

## Written prayers

### Responding to poverty & injustice with faith to see mountains move

*This set of two written prayers and a reflection – all inspired by Jesus' words in Matthew 17:20 – were first written for the opening worship of a Christian Aid conference our co-founder Liz Baddaley was helping to lead. The theme of the whole weekend was 'We can move mountains' and it felt like territory the Sanctuary would be visiting again and again so we decided to share it more widely in this format.*

*You can obviously use just one element alone, or everything together.*

*And you might also be interested to explore what is below alongside our collection of written prayers inspired by testimony and answered prayer – available at*

[http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/written\\_prayers\\_inspired\\_by\\_answered\\_prayer\\_and\\_testimony.pdf](http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/written_prayers_inspired_by_answered_prayer_and_testimony.pdf)

#### A gathering prayer

Leader: From different places, we gather together in one place to worship you;

**All: we are united by the same Lord who loves the least.**

Leader: From different churches and denominations we come together here to speak of your kingdom of justice and love;

**All: we are united by the same vision, your vision Lord Jesus.**

Leader: With different talents and gifts we come together to equip and be equipped;

**All: we are united by the same work to expose injustice and end poverty.**

Leader: With different stories and experiences we come together to be refilled and recharged by your Spirit;

**All: we are united by the same hunger for more faith – enough faith to move these mountains.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, meet us here today. Envision, inspire, equip, fill and challenge so we might grow more like you – in faith, prayer and action – and continue on to complete all that you have called us to do. In the precious name that moves mountains,

**All: Amen.**

#### Meditation inspired by Matthew 17:20

We can move mountains. It's a huge thought; a bold statement; a colossal claim. A stirring invitation to a life of purpose, impact and permanent, rock solid change that's visible – un-missable.

I mean you'd notice it wouldn't you? If impregnable rock piled more than a thousand feet high – hundreds of times the height of a six foot man dwarfed at its foot – just went and left your view one day?

We feel spurred on by the thought of being a mountain mover – part of something so much bigger than ourselves... Especially when we consider these mountains that dominate, overshadow and crush those living beneath them – the mountains of injustice, exploitation, greed, inequality and poverty...

But then, it comes... a whisper of doubt... Can we really move these mountains? I mean *really*? Is this just another slogan – a brand that overpromises delivered with slick, marketer’s concision?

No!

Let all God’s people hear and know this. Let all God’s people speak and believe this.

These are not hollow words – they are true; they came from the mouth of the one that cannot lie. These are not empty words – they are the truth; from the authentic embodiment of Truth himself.

For Jesus said, “Truly I tell you... you can say to this mountain, “Move from here to there, and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

So it’s really true. We can face these mountains and move them. It’s such a beautiful relief, this promise. For Jesus led us here – to see and face these ugly edifices that rob and destroy so many of Christ’s image-bearers. He broke our hearts – like his before us – with the truth of what people will do to each other for money or power. And so into this lamenting, to receive his promise – that we can move these mountains – well, it’s like breathing again.

What could be more important and life-giving than this? What could be a better use of our lives – our energy, time and resources?

So let’s start and continue this work – let’s not delay. Let’s give all we can to tip the scales the other way. Let’s mount our campaigns and strategically lobby for change. Let’s get on our knees and pray night and day. Let’s use every tool, talent and gift that we have to break up this rock and pile it into carts and see these mountains crumble once and for all in to the sea.

These are good actions. Right things to do. Urgent, necessary wise things we need to get better at if these mountains are to move.

But in the middle of those words that Jesus spoke is one tiny, troubling, unquantifiable other ‘if’. “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed.”

Lord we believe; help our unbelief. Give us the faith we need – however small – to move these mountains we pray.

## **A prayer of commitment and dedication**

All: Lord Jesus,  
 Lead us – this day and every day – with the determination to keep facing the truth about poverty and injustice.  
 Move us – this day and every day – through a continued conviction in our hearts that this is our fight; our responsibility; our call.  
 Inspire us – this day and every day – to persevere in love through the power of your Spirit.  
 Equip us – this day and every day – so we can do your give, act and pray together using the gifts you have uniquely given each one of us.  
 And fill us – this day and every day – with the mustard seed of faith we so desperately need to see these mountains crash into the sea.  
 In your precious name – mountain-mover, heart-changer and Lord,  
 Amen.