

In Mark 9:14-29 we find Jesus healing a boy with an unclean spirit in 4 acts.

- I. Act I: Jesus enters a disorderly scene (vs. 14-19).
- II. Act II: Jesus engages a desperate man (vs. 20-24).
- III. Act III: Jesus exorcises a destructive spirit (vs. 25-27).
- IV. Act IV: Jesus educates his disciples (vs. 28-29).

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, September 27, 2015

Passage: Mark 9:14-29

Memory Passage: Mark 9:23-24

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 9:14-29.** Describe the scene into which Jesus & the three disciples descended.
- (b) Compare & contrast this scene with (1) the scene on the mountain, and (2) the scene coming down the mountain.
- (c) Why were the scribes arguing with the disciples?
- (d) Why was the crowd “greatly amazed” at the mere appearance of Jesus?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 9:14-29.** Explain what Jesus means by his questions in v. 19 (“how long am I to be with/bear with you?”).
- (b) How does this man’s request (v. 22) compare with the leper’s request (1:40), the actions of the paralytic’s friends (2:3-4), the requests of Jairus (5:23) and the woman with the issue of blood (5:28), and the Syrophenician woman (7:28)?
- (c) What lesson is Jesus teaching the man in v. 23, and how does the man receive and respond to this lesson in v. 24?
- (d) Was the boy actually dead or did he just appear to be dead? Why is this distinction important given Jesus’ actions (v.27)?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 9:14-29.** Why was the father so desperate in his response (v. 24)?
- (b) How can the father have both faith and unbelief at the same time? How can *you* have both at the same time?
- (c) What does this cry (“Lord help my unbelief”) tell you about the nature of faith? About believers’ exercising of faith?
- (d) In what situations do you find yourself where you need to cry out to God to help your unbelief? What about these situations causes your faith to wane? How are you strengthened as a result of this admission of unbelief?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 9:14-29.** Was the disciples’ question (v. 28) good (i.e. “How did we fail you, Lord”) or bad, (i.e. “What was wrong with our words/incantation/methods” etc.)? What does this reveal about the way the disciples were ministering?
- (b) FYI—Some manuscripts add “and fasting” to v. 29 but the manuscript evidence, as well as the internal evidence in Mark (2:18-22), mitigate against this being the accurate reading. What does Jesus’ response (v. 29) reveal about the disciples’ work?
- (c) What is the relationship between praying and faith? What is the relationship between prayer and carrying out the mission Jesus has given you?
- (d) The disciples “failed” in their efforts to stand in Jesus’ stead. What did they learn from this failure? In what ways do you “fail” as you minister in Jesus’ name, and what are the reasons for your failure?

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 9:14-29.** I’m sure Peter would have rather stayed on the mountaintop with his tent beholding Jesus’ glory than to have descended into the mire and misery of sin. In what ways are you tempted to build your tent and separate from the pain and suffering of the world? How do you overcome this tendency in order to be Christ’s witnesses and make disciples?
- (b) Notice that the man brought his son to Jesus (v. 17), not to the disciples, and yet he expected His disciples to accomplish his request in Jesus’ absence. How does this fact instruct you concerning your ministry to lost and hurting people?
- (c) Mark wants us to see Jesus’ authority and power, as well as to see that Jesus commissions his disciples to exercise that same authority and power in His name. Reflect for a moment on your ministry and your prayer life. Is your ministry dependent upon God’s power or your own? Does your prayer life reflect a dependence on God or yourself? How might you increase your prayer life in a way that demonstrates your dependence upon God and not yourself?

DATE: September 27, 2015

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The Desperation of Faith