

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1 How has your perspective about faith and prayer been impacted by this message?
- 2 What is your mountain right now?
- 3 What does the power of faith in prayer teach you? Recall a time when God answered an impossible situation in your life.

WE DO LIFE TOGETHER!

If you haven't been involved in a LIFE Group yet, send us a message us thru Fb, and we will get you connected to a small group.

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SUNDAY WORD

ARP. 23, 2023



Mark 11:22-24 " 22 Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. 23 I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. 24 I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours. (NLT)

Jesus used this moment to teach his disciples what faith can do. Mark 11. It's for people of faith, people of prayer, and people with needs, whose mountains are not moving. Jesus invites us to talk to a mountain and command it to be cast into the sea.

How does God want us to revolutionize our prayer?

SPEAK!

Mark 11:22 - Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. (NLT)

How simple this is. Only four words, "Have faith in God," yet how revolutionary they are. E. V. Hill said, "Either God is or He isn't."

In Psalm 81:10b God gives a wonderful invitation to his children, "...Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it with GOOD things (NLT)." Ask what you need, God says, and I will do it for you. People often call Jeremiah 33:3 "God's telephone number" because it contains a very clear promise: "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you GREAT and mighty things, which you do not know" (NASB)."

I heard a man say, "Lord, teach us to pray big prayers. So much of what we pray is just the small details." It's not that the details don't matter. They do, but sometimes our prayers suffer because our vision is so small. If we want to honor God, we must believe what He says and then act on that belief by praying large prayers that require an Almighty God to answer them.



Consider this case as an example: during a drought or long period of dryness in England, a pastor called his church to a special prayer meeting to ask God to send much-needed rain. Though it was a bright and cloudless day, Mary came with an umbrella. People asked her, “Mary, Why did you bring an umbrella?” Mary said, “Since we’re praying for rain, I thought I should bring an umbrella.” Everyone laughed. As they were praying, the winds rose, and sure enough, the heavens opened, and down came a sudden outpouring of rain. Mary was dry while the congregation went home wet. That’s what faith does. Folks, Bring an umbrella when you pray for rain!

BELIEVE!

Mark 11:23 - “I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, ‘May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart.” (NLT)

Jesus uses a wildly unreasonable object to point out the great possibilities of prayer. But the words are literal in this sense. When He says “this mountain,” I think He is standing on or perhaps pointing to the Mount of Olives (Mark 11:1), a literal mountain the disciples had traveled many times. That particular mountain might be cast into the sea.

For a disciple to cast a mountain into the sea, two conditions must be met: 1. He must talk to the mountain. 2. He must not doubt in his heart.

What’s the hardest part about casting a mountain into the sea? Most people would probably answer, “Having faith,” or “Not doubting in your heart.” I submit that the hardest part is having the courage to talk to the mountain in the first place. What kind of person looks at a mountain and talks to it? If you do that on a regular basis, people will begin to question your sanity. Yet, that’s exactly what Jesus tells His disciples they must do. When you speak to the mountain of impossibility, you are doing what Jesus said to do. Sometimes God calls us to believe Him for things that humanly speaking make no sense. But we must believe God first even when it defies “common sense.”

We all have mountains of difficulties in our lives. Sometimes they are great tasks laid before us and we have little personal strength with which to meet them. Sometimes those “mountains” are broken relationships or habits of sin. Your “mountain” may involve believing God regarding a health issue or a loved one who is far from the Lord. Or it may mean trusting God amid a failing marriage. One major part of seeing the mountains move in your life is having the courage to speak to the mountain because you believe God can cast it into the sea.

Someone said, “God honors those who dare to say out loud what they are asking God to do.” I remember a testimony that Pastor Peter Kairuz told me. This lady had stage 4 cancer. After finally getting the strength and courage, everyday she would pray and speak out loud about her condition: “You mountain of cancer, I command you to go and be thrown out into the sea!” She would pray this everyday for months. Lo and behold, when the PET scan results arrived, she was cleared of cancer! God honors those who dare to say out loud what they are asking God to do!

RECEIVE!

Mark 11:24 - “I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you’ve received it, it will be yours.” (NLT)

This promise has three parts. It is extensive: “You can pray for anything.” It is conditional: “Believe that you’ve received it.” It is definite: “It will be yours!” Note the change of tenses: There is the present: “You can pray for anything.” There is the past: “you’ve received it.” There is the future: “it will be yours.” We are to pray in the present, with the assurance God has already granted our request, even though the answer will not come until the future.

Because God is God, we may be sure He is at work answering our prayers even before we pray about them. Because God lives outside of time, the prayers we pray today are certain of fulfillment yesterday, even though we won’t receive the answers until tomorrow! Think about that for a while.

Believing in advance is like a young couple who puts up a nursery even before the wife is pregnant. Or it’s like a “hope chest” prepared by a young lady for the day she will be married. For parents, it’s like buying a Christmas present in September but hiding it until December. You can’t give the presents early or it will spoil the joy. In prayer, our part is to trust God completely while we wait for the answers to come. If the Heavenly Father wants you to have it, it may not be in your hands, but it’s already in the closet.”

Sometimes when we pray, we have a promise of a specific blessing and we may then pray with total confidence. But often we pray not knowing what God will do. Not every prayer falls in the category of verse 24 because God doesn’t always give us that kind of faith. Jesus Christ is God. He is the King of Kings. He governs the universe. Sometimes when we pray, He gives us faith to believe for amazing things. Other times we pray with less certainty, still trusting that the Lord knows what is best.

In light of Jesus’ teaching, we may draw the following applications. When we pray, we should:

- Pray for something definite,
- Say it out loud,
- Not question God’s ability,
- Persevere in prayer, and
- Wait for God’s answer.

CONCLUSION

A lot of times we are praying about our mountains. God help me with my marriage. God help my children love you. God, please take away this fear. Yes, it is good to pray. It’s good to ask God to help us. But when you face a mountain, sometimes it’s not enough to ask God for help. It’s not enough to just believe. It’s not enough to just be positive and think good thoughts.

Some mountains must be spoken to, commanded, and told what to do. I know this may sound strange to some of you, but I want you to listen carefully to what Jesus teaches today and then I want you to study it for yourself and see what God shows you.

There are some mountains God wants to remove from your life, but He wants you to participate in those removals. He wants you to experience His power flowing through you as you believe. He wants to show you that He is real and He works through His people in little things and big things.

Sometimes, God answers exactly as we have prayed. Often His answers come in a different fashion. The answer may be delayed, or the Lord may substitute something better, or He may give us grace to bear what we asked might be removed from our lives. Yet in all this, God still answers prayer. God always answers believing prayer. Always!

The only limit on prayer is the will of God. If our prayers are within the circle of God’s will, we may ask what we will and God who knows all things will answer our prayer according to His will. That’s God’s Promise for today: You can move mountains. It’s in the Bible, and we can all read it. Are we willing to believe what Jesus said? There is another way to say it. By yourself, you can never move a mountain, but God can. So ask Him! Ask Him to do what only He can do. When faced with a mountain of impossibility, go to the Lord and beg Him to move that mountain for you.