

All Saints' Sunday, November 6, 2011/CUMC
Habakkuk 2:1-4/Genesis 12:1-8/Luke 17:1-6
The Measure Of Our Faith: Mountain Moving Faith
Rev. Daniel D. Rasmussen

Jesus did not use exaggeration when describing faith and He used analogy that gave His listeners great hope. Jesus did not say, if you have faith the size of a mountain, you can move a mustard seed. That should speak volumes into our hearts concerning the kind of God we serve. Likely, if we were God, we would make it just the opposite, because we would want. . . people to work to deserve our love and mercy.

When in fact, we know that with faith, we can actually overcome the mountain. . . it can actually become the tool by which our faith is strengthened. . . in (Luke 17:6), faith as small as a mustard seed can uproot a mulberry tree.

Maybe, just maybe Jesus was dead serious. Sure, we also find that faith, as it was exercised by the disciples was enough to firmly plant something much bigger than any mulberry tree.

We are told that the faith of the early disciples was actually immovable.

Are governments bigger than a mountain? Is death bigger than a mountain? Because neither governments or death could keep the disciples from exercising mountain moving faith, and establishing the church of Jesus Christ. I am going to guess that when they first began to have a campaign to raise funds for the needs of the church and the church body, there were very few if any who simply stood in the background and cast dispersions by saying, "it can't be done – we have never done it that way before." "People won't do it." The Biblical record of giving is much bigger than that.

In fact, as the church leaders - the very early church fathers - began to notice there were needs they had never dreamed of, we do not find the narrative of the Bible giving witness to them throwing up their hands and giving up.

Listen to Acts 4:31-37, "There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet."

If you were to ask me what I thought had a greater likelihood of happening: someone having faith enough to actually, literally move a mountain, or someone selling their house and property and moving into a commune so that their local church would have money to operate meeting the needs of her people, I admit I would call that one a toss-up.

In fact, let's look at a history of the people of God and giving.

This isn't the only example. In fact there is another one that is just as extreme, let's look: "Tell the Israelites to bring Me an offering. You are to receive the offering for Me from each man whose heart prompts him to give. These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood; olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on

the ephod and breastpiece. Then have them make a sanctuary for Me. . . Exodus 25:2-9.

And so the people were restrained from bringing more, because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work. Exodus 36:7

So if you want to exercise mountain moving, or mulberry tree moving faith, then decide to give a tithe, to move out in faith this year in your giving, you can show clearly who you are as a person of faith. The widow trusted God with all she had, the early Christians trusted God in the sale of their houses, the early Israelites gave so much they were asked to stop giving, why is that so prevalent in the Bible? Because the people of God exercise mountain moving faith in their giving, simply for the fact that is who we are.