

MARK 9:14-29 INTO THE VALLEY

INTRO:

- **Jesus is nearly 3 years into His public ministry now, just months from the crucifixion.**
- **Lk. 9:37 tells us that this incident happened the day after the transfiguration.**

READ Mark 9:14-29

- **For a moment let's look at some of the disciples' obstacles.**
 - 1) The scribes were debating with them and perhaps ridiculing them for their inability to help this father and son.**
 - 2) Jesus' ministry and name would have been insulted, as the scribes would have been doing all in their power to disgrace the name and ministry of Jesus.**
 - 3) Jesus Himself was gone from them.**
 - 4) Peter, James and John, the foremost disciples were also gone.**
 - 5) The remaining 9 would have been on their own.**
 - 6) It would seem they were not diligent in prayer.**
- **So, when Jesus returned from the mount of T, He found disputing scribes, a distraught father, a demon possessed boy, and defeated disciples.**
- **Before we jump into the exposition let's notice some of the contradictions in these 2 scenes, the mount of T. and the valley of despair and possession**
 - **God dominated the mount, here the devil dominates.**
 - **On the mount the disciples gazed into the holiness of God, in the valley they gazed into the wretchedness of Satan.**
 - **There is also shown here a contrast between the Father and the Son on the mountain of transfiguration and the father and the son in the valley of lost humanity.**
 - **This is My beloved Son, My only Son in whom I am well pleased, and the father in the valley, this is my beloved son, my only son, in whom there is a demon.**
 - **On the mount the Father was pleased, in the valley the father was tormented.**
 - **On the mount there was the perfect Son filled with glory, in the valley a perverted son filled with torment and agony.**
 - **On the mount the onlookers were in a holy wonder, here there was an unholy terror.**

VS. 15 & 16, Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to *Him*, greeted Him. ¹⁶ And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?"

- The people were amazed to see Jesus, they did not expect Him, He had arrived at the perfect moment. His timing was perfect.
- Just as His disciples were about to go under as it seemed the scribes were triumphant over them and the name of Jesus would suffer harm,
- just as it seemed the tragedy of the possessed boy and the suffering father would not be satisfied but they would be turned away empty; Jesus shows up! They were amazed!
- God is never late, He is not needlessly early, His timing is perfect.

VS. 17 & 18, Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. ¹⁸ 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."

- Mt. 17:14 tells us the father made his request on his knees before Jesus.
- They could not cast the demon out...MORE ON THIS LATER. VS. 28

VS. 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."

- Note Jesus' frustration with the continued unbelief.
 - How long shall I be with you?
 - How long shall I bear with you?
- There is a limit to God's patience. (**Isa. 5:1-7**)
- He labels the crowd and perhaps the disciples as well with faithless and perverse generation. (perverse; "to distort, twist")
- Basically, this whole generation was characterized as "faithless."

VS. 21 & 22 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."

- Notice the father's love for his son, his heart's connection and dedication to his son for he includes himself with the son's pain; he is one with his son, "have compassion on us, help us."
- Also notice vs 24; the father of the child cried out and spoke with tears. He shares his son's pain.
- What a picture of true effectual prayer, for effectual prayer is prayer that is earnest, and moved with godly emotion for that which we are praying.

VS. 23, Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes."

- Notice the contrast in vs 22 & 23 regarding ability.
- The father says, "if you can do anything, and Jesus responds in Vs 23, all things are possible to him who believes. (faith comes from God, it is His gift to man)

VS. 24, Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

- The word "help" literally means "to run to the cry" a cry of those in danger
- Notice the father's honesty regarding his true faith. He does not hide his deformity of faith. Above all, he aches for his son and is broken and transparent for the answer.
- "Lord help my unbelief." The failure of the disciples of Jesus to deliver the boy, and that the father was most certainly looking at his boy withering and foaming on the ground would have affected his ability to believe.
- This poor man did not want to not believe, he would have rather believed, but he could not make himself believe. He had the will to believe but not the power.

VS. 25; He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!"

- We must notice how the demons must obey Jesus.
- What absolute authority He has over the demonic world.
- Even when the father and son left the demon could never enter the boy again.

VS. 20 26 & 27, 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. 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." ²⁷ But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

- Sometimes when we surrender and go on with God, or bring things to Jesus, things seem to get worse.
- Here it was like that, the father brought the son to Jesus for healing and things got worse.
- He convulsed him greatly, he fell on the ground, withered, foaming at the mouth and fell to the ground as one who was dead.
- Things, circumstances looked worse, but wait, Jesus is in control and He takes things by the hand, things that look hopeless, discouraging and dead, but behold things are answered, there is life.

VS. 28, And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

- In private the disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast out this demon.
 - Mt.17:20, So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.
- The boy's father had a mustard seed of faith. (I believe, help my unbelief.)
- This child was the man's only child. (LK. 9:38)

- **Very interesting that the disciples could not cast out the demon. In **Mk 6:7 &13** Jesus had given the 12 power.**
- **Their ability to cast out demons, heal, etc. was the authority of Jesus lent out to them. It was not their power but His.**
- **The disciple's failure to cast out the demon when earlier they were given the authority by Jesus to have power over them may be linked to a confidence, they may have had in themselves. That they were sufficient for the need.**
- **They had put their trust in themselves and past experiences rather than in Jesus.**
- **Like Israel and Ai when they thought they were sufficient on their own without consulting God. They ended defeated, embarrassed and humiliated.**
- **Desperate prayer is the best path to the power and favor of God.**

VS. 29, So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

- **Would prayer and fasting give them power, or would prayer and fasting build them up while in the presence of God, thus strengthening their faith in God? Not prayer alone but prayer that is communion.**
- **Time, serious time in the presence of God is the proper atmosphere to grow faith in God. (MK. 11:22)**
- **Faith needs nourishing, needs to be watchfully kept up by constant fellowship with our God.**
- **Intimacy with God is best achieved in prayer and fasting which is prayer.**
- **Indulgence of the flesh makes the soul feeble, and causes faith to atrophy.**
- **I don't believe the power is ever owned or originates from us, but from God.**
- **God is always the source.**
- **Our authority comes from Him and our relationship with Him is the strength of the authority.**
- **Prayer and fellowship with God increase and strengthens the muscle of faith. Know God and know His authority.**

CLOSING:

VS. 18: But they could not!

- **What a sad, disheartening statement. What emptiness is in it.**
- **Our "I could nots are many. We are insufficient for our high calling of both life and deeds.**
- **Some sad people, when they reach the "I could not" turn to worldly solutions and answers.**
- **Money, toys, earthly pursuits, relationships, sex. anything to fill the void, the emptiness, the inabilities in their lives. Yet all will fail to fill me, give me a lasting joy and contentment. Only Jesus can do this.**
 - **"For the waters of this world have failed and I am thirsting still."**

- **The I could nots are meant to lead us to Jesus. To intimacy with God for He has no contenders.**
- **It is His presence that empowers, that fills, that heals.**
 - **PS 16:11; You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.**
- **See how the world suffers when Christ's disciples fail.**
- **When the disciples were unable to help, it was the father and son who suffered.**
- **so it is today, when the saints and the church fail the world suffers, the needy hurt, the distressed are in pain, the sin addicted are not released.**
- **The churches failure is the world's calamity and loss.**
- **They could not, I could not, yet such a blessed statement. When we come to the end of our strengths and abilities and find that we cannot and there it is we finally find Jesus and His ability, Our God is able.**
- **But also note, when we fail Christ remains faithful.**
 - **2 Tim. 2:13; If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.**
- **Christ can turn our failures into victories.**

NOT I BUT CHRIST THROUGH ME!