

CHRIST ... and the eternal bulldozer
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(MATTHEW 17:19,20)

Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast the devil out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place ; and it shall remove ; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Faith is heaven's bulldozer which removes every obstacle and makes a highway to the throne of God. Yet faith is far more than an intellectual assent. It is a vital apprehension of things unseen ; it laughs at impossibilities.

No Faith

The ship was sinking, and even the experienced fishermen were scared. Their skilled seamanship was unequal to the task of keeping the small vessel on an even keel, and at any moment the frail craft might capsize in the turbulent waters. The winds shrieked through the rigging ; the mast threatened to break. Frantic baling made little impression on the swirling waters in the bottom of the boat ; the position was untenable. The fishermen disciples were beginning to despair, when they remembered their Master. They could hardly believe their eyes when they saw Him peacefully sleeping in the back of the boat. " And they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" (Mark 4: 37-40).

Little Faith

A remarkable stillness rested upon the holy hill ; the crowd was enthralled. This was the greatest sermon they had ever heard. Slowly, but with rare power, the Preacher from Nazareth spoke about faith. " Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" He paused, and the ensuing silence was as eloquent as His speech. No one moved ; no one desired to move. This was wonderful preaching. He was so sure. He really believed what He was saying ; and what was much more to the point, He had the ability to make them believe. Their emotions were strangely stirred. He continued, "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the Idles of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 6:25-30). It is very foolish to worry when the promises of God are so reliable.

Great Faith

The Lord Jesus was very interested ; something unique had taken place. The elders of the synagogue had swallowed their pride in seeking a favor, but all their plans had been ruined by the very man on whose behalf they had acted. They had persuaded Christ to visit the home of the Gentile officer; but now, he had said, "Lord, trouble not thyself :

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for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof
. . . say in a word, and my servant shall be healed." Master,
because I represent Caesar's empire, I command men to do
things, and they obey. You represent God's empire, and if
you issue a command, that will be sufficient. Some angel will
hasten to do your bidding, and my servant shall be healed.
When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled . . . and said
I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel " (Luke
7: 1-10).

In the spiritual realm, the Capernaum centurion had a twin
sister-she was the woman of Canaan who tried to deceive
the Lord. (See Bible Cameos, p. 91.) She clung to the belief
that Christ would help her, even though her appeals for help
met with no immediate response. "But he answered and
said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of
Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord,
help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take
the children's bread and cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth,
Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their
masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O
woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.
And her daughter was made whole from that very hour "
(Matt. 15: 22-28). Faith is a great bulldozer-it can remove
mountains. But what is faith? Someone has supplied a most
illuminating acrostic: F A I T H-Forsaking All I Take
Him. These texts placed together represent the royal high-
way. No motor traffic travels there. Travellers must walk-
by faith ; and those who walk by faith, walk with God.

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