

Mark 11:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

Analysis

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God (Ἐχετε πίστιν Θεοῦ)—Jesus responds to the disciples' amazement (v. 21) by redirecting focus from the miracle to its underlying principle: faith in God. The Greek construction echete pistin theou (ἔχετε πίστιν Θεοῦ) can be translated "Have faith in God" (objective genitive) or "Have the faith of God" (subjective genitive)—likely the former, emphasizing trust in God's power and character. The present imperative echete (ἔχετε, "have") indicates continuous action: maintain ongoing faith, not merely momentary belief.

This simple command contains profound theology. Faith (pistis, πίστις) is not self-generated confidence or positive thinking but trust in God's character, promises, and power. The focus is theocentric—**faith in God**, not faith in faith. The withered fig tree demonstrates God's power working through Jesus' word; now Jesus teaches that faith in this same God enables His followers to participate in God's powerful work. The subsequent verses (vv. 23-25) elaborate: faith moves mountains, receives answers to prayer, and forgives others. But the foundation is verse 22: genuine faith is oriented toward God, rooted in His nature, and confident in His ability to accomplish His purposes.

Historical Context

Jesus' emphasis on faith appears throughout His ministry: "Your faith has made you whole" (Mark 5:34; 10:52), "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29), "Where is your faith?" (Luke 8:25). Faith was central to Jesus' message and

the early church's proclamation (Acts 16:31; Romans 1:17; 5:1; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8). The disciples needed this emphasis as they approached Jesus' crucifixion—events that would severely test their faith. Peter's denial (Mark 14:66-72), the disciples' desertion (Mark 14:50), and their despair after the crucifixion (Luke 24:21) showed how fragile their faith was. Yet resurrection faith transformed them: the same disciples who fled became bold proclaimers who faced persecution and martyrdom. This transformation fulfilled Jesus' promise that faith in God—even small as a mustard seed (Matthew 17:20)—accomplishes great things. The early church's rapid growth despite overwhelming opposition (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:7) demonstrated mountain-moving faith in action.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' command 'Have faith in God' distinguish authentic biblical faith from self-confidence or positive thinking?
2. What does it mean practically to maintain continuous, ongoing faith in God (present imperative) rather than occasional, circumstantial belief?
3. In what ways does focusing faith on God's character and power rather than desired outcomes transform how we pray and face obstacles?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἀποκριθεὶς	Ἰησοῦς	λέγει	αὐτοῖς	Ἔχετε	πίστιν	θεοῦ
And	answering	Jesus	saith	unto them	Have	faith	in God
G2532	G611	G2424	G3004	G846	G2192	G4102	G2316

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 62:8 (Faith): Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

John 14:1 (Faith): Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

Mark 9:23 (Faith): Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

Isaiah 7:9 (Faith): And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

2 Chronicles 20:20 (Faith): And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

Titus 1:1 (Faith): Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;

Colossians 2:12 (Faith): Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.