

## MARK 9:22-24 – AFTER A MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCE, A BOY IS HEALED,!

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*Mar 9:22-24 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." [23] Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." [24] Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"*

**Following a series of miracles -- Wind and Waves Obey Jesus; A Demon Possessed Man Healed; A Woman Healed; A Girl Brought Back to Life; We Now Have A Boy Healed! --** We are shown here that **the duty of the Church is not to build tabernacles on the mount of vision, but to take her way into the worldly places of crime and misery and cope with the power of Satan**

### HOW IS YOUR BELIEF?

#### 1. (14-18) The disciples are unable to cast out a demon.

*And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?" Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. "And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."*

- *all the people were greatly amazed....* Why? Probably, there might remain something unusual in his countenance; as Moses's face shone when he came down from the mount. So perhaps did Christ's face, in some measure; at least, instead of seeming fatigued, there appeared **a wonderful briskness and sprightliness in His looks**, which amazed them.
- "He found disputing scribes, a distracted father, a demon-possessed boy, and defeated disciples . . . He **silenced the scribes**, He **comforted the father**, He **healed the boy**, He **instructed the disciples**." (Morgan)
- **A mute spirit:** In the eyes of contemporary Jewish exorcists, this was a particularly difficult - if not impossible - demon to cast out. This was because **they believed that you had to learn a demon's name before you could cast it out**, and if a demon made someone mute, you could never learn his name.
- **Wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid:** The boy displays signs that many today would regard as evidence of epilepsy, but Jesus perceived that they were caused by demonic possession. Surely, some of whom we diagnose as physically or mentally ill today are actually demon possessed.
- **That they should cast it out, but they could not:** This particular case of demon possession was too much for the disciples, though Jesus had given them authority over unclean spirits (**Mark 6:7**).
- Apparently some demons are stronger - that is, more stubborn or intimidating than others. **Eph. 6:12** seems to describe different ranks of demonic beings, and it isn't a stretch to think that some ranks might be more powerful than others are.

#### 2. (19-27) Jesus delivers the boy.

*He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." Then they brought him to Him.*

- *O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you?* Who does Jesus call the faithless generation? He might refer to the contentious scribes, to the desperate father, or to the **unsuccessful disciples**.

*And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him.*

- *And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground:* When Jesus comes near, the demon inside the boy knows that his time is short. **He wants to do as much damage as he can** before he leaves.
- "However, it lets us see how hardly the devil parts with his possession in us in any degree, and how ready he is to run the length of his line in doing us mischief." (Poole)

#### But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

- *But if you can do anything:* The man seems unsure if Jesus can do anything. But the "if" isn't in regard to what Jesus can do. The "if" is in regard to the man's faith. So Jesus told him, **if you can believe, all things are possible** to him who believes. **When we trust God as true, and all His promises as true, all things He promises are possible.**
- **But we have to believe God is true:** "If all the angels in heaven were to march by me in a file, and assure me that God would keep his word, I should say, 'I did not require you to tell me that, for the Lord never fails to be as good as His word.' God is so true that the witness of angels would superfluous."

Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "**Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!**" When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "**Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!**"

- **Lord, I believe; help my unbelief:** The poor father in this account is challenged by Jesus' exhortation for faith. **He did believe in Jesus' power to deliver his boy** - after all, why else would he have come to Jesus? **But he also recognizes his doubts.** So, he tearfully pleads with Jesus: **Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!**
- In this case, the man's unbelief was not a rebellion against or a rejection of God's promise. He did not *deny* God's promise; he *desired* it. However, **it just seemed too good to be true.** Thus, he says, "help my unbelief!"
- "Help my unbelief" is something a man can only say by *faith*. "While men have no faith, they are unconscious of their unbelief; but, as soon as they get a little faith, **then they begin to be conscious of the greatness of their unbelief.**" (Spurgeon)
- He adds a prayer for grace to enable him more firmly to rely upon the assurances he had of the ability and willingness of Christ to save; **Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!**
- Those that complain of unbelief, must look up to Christ for grace to help them against it, and His grace shall be sufficient for them. "Help my unbelief, help me to a pardon for it, help me with power against it; help out what is wanting in my faith with Your grace, the strength of which is perfected in our weakness."

**Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.**

- **Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him:** Jesus had no difficulty whatsoever in dealing the demon, even though the demon made a final display of his terrible strength. Knowing he must leave, the demon did the most damage he could before he left. But it was not lasting damage.
- "He will do what harm he can, when he cannot do us the harm he would." (Poole)

### **3. (28-29) Why were the disciples unsuccessful?**

- **And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."**
- **Why could we not cast it out?** Jesus reveals the reason for their weakness: **it was due to a lack of prayer and fasting.** It isn't that prayer and fasting make us more "worthy" to cast out demons; it is that **prayer and fasting draw us closer to the heart of God, and they put us more in line with His power.** They are **an expression of our total dependence on Him.**
- Jesus had already given them the authority to cast out demons (**Mk 3:14-15**), but **"The authority that Jesus had given them was effective only if exercised by faith, but faith must be cultivated through spiritual discipline and devotion."**
- This total dependence on God is the remedy for many spiritual problems. To be disappointed in yourself is to have trusted in yourself.
- We must not think to do our work always with the same ease; some services call for more than ordinary pains.

### **SUMMARY:**

- **How is your belief? Your unbelief?**
- **How accurately does the term "O faithless generation" apply to you? To Me?**
- **Do you believe that God is true and all His promises are true?**
- **Help my unbelief!** Is that your expression because you simply can't believe that God will do what you are asking?
- **How thankful? How grateful to Him am I?**

### **He Is Able to Deliver Thee - William Ogden – Hymn# 107**

1. 'Tis the grandest theme through the ages rung; 'Tis the grandest theme for a mortal tongue;  
'Tis the grandest theme that the world e'er sung, "Our God is able to deliver thee."  
Refrain: He is able to deliver thee, He is able to deliver thee;  
Though by sin oppressed, go to Him for rest; "Our God is able to deliver thee."
2. 'Tis the grandest theme in the earth or main; 'Tis the grandest theme for a mortal strain;  
'Tis the grandest theme, tell the world again, "Our God is able to deliver thee." (Refrain)
3. 'Tis the grandest theme, let the tidings roll, To the guilty heart, to the sinful soul;  
Look to God in faith, He will make thee whole, "Our God is able to deliver thee." (Refrain)

**Note:** You may access past notes and audio of the Prayer/Devotional Notes by going to: [www.missioncalvary.com](http://www.missioncalvary.com) When the screen comes up, scroll down on the left side to "Saturday Prayer Studies" Click on it and you'll see studies of Bible Prayer/Devotions. If trouble, email [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com)