

Sermon Discussion Questions: Help My Unbelief

Mark 9:14–28

Main Idea: Faith is the act of humbly believing that Jesus is both willing and able to meet us in our most hopeless inadequacies.

Outline:

- I. The Surprising Failure (Mark 9:14–20)
- II. The Fundamental Requirement (Mark 9:21–27)
- III. The Underlying Problem (Mark 9:28–29)

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you think the disciples are doing in their discipleship as you consider the transfiguration and this demon possession?
2. What key aspects of discipleship do the disciples seem to be struggling with?
3. Read Mark 9:17–18; 20–22.
 - Identify the tangible reasons this father is struggling to believe that Jesus is able to do anything for him and his son, “But, if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us” (9:22).
 - Why do you think the father asked Jesus to have compassion on “us” not just his son?
 - What is the fundamental problem with his question in verse 22?
4. Read Mark 9:23–24.
 - How can Jesus’ promise, “All things are possible for one who believes” (9:23b) destroy someone’s faith instead of build it up?
 - How is Jesus using this promise to lead this man out of his unbelief?
 - How does the Father’s response in verse 24 protect us from over realizing and wrongly applying Jesus’ promise in verse 23?
 - How does this hopeless tragedy turn out for good (more than the exorcism itself)?
5. Why doesn’t this account end with the exorcism?
6. How does verse 28 reveal the disciples self-reliance?

Application:

1. As you think about your own prayer life: (a) How does pride keep you from prayer? (b) How does God’s inexhaustible and sovereign omnipotence keep you from prayer?
2. Are there examples in your life where desperation has driven you to Jesus? Share some of those examples.
3. Would you be willing to share with your small group some of the areas you struggling with doubt, cynicism, and unbelief today?
4. How can the father’s plea, “I believe, help my unbelief” encourage you to take your struggles, anxiety, and doubt to Jesus today?
5. How can the father’s plea help you counsel friends and family who are struggling with unbelief?