

Saturday, March 28 ~ Overcome My Unbelief ~ Mark 9:14-29

Jesus returned from the mountain where the Transfiguration had just taken place to find the religious leaders of the day arguing with a crowd over a demon-possessed boy. The disciples had been earnestly trying to heal the boy, but they could not. The boy's father approached Jesus and asked for healing for his son. He said, "Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." Jesus was startled by the man's question. "What do you mean, 'If I can?'" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes." The man immediately realized his mistake. The father cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!" This man was overcome with grief over his son's condition. He had spent years searching for a solution to no avail. His frustration and heartbreak led to his unbelief in the power of Jesus.

Many times the responsibilities of school, work, or family life can lead us to frustration. We get so caught up in the trials of today that we forget our God's power to heal us and deliver us from any situation. After Jesus had healed the boy the disciples asked, "Why couldn't we cast out that evil spirit?" They had tried with all of their might but still were unable to heal the boy of his sickness. Jesus responded, "This kind can be cast out only through prayer." When our present struggles bog us down, when we feel frustrated and our hearts incline towards unbelief, the Great Teacher gives us a remedy: prayer. The health of our prayer life is the key to the health of our spiritual life. The answer to our unbelief, the strength to climb the mountain, the healing to our sickness, and the joy to persevere through all of life's trials is found in the outcry of our prayers.

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Jesus Heals a Boy Possessed by an Impure Spirit

¹⁴When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. ¹⁵As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him.

¹⁶“What are you arguing with them about?” he asked.

¹⁷A man in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. ¹⁸Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.”

¹⁹“You unbelieving generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.”

²⁰So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

²¹Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?”

“From childhood,” he answered. ²²“It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”

²³“If you can?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”

²⁴Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

²⁵When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. “You deaf and mute spirit,” he said, “I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.”

²⁶The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, “He’s dead.” ²⁷But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up.

²⁸After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

²⁹He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.^[a]”