

Mountain-Moving Faith

While I was in college, I met people from different areas of the country. Tom Roark was one of those new friends I met who had been reared in the ranching community of Colorado. He was a very dedicated young man who had this insatiable desire to be everything God wanted him to be and to do everything God wanted him to do. During the first two years after the founding of Hyles-Anderson College, we were very blessed to have some of the greatest men of God in the twentieth century spend several days at our college instructing and teaching us. To say I was there in the “golden years” would be no exaggeration. One of the largest impacts was the first year of college when Dr. John R. Rice made three visits in his latter days on our campus. On the days we had speakers of notable acclaim on campus, our schedule went like this: The speaker spoke for our chapel at 10:00, then he spoke to the preacher-boys for the Church Education class at 11:00 am. Later he would come to supper and the preacher boys who were on campus would eat supper with the man of God and talk to him during the meal. We discovered that if we kept asking questions, the men of God would stay and answer. So, it was not unusual to talk to the visiting speakers from supper until 9:00 pm. We were privileged to have three weeks with Dr. John R. Rice like this.

These days were faith-building days. We dared to become visionaries and dreamers as a result of some of these visits. We became anxious to try out our newly found wings of faith. If you know of the ministry of John R. Rice, you know his most famous book he wrote was, Prayer, Asking and Receiving. He may have been the boldest man of prayer I have ever met. He taught that when you knew you had heard from God, claim in prayer believing and it would be done!

During our Christmas break, Tom went home to Colorado. He decided to test God’s promise to move mountains. As was narrated to me by Tom himself, he went out to the range and stood at the foot of a massive snow-capped Rocky Mountain, opened his Bible up to Mark 11:22-24 where the Bible says, *“And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”* Then with all the faith that Tom could muster, he told me with one hand on the Bible and the other lifted to the mountain, he cried out, “Lord, I am asking you to take that mountain and....” Then he explained how he stopped cold in his tracks from saying another word; the Lord quietly spoke to his heart and said, “Yes, Tom, and where would you like Me to put that mountain?” Tom replied as he looked around, “Well, Lord, it looks like to me that you have placed that mountain in a perfectly good spot where it is.” And then Tom said God spoke again to his heart and said, “Tom, when you have a mountain that needs to be removed, talk to Me.” Tom learned a valuable

lesson that day. He communicated it to his friends after the Christmas break and we all learned from our friend that God indeed will move any mountain, no matter how big, no matter how seemingly insurmountable, if it is really in our way of His designated blessings for His children.

1. Mountain-moving faith is granted to those who are close to God.

God never blesses a casual, mediocre approach to Christianity. In Isaiah 45:3, God says, *“And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.”* God is saying, “I will give you treasures that are presently hidden from you. I have riches that are still in secret, but in time I shall reveal to you where you may lay hold on them.” I would like to paraphrase again what the Lord says in the next seven verses (4 through 10) of Isaiah 45, “I have called you, I have girded you with strength, from the rising of the sun, there is none beside Me. I make light to shine forth and darkness to envelope the earth. You are but clay, you cannot tell Me how to fashion you. You cannot even give credit to your parents for making you who you are. I brought you forth in birth and, although I used your parents, I am the One who made you. No one tells Me what to do.” Then in what appears to be a striking contrast, the Lord says, in Isaiah 45:11, *“Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.”* God says, “Command ye me!” How can this be, just after God reminds us He is in control? There is no contradiction. God said previously in Isaiah 33:13, *“Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might.”* God is saying, if you acknowledge Him for who He is, if you love Him, He will let you in on His secrets. He will give you *“...the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places...”* When you are close enough to Him, your commands will be in perfect sync with Him so that your prayers become the out-working of the in-working plans He has placed in your heart. This is much like what God is saying in Psalm 37:4, *“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”*

N. D. Daniel told a story of a father who saved much wealth for his children and hid it away safely. Before his death, he told his children that he had laid up much treasure for them. He told them it was hidden between Godavari and Krishna. Godavari and Krishna are big rivers in South India, traversing hundreds of miles and the area of land enclosed between them is immeasurably vast. The children were aghast at the task before them. It would be impossible to find the treasure. One of them struck at a bright idea. Their aged mother was still alive. They would ask her what the meaning of "Godavari and Krishna" is. She said, Godavari and Krishna were the two cows in the stall in their backyard. The matter became very simple. The stall was a small place. Digging there they soon struck at the treasure. Proximately to the parent was key to finding the treasures! We must stay close to God if we find the treasures He has reserved for us.

2. Mountain moving faith is given to those bold enough to ask.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16). James

said, “...*Ye have not, because ye ask not*” (James 4:2). When God reveals His will, be brave enough to request in boldness your very heart’s desire.

3. Mountain moving faith is given to those who don’t give up.

Jesus said, “*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you*” (Matthew 7:7). Leading Greek scholarship tells us the tense in which these verbs are given, our Lord is saying, “ask and keep asking, seek and keep seeking, knock and keep knocking.” God does not bless the nonchalant approach to prayer. He will honor the one who tenaciously lays hold on God and His promises. Peter said, “*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time*” (I Peter 5:6). If we humble ourselves in prayer and don’t give up, in “due time” God will fulfill His promise. In the next verse Peter encourages us to be, “*Casting all your care upon Him...*” and then he tells us why God is willing to hear, answer and move our mountains: “...*for he careth for you*” (I Peter 5:7).

-Pastor Pope-

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