

mountain moving faith: *yours can grow*

-by Kenneth Hagin

MARK 11:22-26

22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.
23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

As we have seen in our previous lesson, this faith is the "God kind of faith." It is mountain-moving faith and every believer already has a measure of it. We proved with the following Scriptures that every believer has a measure of the "God kind of faith."

ROMANS 12:3

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you (i.e., to every believer), not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

EPHESIANS 2:8

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

ROMANS 10:17

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

II CORINTHIANS 4:13

13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

Did you notice that II Cor. 4:13 says, "We having the same spirit of faith..." It does not say, "We are trying to get it," or, "We are praying for it," but, "We have it!"

And you can readily see that the "same spirit of faith" of II Cor. 4:13 is identical to the faith Jesus is talking about in Mark 11:23 when He says, "...whosoever shall say...and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith."

In God's Word we have established that every

believer already has a measure of the God kind of faith. God gets everybody started off equally. He does not give one more faith than He gives another. Then, however, it is according to you as to what you do with your measure of faith.

A lot of people have done with their faith just as the fellow did with the one talent. He just wrapped it up in a napkin, hid it, and didn't use it. It is up to you what you do with your measure of faith.

The thought I want to get over to you in this second lesson is this: Your measure of faith can be increased, but you are the one who increases it--not God. God does furnish a portion of the means whereby it can be increased.

Your measure of faith can be increased by doing two things: (1) By feeding it on the Word of God. (2) By exercising your faith; by putting it into practice.

The Bible very often uses natural human terms to teach spiritual thoughts. Jesus said in Matthew 4:4, "...Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Here Jesus uses a natural human term to convey a spiritual thought. He is saying to us that what bread or food is to the body, the Word of God is to the spirit, to the heart of man.

You know that if you eat food regularly, it will build you up physically. However, if you don't exercise, you will just grow fat and flabby.

You must feed your faith on God's Word, but you must also exercise your faith. If you don't, your faith muscles will be flabby. You won't be able to do much spiritually or in faith.

I have seen people who were quite large, yet they couldn't lift a thing. They hadn't used or developed their muscles. And then we have seen some little fellow come along who has been lifting weights, and he can press many pounds above his head.

What is the difference? One fellow is much bigger than the other, but he hasn't developed his muscles. He has fed his body, but he hasn't exercised it.

ROMANS 10:8

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

You can feed your spirit and you can feed your faith. God's Word is "faith food." Paul calls the message he preached, "the word of faith." This is because God's Word will cause faith to come to your heart. Notice how he summed it all up in Romans 10:17:

ROMANS 10:17
17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

God's Word will build assurance. God's Word will build confidence. God's Word will build faith in your spirit and in your heart.

Then, it is up to you to exercise that faith.

The measure of faith is increased by those two things--feeding on God's Word and putting it into practice in everyday living.

FAITH IS MEASURABLE

Now, let's study just a little bit about this "measure" of faith. One individual said concerning faith, "You either have it, or you don't have it." He was indicating that you couldn't have more or less of it.

But Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica saying, "...your faith groweth exceedingly..." (II Thess. 1:3).

He said faith could grow. Well, if faith can grow, praise God, then it can be greater.

Let's look at several other statements God's Word makes regarding faith.

In Luke 12:28 Jesus speaks to individuals about having little faith, "...O ye of little faith."

Then in Romans 4:19 the Word of God speaks of weak faith. And in the very next verse, Romans 4:20, it speaks of strong faith.

If faith can be weak, or faith can be strong; if faith can be little, or faith can be great; then it can be less, or it can be more. Faith is measurable.

We have seen that the Word speaks of growing faith in II Thess. 1:3.

In Matthew 8:10 Jesus speaks of great faith. A centurion came to Him in behalf of his servant saying, "My servant lieth home sick." When Jesus said, "I will come and heal him," the centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it."

Jesus said to him, "Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee."

Speaking to His disciples concerning the centurion Jesus said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

And then you remember the time when Jesus came to the disciples walking on the water. They were afraid thinking they were seeing a ghost. When they cried out in fear, Jesus said, "It is I, be not afraid." Peter said, "If it be thou, bid me to come unto thee on the water." And Jesus said, "Come."

Peter stepped down out of the boat as though it were easy, but then the Scripture says, "...when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matt. 14:30-31).

We see here instances where He speaks to one man that he had great faith, and to another man that he had little faith.

James 2:5 speaks of rich faith.

Acts 6:5 speaks of Stephen as a man "full of faith." Well, if you could be "full of faith," you could be half-full. If a glass is full of water, by the same token it could be half-full, or even a third full.

We read of perfect faith in James 2:22 and of unfeigned faith in I Timothy 1:5.

I Timothy 1:19 speaks of shipwrecked faith, and I John 5:4 speaks of overcoming faith.

The Bible declares that in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established, and these many verses prove to us that faith is measurable.

FAITH CAN GROW

Now then, this measure of faith, whichever believer has, can be increased. Your measure of faith can be increased by feeding it on the Word of God, and by exercising it, or putting it into practice.

George Muller was a man of faith. He founded the Bristol Orphanage in England many years ago. It was strictly a "faith project." He had no church. He wasn't a pastor. He couldn't take up any offerings to help support these orphaned children. Eventually, he ended up with as many as 2,500 orphans in the home. He was responsible to believe God for the food to feed 2,500 children, the clothing to clothe 2,500 children, buildings to house 2,500 children, the money to pay the salaries of all the attendants it took to care for 2,500 children.

There were no radios in those days and he didn't have a mailing list to use to tell people what he was doing; he simply had to believe God.

Of course the word did get out by word of mouth to others, but as far as his being able to publish what he was doing and solicit people's interest and prayers, there was no way. He just had to believe God.

In his lifetime he prayed in over seven million dollars. That may not sound as big now in these days of inflation as it was then. It would be more like thirty million today.

Muller stated that he always began the day by reading God's Word--feeding on it, not just reading it but feeding on it, before he ate his breakfast, before he fed his body.

At 93 years of age he wrote these words in his journal, "When I first began praying and believing God (i.e. exercising his faith) it took all the faith I had to believe God for...(what in American money would have amounted to one dollar). But after feeding my faith daily on the Word of God for fifty years, and exercising my faith daily for fifty years, I could believe God for (one million dollars) just as easily as I could for (one dollar) fifty years before."

He had what Paul spoke of to the Thessalonians as a "growing faith." He had what Smith Wigglesworth called an "ever-increasing faith."

Smith Wigglesworth was another great man of faith from England. He always carried his Bible or Testament with him.

He said, "I never consider myself thoroughly dressed unless I have my Testament in my pocket." He said that he would just as soon go out without his shoes on, as without his Bible.

As he traveled over the world, he stayed in many people's homes. And people have reported that he would always, after every meal, even if he was in a restaurant, after he had eaten, he would always push back from the table, get out his Testament and say, "We have fed the body, now let's feed the inward man." He would begin reading something about faith and would usually wind up giving them a little faith message.

F. F. Bosworth said, "Most Christians feed their bodies three hot meals a day, their spirit one cold snack a week, and then wonder why they are so weak in faith." If you ate only one cold snack a week physically you would grow weak physically, wouldn't you? God's Word is faith food. I like to put it that way--God's Word is "faith food."

Many times people are praying, "Oh, God, give me faith" and paying no attention at all to the means that He has put into their hands to produce faith. Well, you see, God can't answer that prayer because in a sense He has already answered it. He has already told you in His Word, "So then, faith cometh...."

And still we lament that if we could just find out how faith comes we would have it made.

But He has told us how it comes. And how is that? By hearing! By praying? No, by hearing! "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

God demands faith of us. He says in Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

If God demanded of us that we have faith when it is impossible for us to have faith, we would have a right to challenge His justice. But if He places into our hands the means whereby faith can be produced, then the responsibility is up to us as to whether we would have faith or not.

He has given us His Word and told us that "...faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." God's Word is our faith food.

You have a measure of faith. Start feeding that measure of faith on God's Word, and then exercise it.

The trouble with many folks is they want to start out with the million dollar mark and because that doesn't work for them, they give up on the whole thing.

Start out where you are! Nobody climbs the ladder by starting on the top rung. You have to start on the bottom rung and climb upward. Spiritual things very often are just the same. The Bible teaches it.

Many folks are defeated because they are trying to believe beyond their measure of faith.

Because one person has fed more on God's Word and exercised his faith more does not mean that God gave him more faith than He gave someone else. They each had the same measure of faith to begin with, but one has exercised his faith and it has grown. As a result he can believe God for more.

Some may say, "I believe I will start right where Muller was."

But, he didn't start there. He eventually got there. He arrived there at 93 years of age, but he started back on the bottom rung. He started on a dollar and kept climbing until he got to the million dollar mark.

I can remember in my life when it took all the faith I had to believe God for \$150.00 a week. I just pared everything possible off my budget. It was pared right down to a bare minimum. And it took everything I had to believe God for \$150.00. It took all the faith I had.

But after feeding my faith through the years, and using my faith, I could believe God today for \$10,000.00 just as easily as I could \$150.00 twenty years ago.

In fact, I believe it is really a little easier on \$10,000.00 than it was on \$150.00. If I had tried twenty years ago to believe God for \$10,000.00, I would have fallen flat on my face because my faith wasn't up there.

And a lot of folks are defeated because when they have heard faith taught they will try to start on top of the ladder. And if they are not up there yet, it won't work. Then when it doesn't work, they give up on the whole thing and say, "Well, that doesn't work. I tried it and it doesn't work. There is nothing to it. It's not true."

Begin where you are. Exercise your faith where you are. Feed it and exercise it and it will grow. You can believe God for more and more. After a while you will be believing God for things you never even thought you could.

We should not make the mistake of criticizing others if they don't believe for as much as we can see belongs to them. However, we certainly have to preach it to folks so they can get started.

For instance, the Bible says, "...That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:19). That also means that if there is no agreement, it won't be done. You won't be able to get someone healed with your believing they receive their healing while they believe they won't. There is no agreement there.

Folks have sometimes thought, "If I could just find someone else who has enough faith, they could believe God and I would be healed--whether I believe or not."

But we can't do something that Jesus couldn't do. Mark 6:5 says, "And he could there do no mighty work, (Notice that it doesn't say He wouldn't, it says He couldn't.) save that he laid, his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them."

Why did He just get a few sick folk healed in Nazareth? Why didn't He just go ahead and believe God for them anyhow; wasn't He a man of faith?

The next verse tells us, "And he marvelled because of their unbelief..." (Mark 6:6). His faith could not override their unbelief.

In the last church I pastored, we had a lady who was facing major surgery. I knew that God's best for her, His perfect will for her, was that she be healed by the power of God and not have to undergo this surgery.

And so, I talked with her, read God's Word and prayed with her, trying to raise her faith to the level of receiving God's best. However, I saw over a period of time that I just wasn't making it.

So I said to her one day, "Now I have done my best to get you to agree with me. I have tried to

get you to come up on my level where we could agree together and I just see I am not doing it. So I'll tell you what we will do, I will come down on your level. What can you believe? Tell me what you can believe and I will believe with you where you are because God's Word says, '...if two of you shall agree....' "

"Well," she answered, "I can believe that God will see me safely through this operation."

"All right, I will join you and believe with you," I said.

Then as I laid my hand on her head I said to her, "Just listen to me pray and agree. See if you can agree with this prayer. We will agree that it will be done."

And so I prayed, "Heavenly Father, I know You provided healing for us and for this sister and she has not come to that level to accept it, so I'll come down on her level. You are not going to forsake her. She is your child. I am agreeing with her that You will bring her swiftly through this operation; that You will cause her to respond so quickly and bring her through this so fast that even the doctors themselves will admit it's a miracle. Amen."

Then I asked her, "Do you agree with that?"

"Yes, I can agree with that."

(We Christians ought to do that. We should find things we can agree on instead of things we disagree on. And if we do disagree, we ought to be able to disagree without being disagreeable.)

The woman had the operation. I was there at the time. She went into the operation at 7:30 in the morning, and awoke fully conscious at 12 noon after surgery, which had been more extensive than originally planned.

That night at 8:00 I was in the room again visiting when the doctor came in. He was amazed when he saw from her chart that she had had nothing for pain. Even though she insisted she had no pain and didn't need anything for it, he said, "I am going to order one shot for you anyhow." But that was all she ever had.

The doctors who performed the surgery were specialists. People came from over the United States to that hospital and they performed that same kind of operation from 3 to 5 times a day. They told me later they had never seen anyone come through it so quickly, with no pain and do so well. One doctor said it was nothing short of miraculous.

We got what we believed for. It really wasn't the best God had, but that was the measure she could go to and, praise God, what we agreed on happened.

I saw that same woman develop in faith. When she began to see that faith does work, she began using her faith, and it started growing.

She began to use her faith in other areas and I saw her develop in faith beyond any other member of the church within a two year period.

She could have taken the wrong attitude and said, "I couldn't believe God for healing. I tried it and it didn't work." She could have just given up on the whole thing and she would never have grown spiritually. She would still have been a spiritual midget, or spiritual baby, never able to help anyone else.

Many Christians have developed far in faith. Some of great age are kept because of their belief and because of their faith. I believe that if we are really taught right and taught correctly and realize the life of God that is in us-- that life can be made manifest in our mortal flesh even now and we can live a little longer.

In my hometown of McKinney, Texas there was a fellow by the name of Brother Smith. He was an old-time Free Methodist and he had been indoctrinated to some extent on the subject of Divine healing. When I came back to my hometown to preach several years ago, Brother Smith heard it announced on the radio and came to the meeting.

As he shook hands with me after the service he said, "Brother Kenneth, (He always called me Kenneth because I had worked for him when I first began preaching as a Baptist boy preacher. I pastored a church and worked for him, too.) I always like to hear you preach because you always preach faith and healing and are positive and I like that. You know, I'm 90 years old and I'm just as good a man, just as strong, just as good in every way as I was when I was young."

He certainly looked good.

"God has kept me," he continued, "and I haven't been sick in 40 years. I was reading one day, years ago, in the Bible where Jesus said the very hairs of your head are numbered and I got to thinking about that. And I said, 'Lord, You know how many hairs I have, and I am just going to believe You to keep my hair.'"

And so, at 90, he had all of his hair.

(I'd never thought about that until Brother Smith told me this. It had never dawned on me and I had already lost some of my hair. But

from that day to this I have never lost any more. It has been more than 25 years now and I have never lost any more hair.)

Not only did Brother Smith have all his hair, he had very few grey hairs. My wife had never seen him before and I asked her if no one had told her his age how old she would have guessed him to be. She replied that her guess would have been that he was not a day over 55.

At 90 he was still working every day. Although he was a man of wealth, he got out every day and worked with his hands.

He started to walk away that night after we had visited a while, but then he came back again and said, "Brother Kenneth, I'll tell you something else. I believed God to keep my teeth."

At that he opened his mouth and showed me that he had all his own teeth and not one filling.

All of his own teeth at 90! I hadn't thought of that either, and at that time I had one or two fillings, but after that I never had any more.

He started to walk away again, but once more he turned around and said, "Brother Kenneth, I'm going to tell you the secret of the whole thing. I asked God first of all to help me keep this..." As he said that, he stuck out his tongue!

He had asked God to help him keep his tongue! And the Bible says, "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile" (Ps. 34:12-13).

I knew Brother Smith. He always had something good to say about a man. He would never say anything bad about him.

Now this is beyond Divine healing. According to your faith, be it unto you. If you believe God to do it, God will do it.

Some are beyond others in the development of their faith. But, wherever you are, keep your attitude right. It makes all the difference in the world what attitude we take wherever we are in life. Keep a positive attitude and keep the switch of faith turned on. Keep believing God and using your faith. Exercise your faith wherever you are.



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