

Do You Believe?

Mark 9:14-29

Dr. Paul Cannings

A. The Battle (vs. 14-19):

1. When they came back – Jesus’s coming from the Mt. of Transfiguration did not come to the crowds; He came with His mind set on serving the needs of the disciples.
2. When they came back – Christ had provided the disciples with the power to remove demons (Mark 6:7-13) and they were faithful in getting that done. We have the power of the Holy Spirit permanently in us (Ephesians 1:3; Titus 3:4-8; 1 John 4:4).
3. Saw – Christ already fully understood what was taking place when He began to experience the crowd.
4. Scribes were arguing - The scribes were critically and forcefully disputing this issue with the disciples.
5. The entire crowd saw – The crowd clearly and fully recognized who Christ was. They needed no introduction so they must have seen Him before.
6. Amazed – The people were astounded that Christ was actually there. It seems like they did not expect Him to be present especially since the disciples were out and about presenting.
7. He asked them – Christ demanded that the disciples explain what was going on. In other words with the authority Christ gave them this should not have taken place.
8. Discussing with them – Christ wanted to know why were there such forceful differences of opinions being disputed.
9. One of the crowd answered Him – The person with the greatest need always speaks loudest. The father of this afflicted boy wanted results. He was going to persist until he found help. He must have been the loudest and the first to speak.
10. I bought you my son – The father took the initiative and moved his son in Christ direction. He did not bring his son to see the disciples or scribes; he brought his son to Christ because he expected Christ to resolve the issue.
11. I bought you my son – This man knew who Christ was and was convinced that Christ was the answer to his persistent violent problem he has been dealing with for a year – (how does this play into his unbelief request vs. 24 – discuss later).
12. Seizes – Whenever the demon decides to enter the boy, he takes full control of the boys’

body.

13. I told the disciples to cast him out - The man expresses his disappointment by telling Jesus that he spoke to Christ followers (since he was bringing the boy to Christ and He was not there) and they could not forcefully expel this evil spirit from inside his son.
14. Said – Christ repeatedly kept rebuking the unbelief demonstrated by everyone including His disciples. In other words, this is doable, the problem is the level of everyone’s faith including the boy’s father who later admitted that he needed help with his faith.
15. Unbelieving – Everyone knew of Jesus’s reputation because they were amazed when they saw him. Everyone knew of the phenomenal miracles He had done but yet they still lacked the confidence (arguing among themselves; vs. 14) that Christ can heal the boy.
16. Put up – Our lack of faith has a day of accountability. Christ is only going to delay punishment so long before He brings us into His courts for reckoning.
17. Bought – Christ did not take the boy from his father. Christ challenged the father, who was looking for Him, and now recognized He is there, to obey His command, submit to His will, put aside his thoughts and pass disappointments, and continuously obey His command to move the boy to where Christ was standing.

B. The Inner Struggle (vs. 20-27):

1. They bought the boy to Him – They, not just the father, obeyed Christ command and once and for all moved the boy to where Christ was standing.
2. When He saw Him - Christ saw the father when he talked with him (vs. 17) and the disciples (vs. 14) but apparently, He did not see the boy.
3. When He saw Him - As soon as the demon recognized that Christ was in full knowledge of what is taking place, not just because of what the father said, but also because He now has his eyes on the boy, the demon sought to take over. The demon knows he has lost but he is not going to give up.
4. He ask his father – They may have brought the boy, but they are demanding answers from the father. This problem has been going on for years. This father however never stopped trying to help his son no matter how long it took to get help. I admire this so much! When you believe the Lord is your answer you never quit.
5. If you can – “If you can” is evidence that the father struggled with faith. He heard all about Jesus, came to seek him out, but yet since no one else was able – “if you can.” Despite all this Jesus never turned him away.
6. If you can – The question is ‘if you continuously have the power, ability, and resources and the power of God please heal my son.’

7. All things are possible – When we bring all things before the Lord the Almighty divine powerful ability of the Lord God is always magnificent. There is absolutely nothing that can outmatch the ability of the Lord (Phil. 4:13).
8. To him who believes – What makes things possible is when the person coming to Christ has a deep commitment to continuously trust in His promises when faced with the impossible issues before them. In other words, the overwhelming issues before them do not cause them to question the Lord's ability; it does not create doubt (James 1:6-8).
9. Cried out and said – The boy's father demonstrates his level of desperation and distress when he continuously, boisterously and in a disorderly urgent fashion ask Christ to help his disbelief. He had no plans to stop asking Christ to help him so that he can save his sons' life.
10. I do believe – The man confesses that he continuously has kept a deep conviction and complete confidence in the ability of Christ. From all the knowledge he has of Christ he has a deep commitment to trust Christ. This is demonstrated through this narrative and by his persistence for Christ to help him.
11. Unbelief – His problem is directed towards a lack of confidence when he has the opportunity to trust Christ. This could be a statement about his life. He may not be consistent in his walk with God, because he just said he believes and has been persistent in finding help from Christ. It could be that because of the control the demon has over his boy and the failure of Christ's disciples, he sometimes doubts that his boy can be healed or because nothing has changed yet, and the boy is having another attack, his faith is wavering. Like the disciples, he needs Christ to help him. I love this mans' honesty.
12. When Jesus saw the crowd gathering – Jesus did not want the attention of a larger crowd.
13. He rebuked the unclean spirit – Christ manifested His power when He functioned in a supernatural manner with a supernatural being commanding the demon to leave the boy.
14. Cry out – The demon was boisterous and disorderly as it left the boy. The demon, even with Christ present, did not plan to leave peacefully (vs. 20).
15. Jesus took him by the hands – To take the boy by the hand means that Jesus now has full control and authority over the boy's life.
16. Raise him – While the boy was still unconscious Jesus was pulling him up. He demonstrates that He is powerfully in control.
17. Got up; Rose – The boy once and for all rose up because of the power and authority of Christ, which means the demons power was overthrown.

C. The Victory – Believe (vs. 28-29):

1. He came into – Christ and the disciples withdrew from the crowd to a place where they were alone.
2. Questioning – The disciples were endlessly demanding for Christ to explain why they could not remove the demon when He gave them the power to do it (Mark 6:13).
3. We Cannot Drive Him Out – They kept trying to find out why could they not forcefully expel the demon from the boy.
4. This Kind Cannot Come Out – This particular kind of demon cannot be expelled the same way they did the other demons when Christ sent them out. They needed to learn one more step from Christ.
5. Purposeful prayer – Their dependence on God is always needed and it is vividly portrayed when circumstances expose the commitment to pray. The strength of God is exposed by our humble submission to our need for His power. Prayer demonstrates our humble submission and dependence on the power and authority of the Lord.