



Grace Assembly Of God

## CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER BIBLE READING DEVOTIONAL

Scripture:	Matthew 17	Title:	Effective Vs Defective Faith
Author	Sis Samantha Lim		
Summary of Chapter	In this chapter, Jesus healed and delivered an epileptic boy. The disciples were unable to drive the demon out but Jesus was able to.		
Key Verse(s)	How does it speak to me?		
20 <i>"You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.</i>	<p>Jesus was not actually critiquing the disciples for having a small quantity of faith. Rather, He was critiquing them for having a defective faith. Earlier, Jesus had commented on the "unbelieving" and "perverse" generation, referring to the Jews at that time who had the Messiah in their midst but had yet to place their faith in Him. "Faith is either existent or non-existent, but it can also either be functioning effectively or defectively. Jesus does not so much condemn the little faith as he points out that if faith is placed in God's will and power, even though it is "little," all things can be accomplished. Even the smallest amount of effective faith can move mountains; misdirected faith, even if it is of the largest amount, can do nothing." (Michael J. Wilkins). Sometimes, I catch my inner self-talk saying things like, "Sam you just gotta have more faith. This thing didn't come through for you because you didn't have enough faith. If only you had more faith, your prayer would be answered." We see Jesus telling his disciples that "if you have faith even as small as a mustard seed... nothing would be impossible!" So the equation here is definitely NOT: more faith = more prayers answered. In fact, the equation is: SMALL FAITH = NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE. Wow. In God's economy, it's not the size of faith that we have. It's basically just, does your faith exist? Or does it not? And sometimes, our faith could even be defective! We may be placing faith in our own abilities, past experiences, or on others to meet our needs. Jesus tells us that effective faith is focused on the Lord, for whom nothing is impossible. Does this mean that every kind of prayer will be answered? No. We are still to seek the kingdom of God and live for His will to be done. Yet does this change the fact that nothing is impossible for the Lord? No! So, to have an effective <i>faith, it's not the amount that matters, but the focus of our faith that matters.</i> Let's focus our faith back to Father God. We cannot create more faith out of ourselves. We simply place our faith and trust in God alone, to provide and to guide us through life.</p>		
<b>APPLICATION REFLECTIONS</b>			
Adult:	What are some areas of your life in which you need to exercise effective faith in? Bring those areas or issues to light before the Lord and ask Him to help you place your faith in Him once again.		
Youth:	What are the possible consequences of advising a struggling friend by saying, "Oh you didn't get your prayer answered because you didn't have enough faith?" In the future, how could you give more biblically accurate and edifying advice to your friends?		
Child:	Go on a scavenger hunt around your house and look for the smallest seed that you can find! Do you have faith in Jesus as much as that seed's size? The Bible tells us that if we have faith even as small as a mustard seed, we can pray bold prayers and God will hear us! Exercise a faith-filled prayer right now for yourself, or someone in your family.		
<b>PRAYER</b>			
Praying Scripture:	Lord, nothing is impossible for You. Thank You for making a way for us, through Jesus, to be able to come directly to You as Your children and simply and boldly, with a childlike faith no matter how simple or small, to ask of You what we need. Align our hearts with Yours that the prayers we pray will be of Your will. Hear our prayers.		
Thanksgiving:	I/We thank You for _____ (e.g. delicious food we ate, prayer that was answered, etc)		
Intercession:	I/We want to pray for _____ (e.g. healing, family, work or study, leaders, nation, etc)		
Salvation Prayer:	I/We pray for the salvation of my/our unsaved loved ones _____ (one name per day). In Jesus' Name I/we pray. Amen.		