

Daily Bible Study

“If You Can?!” Part - 1

Mark 9:14-29

December 5 – December 11, 2010

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY – We return this week to our study in Mark and begin a two-part look at **Mark 9:14-29**. In this text we see a major shift of scenery if you will, from the magnificent glory of Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. Last time (**Mark 9:9-13**) we saw that Jesus was descending the mountain answering the questions of Peter, James, and John concerning The Messiah’s mission and the role of Elijah the prophet. In this text we see that Jesus and the three disciples come upon the rest of Christ’s twelve disciples along with a *great multitude* including the *scribes* and the scene is anything but glorious; it is confusion, disorder, and pain. A man with a demon possessed boy had come to get deliverance for his son and the disciples were unable to cast out the evil spirit. This caused a *dispute* among the scribes and disciples and the curious onlookers were also involved. Jesus arrives on the scene and speaks some amazing lines concerning this *faithless generation*. He also gives an emotional lament as He says *How long shall I bear with you?* The boy is brought to Jesus and He asks the father some questions and the father explains to Jesus the torment of his son and then says to Jesus, *If You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.* Jesus deals with this statement of “*If You can*” and then calls the man to *believe*. The man responds to Jesus and Christ casts out the evil spirit. The disciples then later in private ask Jesus why they could not cast out this spirit and Jesus answers them with words that teach a great lesson. Read our text: **Mark 9:14-29** “*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.” 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. 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. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” 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!” 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. 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.”

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father God, Please teach and feed me from Your Word this week.

TUESDAY – **Mark 9:14-16** “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?” This event is recorded for us in all the synoptic gospels but Mark clearly gives us the most detailed account. We find that Jesus and the three disciples are coming down the next day from the mount of Transfiguration (**Luke 9:37**) and as they approach the other 9 disciples they see *a great multitude*. They also find that some of the scribes were *disputing* (examining or arguing) with the disciples. It is not precisely stated in the text but it is most likely they are *disputing* with gleeful and mocking attitudes because of the inability of the 9 disciples to cast out the evil *spirit* from the *possessed* boy. You can almost hear the, “ha, ha, you couldn’t do it”. Remember that many of these scribes along with many Pharisees wanted to discredit Jesus and doing this to His men was as close as they could come because the Savior NEVER failed to deliver. For this we praise Him! He never fails to bring about His decreed will. The mocking attitude was not universal as Mark using one of his favorite words “*Immediately*”, tells us, *when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him*. The crowd come up to Jesus and apparently the scribes came along as Jesus addresses them with “*What are you discussing with them?*” Some scholars believe that Jesus may still have had some of the Transfiguration brightness in His face which is why the people were *greatly amazed* but this is not in the text and therefore not verifiable but merely speculation. But now Jesus comes to the aid of His own disciples and in essence defends them although we will see they were not without need of admonishment. How much this is like Jesus to love His own and yet teach them and tell them what they need to hear.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Jesus, than You for loving me as Your child although I do not deserve Your kindness and compassion. Thanks also for the fact that You never fail.

WEDNESDAY – **Mark 9:17-18** *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.” We find that the mocking or taunting of the scribes apparently does not last long after Jesus asked, “*What are you discussing with them?*” It appears their bravery has vanished as they (*scribes*) are not the ones to answer but instead the man whose son was possessed speaks up from the crowd to tell Christ what was going on. It is with great respect that the man calls Jesus *Teacher*. Matthew records the man as saying, *Lord* (**Matthew 17:15**). Matthew also informs us that the “*man came to Him, kneeling down to Him*”. The man then tells Jesus that he brought his son, Luke adding, *he is my only child*. This man came to the disciples first with his son whom is tormented by a demon so much that it caused him to be *mute, throws him down*, and makes him *foam at the mouth, gnash his teeth*, and causes him to *become rigid*. This boy has a very grievous condition which is horrifying to think about. Sadly, the man brought his son to the *disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not*. This not being understated is surprising in light of the fact that Jesus gave these men incredible power (**Mark 3:15**). We as God’s people, although not the Apostles need to realize that we too have been granted power through the Holy Spirit who lives within us to live in obedience to Christ and please Him (**Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, 2 Peter 1:3**). Although we do not have the same type of authority as The Apostles we do have the same Holy Spirit within us.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for caring so much for me. Thank You Jesus for being the bravest man to ever live. Thank You Holy Spirit for Your indwelling and power; help me to obey.

THURSDAY – Mark 9:18-19 *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.” 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.”* As we have already stated, the condition of this boy was severe. If you were to look into the meanings of the Greek words in the text which describe the demons tormenting of this *only child* you would find them to be graphic and disturbing; such is the case with sin, Satan, and demons. Words such as *seizes* (to lay hold of), and *throws* (burst, to break up, to tear in pieces), along with the *foaming mouth*, and *gnashing teeth* give us a pretty grim and horrifying picture of the effects of sin and the curse. Furthermore, the heartache of this man is compounded in that this is his *only child* (**Luke 9:38**). We are reminded of several *only child* situations which Jesus faced in His ministry; the widow of Nain’s *only son* (**Luke 7:12**) and the *only daughter*, the *little daughter* of Jairus (**Mark 5:23, 35-43**), both of which Jesus brought back from death. We see that the heart of *God’s only begotten Son* went out in compassion and mercy upon these only children of hurting and grieving parents. What an insight into the heart of our Savior who sympathizes and loves hurting people who come to Him for help. When Jesus speaks to this man we find that utters two incredible statements concerning the

sorry condition and plight of fallen mankind. Jesus is obviously moved emotionally as He says “*O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you?*” We see both the pain of Jesus along with His holy and righteous indignation as He addresses His complaint to this *faithless generation*. As Scripture informs us, *without faith it is impossible to please God* (**Hebrews 11:6**).

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You that Your love is abundant toward hopeless, sinful people. Help me to always come to You for strength and help whenever I struggle in life.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 9:19 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.*” Jesus broadly spreads His complaint toward not merely those in this specific situation, but all those in general who have a lack of faith in Him and His power. The faltering disciples, the father with weak faith, the mocking scribes, and the *faithless generation* in general is in view here in Christ’s words. It is interesting to note that Jesus will point out later in the text the disciples problem of deficient faith was brought on and magnified by their lack of persevering prayer (**Mark 9:29**). Jesus next statement contrasts His total trust in The Father with the people’s lack of faith and trust in Him when Christ literally says in today’s vernacular, *How long shall I put up with you?* Think about that Beloved, Jesus was grieved that the people even His own, were so weak in their trust and faith in Him (God). He obviously has the end of His ministry in view here as He knows the cross is the final destination of this The Faithful One for the sins of a faithless and weak-faith people. Instead of “losing it” and “lashing out” in a difficult and frustrating circumstance as we often do, Jesus sets the example of patience and proper behavior under a stressful situation as He points men to Himself, the God of love, patience, and unlimited power as He says, *Bring him to Me*. This is an epic and heartwarming statement to all of us in Christ as we know that in coming to Him, and believing in Him we find all we need to deal with any circumstance of life. *Bring him to Me*; these four words say more than I could possibly attempt to express or explain in and with my human reasoning. Meditate upon them Beloved; and go to Jesus now in prayer. He is the answer to ALL of life’s problems. Is it possible that it is so simple? Yes. It is all about the person and work of Jesus our Savior. *Come unto Me all you that labor...and I will give you rest...* (**Matthew 11:28**).

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me to always come to Jesus, my sufficient Savior by faith.