

## Word on Wednesday Bible Study

Pastor Kenneth Reece

December 3, 2025

### When Your Faith Falls Short – Matthew 17: 14-21

*When Michael Jordan entered the NBA, he was undeniably gifted — Rookie of the Year, scoring titles, highlight after highlight. But for years, the Detroit Pistons shut him down every single season. No matter how great he was, his own strength wasn't enough. Everything changed when the Bulls brought in coach Phil Jackson. Jackson introduced a new system — a new way — and the Bulls finally stopped depending on their individual talent and started trusting their coach. And when they trusted the coach, they beat the Pistons and won championship after championship.*

*Here in Matthew 17, we see Jesus' disciples facing their own "Pistons." They attempt a miracle... they attempt a victory... but they fail. Not because they lacked talent. Not because they lacked experience. They failed because they trusted themselves more than they trusted Jesus.*

## I. FAITH FAILS WHEN WE \_\_\_\_\_ ON \_\_\_\_\_ - vs. 14-16

As the scene opens, Jesus comes down from the Mount of Transfiguration — a mountain of glory — and walks straight into a valley of need. A desperate father kneels before Jesus. His humility tells us everything:

- He knows who Jesus is.
- He knows Jesus can do what he cannot.
- He knows Jesus can do what the disciples could not.

***"Lord, have mercy on my son!" vs. 15  
"I brought him to Your disciples... but they could not heal him." V.s 16***

You almost feel the sting. The disciples, who had previously cast out demons, suddenly fail. Why? Because they were doing **God's work in their own strength.**

### **They relied on:**

- Past victories, Personal experience
- Their own perceived ability, and they forgot to rely on Christ.

**KEY IDEA: Desperation brings deliverance, but self-reliance brings disappointment.**

**APPLICATION:** *Where are YOU trying to do God's work in your own strength?*

## II. FAITH \_\_\_\_\_ WHEN WE IGNORE GOD'S WORK – vs. 17-18

Jesus' response is strong: **"O faithless and twisted generation..."**

- He isn't merely frustrated — He is grieved. Why? Because they *forgot* who He is.
- They had just seen Him transfigured — shining like the sun — revealing His divine glory. They witnessed miracles, healings, and demonstrations of power.
- Yet in the moment they faced a challenge, they forgot everything He had shown them.

**KEY IDEA: A forgetful faith becomes a fragile faith.  
Faith forgets when we ignore God's work!**

**APPLICATION:**

- What miracles have you forgotten?
- What answered prayers have faded from your memory?
- What mountaintop moments have you let slip from your heart?

**III. FAITH FLOURISHES WHEN WE \_\_\_\_\_ GOD  
WITH EVEN A \_\_\_\_\_ – vs. 19–21**

- The disciples ask the honest question: “**Why couldn’t we drive it out?**” vs. 19
- They failed, and they don’t understand why. Jesus answers with clarity:

***“You have so little faith.” - vs. 20***

***“If you have faith like a mustard seed... You can say to this mountain,  
‘Move,’ and it will move.” – vs. 20***

**Questions:**

- What is mustard-seed faith?
- What does “moving mountains” mean?

**KEY IDEA: God does not bless big talent;  
He blesses small trust in a big Savior.**

**APPLICATION: Where do you need to offer God your mustard seed?**

**Conclusion:** *When failure happens, we must stop looking to do things in our own strength. Instead, we must place our faith in the God who has demonstrated his power and promises that he will never leave us nor forsake us. It only takes a little faith in a big God for Him to move mountains.*