

# Effective Faith

Matthew 17:14-21

## 80/20 Rule

What happens if the top 20% are taken away?

14-16: Disciples couldn't heal the boy

17-18: Jesus instantly heals the boy

19-20: Disciples ask about their failure

"You of little faith":

Matthew 8:26: fear of dying in the boat

Matthew 16:8-9: confusion about Jesus' metaphor



## The Big Idea

The power to do God's work is in Christ  
accessed through active faith in Him



## Three audiences

Jesus → the 9 apostles

When they didn't have Jesus or the "big 3"

Doing God's work requires faith **in God** to act

Matthew → early Church

When Jesus & the eyewitnesses of Jesus were gone

Doing God's work requires faith **in God** to act

Jesus → Church throughout the ages

When Jesus & the "greats" of the faith aren't here

Doing God's work requires faith **in God** to act

## What are we to do?

### Trust in Jesus

He is all powerful

He is all good

He is all wise

Trust His power, goodness, and wisdom

And He says He will do the miraculous according to His perfect wisdom

### Pray boldly and humbly to the One who can do all things

Pray with others: Life Groups, 3rd Sunday prayer gathering, 2nd & 4th Thursday morning, household, elders, ...

And take faith-filled action that is consistent with the prayer

**Jesus' prayer to the all powerful, all good, all wise God**

"Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed,  
'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I  
will, but as you will.'" Matthew 26:39

## Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. When have you experience unanswered prayer? What was it like? What did you think was the cause of it?
2. How would you explain the power of prayer?
3. What is significant about the example of Jesus' prayer?
4. What is a big thing (maybe even "impossible") that you long for God to do? What does 'effective' faith look like, expressed in prayer and in action?

## Conversation starters with people in daily life, whether or not they are Christians

What is prayer? Do you think it "works"? (What does that mean?)

Is there something you would like prayer for?