

Luke 17

Submitted by Anne Sims

HIGHLIGHT:

Luke 17: 5-6

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you."

EXPLAIN:

In this chapter of Luke, Jesus instructs the apostles on many topics: sin, forgiveness, faith, duty, and his identity as the personification of the Kingdom of God. The sheer number of issues Jesus covers in this and preceding chapters suggests to me his awareness of the short time he has left with the disciples and his urgency to equip them for ministry without him.

APPLY:

I highlighted verse 5 because it reminds me of the Bible verse with which I most closely identify: "I believe; help my unbelief." (Mark 9:24)

I struggle with faith and belief even though, on an intellectual level, I understand that all I need to do is ASK God and ACCEPT that He wants to assure me and equip me. However, on a "gut" level, I feel inadequate and unsure—just as the apostles felt.

Like most people, my life has included challenges: I've survived two life-threatening illnesses, the breakdown of a marriage and the resulting single parenthood, and professional disappointments. I remember thinking, "I'm tough; I can handle this." However, I recognize—only in retrospect—that it was God's mercy, not my own strength, that got me through all the trials!

RESPOND:

Heavenly Father,

My fervent prayer is for increased faith, belief, and trust in YOUR power. I confess that I'm utterly helpless on my own.

Amen