

## **REPEAT AFTER ME...**

Matthew 17:20 ... “... if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”

Matthew 19:25-26 ... “When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, ‘Who then can be saved?’ But Jesus looked at them and said to them, ‘With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”

Luke 1:36-37 ... “Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren, for with God nothing will be impossible.”

We learn about God in three ways: 1) The description of his character and sovereignty as stated in his own Word – the Bible, 2) through the testimonies of his followers, and 3) through our own personal experiences. The first two ways are how we initially learn about God and make a decision to follow him or not. The third way comes only when we surrender our lives to him and choose to obey and serve him.

As I have said before, I am very much annoyed when believers build slogans from snippets of scripture totally out of context from what the Bible intends. Today's three verses are often “borrowed” to infer or state something they do not mean. Matt. 17:20 says that “nothing will be impossible” for a believer, IF the believer has sufficient faith. And such faith demands a level of obedience to God that few have ever portrayed. Plus, moving a mountain would have to be in God's plan. If abundant faith and submission to God's plan do not come together, mountains will stay right where they are.

Matt. 19:25-26 is Jesus' response to his disciples' question about who can be saved. He tells them it is impossible for men to save other men. Only God can do that. Luke 1:36-37 is the account of the angel telling Mary that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant. It was in this context that the angel told Mary that God was in control of her own and Elizabeth's pregnancies. To summarize these three passages: 1) nothing is impossible if you have superior faith and your plan coincides with God's plan, 2) only God can save, and 3) old ladies and virgins can have babies if God is in charge of their lives and it is his will.

As you mature in your faith you will learn, through personal experience, that God is certainly able to make anything happen that he wants to happen. But if you try to convince others of this fact by snipping portions of scripture out of context, you are manipulating scripture and people. Romans 8:28, the first portion of which is also often misused, makes this clear when it says “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, TO THOSE WHO ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE.” For whom might all things work together for good? For those who love God and are living out his plan for their life, and them alone.

Repeat after me: All things are possible with God IF they suit his plan and purpose. Again: All things are possible with God IF they suit his plan and purpose. Keep repeating it until you have it memorized.

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