not the will of the Heavenly Father to heal this boy anyway. Look at all the lessons this earthly father has learned about life. He has learned to treat burn victims and rescue drowning person in water. He has learned many lessons on time management. He has learned to get along in life without sleep or rest to keep his son from harming himself”.

“I think the father is demonstrating selfishness to ask you or me to heal his son. He shouldn’t ask to get out of this situation because he is still learning so much. He doesn’t know that one day “in the sweet by and by”, he and his son will understand all the reasons they had to go through this suffering. Not to mention, I have reviewed the father’s and son’s record in heaven and they aren’t worthy of this healing”.

“I am also concerned that the father might think he can demand things and develop an “insolent attitude”. I believe his son’s affliction will keep him humble”.

“I am going to heal this boy today, so that every one here will know that I am the Messiah and to fulfill prophesy. But don’t keep expecting to experience healings, deliverances, or miracles in the future. You need to realize that in about 20 centuries from now, I will raise up some special people who will discover how to control the symptoms of epilepsy with medicine. You need to look forward to that day”.

Oh NO – this is NOT what Jesus said to his disciples

Jesus said to the disciples in Matthew 17:20, “if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will **say** to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and *nothing will be impossible for you*”

It is the hour and moment for the church now more than ever before to rise to the occasion by the power of the Holy Spirit and by using the Name of Jesus Christ, perform signs, wonders and miracles as we have been commanded.