

**The Gospel of Mark: “A Crisis of Faith”**  
Mark 9:14-29

**A Crisis of Faith**

- The disciples who didn't go on the mountain with Jesus were arguing with the scribes. (vv. 14-19)
  - A father with a demon-possessed son was among them.
  - He had brought his son to Jesus' disciples, but they could not help the boy.
  - Jesus declared them a faithless generation, a reference to faithless Israel of old.  
*They have dealt corruptly with him; they are no longer his children because they are blemished; they are a crooked and twisted generation. (Deuteronomy 32:5)*
- Immediately, the presence of Jesus unsettles everything. (v. 20)
  - It's not surprising that the demon rages in the presence of Jesus.
  - The battle is joined when Jesus is on the move.
- There is clearly an evil, sinister force at work beyond the physical suffering of the boy. (v. 22)
  - Not every sickness is demon related.
  - Some sickness is simply sickness.
- The man wonders if Jesus can help his son. (vv. 22-23)
  - Some followers may have extraordinary measures of faith and trust in God.
  - But there are many of us who don't, and this man is one of those who doubts as much as he trusts. (v. 24)
  - What's important, though, is not the amount of faith but the object of faith. (vv. 25-27)  
*A weak faith can lay hold on a strong Christ. (Thomas Watson)*
- The story ends with the disciples perplexed by their failure and instructed by their King.  
*This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer. (v. 29)*

### A Call to Faith

- The call—God wants you and me to rely on Him.
  - We should be instructed and awed by the omniscient Jesus.

*We should leave the passage with comfortable feelings. Greater is He that is for us than all those who are against us. Satan is strong, busy, active, malicious. But Jesus is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him—from the devil, as well as from sin—from the devil, as well as from the world. Let us possess our souls in patience. Jesus still lives, and will not let Satan pluck us out of His hand. Jesus still lives, and will soon come again to deliver us entirely from the fiery darts of the wicked one. The God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly. (J.C. Ryle)*

- We should be warned and aware of our overconfident selves.

- The disciples had cast out demons before.

*So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. <sup>13</sup> And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them. (Mark 6:12-13)*

- Now, they can't, and the reason is a lack of prayer and dependence. (v. 29)

- So...

- Follower of Christ, are you relying on God's help to do God's work?

*Let us learn a lesson of humility from the failure of the disciples. Let us strive to realize every day our need of the grace and presence of Christ. With Him we may do all things. Without Him we can do nothing at all. With Him we may overcome the greatest temptations. Without Him the least may overcome us. Let our cry be every morning, "leave us not to ourselves—we know not what a day may bring forth—if your presence does not go with us we cannot go up." (J.C. Ryle)*

- Do you pray?
- Do you ask and plead for God's Spirit to help you? (2 Cor. 10:3-4; Eph. 6:11-12; Proverbs 3:5-6)

*We are never more safe than when we are most sensible that we can do nothing without Christ. (John Newton)*

- Christ Fellowship Church, are we a weak church, desperate for His help?

*For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10)*

- To each and every person: are you aware of your desperate need for Christ and His delight in meeting your needs?

*Unbelief will destroy the best of us: faith will save the worst of us. (Charles Spurgeon)*