

## **Resurrection Faith**

### **Mark 11:20-22**

#### **Introduction**

Resurrection Sunday has got to be one of the most fantastic celebration days of the entire year! What a wonderful day it is! Not just because it's nice outdoors or because the Easter Bunny brought you an easter basket! Today Christians worldwide are celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It takes faith to believe in the Resurrection. So, let's talk about receiving this resurrection faith for a few minutes.

Following the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, Jesus and the disciples returned to Jerusalem each day after spending the night in Bethany. In Mark verses 12 and 13, we see Jesus on his journey from Bethany to Jerusalem. And it says he was hungry. So when he saw a fig tree in leaf in the distance, he got his hopes up for some early figs. But when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, so He cursed it. There are some profound lessons in these image verses about fruitfulness.

In Jerusalem, Jesus enters the temple, overturns the money changers' tables, and accuses them of being thieves and robbers. He calls the people back to the true purpose of the Temple and says, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."

In verse 19, it says that "when evening came, they went out of the city and returned to Bethany. Let's pick up the narrative in Mark Chapter 11:20, "Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away." So Jesus answered and said to them, "**Have faith in God.**" (Mark 11:20-22 NKJV)

#### **I. The Faith of God**

According to the Discovery Bible, "Faith is *an experience with God* as well as divine revelation about what pleases Him. It is all about Him, comes from Him, and glorifies Him. Gleason Archer says, "*Faith* then is not the *same as human belief*, which is a common theological error. Human belief is explicitly refuted in Scripture. Faith is always God's work imparted by the Lord."

This continual faith is born out of a relationship and contact with God. John never uses "faith" or "belief" as a noun in his gospel, and he uses the word "trust" only once. But he uses the word "believe" as a verb 52 times. John viewed "believing" as being connected to something outside of himself. And that something is really someone – Jesus.

James writes about this faith in Chapter 2, "Thus also faith by itself if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? (James 2:17-20 NKJV)

In 1 John 5:4, it says, "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." (1 John 5:4 NKJV)

Faith is born of God – not man! Faith is an action word! Belief does not require outward action; it can be based solely on inner thoughts and feelings. But faith is an action birthed by God. Faith is based on God's revelation, not something conceived in your mind. The faith that Jesus talks about here to his disciples is the ongoing process of receiving continued revelation and insight from God.

Faith and Belief are like your lungs breathing in and out. It's like the heart pumping constantly and continuously. You don't have to tell your lungs to breathe or your heart to pump blood, thank God! It just comes naturally.

When you connect with God through Jesus Christ, faith comes naturally to you! How connected are you to Christ? Do you exercise the faith of God? Because faith is like the breath of God! When God speaks, It is so! God said, "Let there be light, and there was light!

## **II. The Faith That Overcomes**

In verse 23, Jesus says, *For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.*" (Mark 11:23-24 NKJV)

Jesus is not talking about having a positive mental attitude. I don't think you can convince yourself to have faith simply by saying: OK, I'm not going to waver, I'm not going to waver! This kind of faith puts on the mind of Christ. We receive by faith the confidence and unwavering conviction of Christ in your spirit.

Sometimes mountains in scripture are symbolic of kingdoms. Colossians 1:13 says, "God has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." In Revelation 16:10, we learn that the kingdom of the Antichrist will be a kingdom full of darkness and evil and will represent what Satan is in the spiritual realm.

Early kingdoms like Greece, Rome, and Israel built capital cities on the tops of mountains. So the mountain became synonymous with the city, and the city became synonymous with the kingdom. What kingdom is Jesus referring to? The Romans? The Jews? or perhaps the kingdom of darkness? The point Jesus is making is that faith overcomes doubt.

Can you think of any place in scripture where someone actually casts a mountain into the sea? Of course not! No human, not even Sampson, ever physically picked up a mountain and threw it into the sea. The mountain Jesus is speaking about is symbolic of an obstacle that even today's technology cannot humanly overcome. And yet, "mountain tossing" is very possible with the faith of God. Believing faith does not waver because it trusts completely in the Source of faith.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled." (2 Corinthians 10:3-6 NKJV)

The Apostle Paul says our battlefield is not on a human level because we are engaged in spiritual warfare. That sometimes makes human reasoning and mental computations barriers or obstacles to God's way. Our human thoughts and ideas are sometimes in direct opposition to the knowledge that comes from God. God's ways are not our ways.

In Isaiah 55:8, God says, "For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9 NKJV)

Too often, we try to figure out ways to use God's power without submitting ourselves to him or surrendering our will to His will. Paul says that we are to take prisoner every thought or exercise of the mind and make it captive to the obedience and understanding of Christ. The Holy Spirit gives us the strength to tear down the mountainous obstacles in conflict with God's ways and declare them prisoners of war.

A pure and righteous heart calls upon God to punish the wrong and avenge the right. People of faith today need to cry out to God for justice against all the disobedience that is pervading our world.

### **III. The Faith That Gives Life**

The prophet Zechariah talks about rebuilding the temple in Chapter 4. In verse 6, he says, "This *is* the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts." God tells Zerubbabel that what is done will not be accomplished by human might or power but is spiritually arranged by the Holy Spirit.

Too often, we are confused by our circumstances because our situations in life confine us. But faith transforms us! Through faith, we see from God's point of view. And through faith, we learn how to overcome even difficult circumstances.

In verse 7, God says, "What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel, you will become a plain, and he will bring forth the capstone with shouts of Grace, grace to it! The temple was in the process of being rebuilt. And human effort was failing. The obstacles were mountainous. And it seemed like everything was going wrong. But God declares that every obstacle would become as smooth as a plain.

The Chief Cornerstone would be laid all by the Grace of God, and everyone would be talking about what an incredible miracle it was! Do you have any immovable obstacles in your life? Are there mountainous circumstances you're facing? Do you look at the impossibility of your situations, or do you see through his eyes of faith? God gives us His grace. And we can speak to any mountain in our life in the power of the Holy Spirit and see those mountains become a plain.

Resurrection life is about applying God's spiritual power to your circumstances and overcoming the intimidation and fear of human thinking. Resurrection power causes you to speak to the mountain in faith and see it cast into the sea. The message of Easter is that Jesus is Risen! He has overcome the most incredible mountain of all. The mountain of death, hell, and the grave!

Because He lives, anyone who chooses Jesus will also overcome death and inherit eternal life! Everlasting Life is the message of the Resurrection! Jesus was the firstfruit, but we are the continuing fruit! The resurrection gives us an experience of God's love and grace for eternity. And God wants us to experience His mountain-moving faith in this life.

Unfortunately, for many, disappointment or disillusionment prevents them from believing that mountains can actually be moved. Anger, hate, envy, lust, pride, selfishness, and unforgiveness can become mountainous obstacles that no human ingenuity, resource, or personal effort and ability can move out of our life.

Sometimes only the faith of God can cast these things into the sea. And to be set free from them really requires a supernatural faith and revelation from God. Having a positive confession or mental attitude can be helpful, but faith that moves mountains is more than that.

Mountain-moving faith requires putting God first at the center of your life! It is allowing your heart to be His temple. And it is learning to trust in God before you put your trust in yourself.

#### **IV. The Faith That Forgives**

So in Verse 24, Jesus says, "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*. "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses." (Mark 11:24-26 NKJV)

According to Jesus, forgiveness has a direct bearing on our faith life.

If we refuse to forgive others, neither will our Heavenly Father forgive us! Withholding forgiveness is disobedience to God's will, and the mountainous obstacles you face will remain. No amount of human effort will alleviate the frustration and anxiety you feel when you harbor unforgiveness.

Unforgiveness cancels out mountain-moving faith. You've got to let go of the resentment, bitterness, anger, anxiety, conflict, or whatever unforgiveness lies in your heart.

The Faith of God must conquer the conflict that caused the pain and suffering in your life, or else unforgiveness will take root in your heart and hinder your fellowship with God and others. When you acknowledge and embrace the power of Christ to be greater than all the obstacles in your life, the mountain-moving faith of God assures your victory and success.

Forgiveness is the key to restoring fellowship. Not forgiving is disobedience to God, which means the mountainous obstacles remain.

## **Conclusion**

It is the Cross that makes Resurrection Faith possible. It is the Cross that bears the wrongs and injustices of life. It is the Cross that makes God's forgiveness available to us.

However, the resurrection restores our relationship with God and makes it possible for us to forgive those who have hurt us! The resurrection puts us on the path to restoration. Resurrection faith takes the promise of a miracle and makes it a reality! Resurrection faith destroys the kingdom of darkness around you and floods you with the light of God's grace!

It is the kind of faith that frees us to forgive and to be forgiven! So rise up in faith and let God show you how His faith can move the mountains in your life.