

December 10, 2023

FROM THE MOUNTAINTOP TO THE VALLEY

Pastor Roger Poupart // Mark 9:14-29



PREPARE YOUR HEART & MIND

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide you in your time.



14 When they came back to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. 15 Immediately, when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed and began running up to greet Him. 16 And He asked them, "What are you discussing with them?" 17 And one of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; 18 and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it." 19 And He answered them and said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!" 20 They brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth. 21 And He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. 22 It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" 23 And Jesus said to him, "'If You can?' All things are possible to him who believes." 24 Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief." 25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again." 26 After crying out and throwing him into terrible convulsions, it came out; and the boy became so much like a corpse that most of them said, "He is dead!" 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him; and he got up. 28 When He came into the house, His disciples began questioning Him privately, "Why could we not drive it out?" 29 And He said to them, "This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer."



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- How would you describe the mental, emotional, or spiritual state of the boy's father? Consider the details of his dialogue with Jesus that Mark included.

- In what ways can you relate to the father in this story? What might be a time in life in which desperation drove you to Jesus?

02. Jesus responded to the father's doubt and stated that all things are possible through faith. The father affirmed his faith, yet sought help regarding his unbelief. Jesus healed the boy and explained to his disciples that this type of healing required prayer (v. 23-29).

- How would you articulate the connection between faith and the work Jesus did during his earthly ministry? See also Mark 5:34, 36; Matthew 8:5-13.



GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Pray to begin your group time. Remind the group why you are meeting: to connect in meaningful relationships, to grow spiritually, and to engage in the life and work of the church together. Reflect on the values you want to share as a group (i.e. confidentiality, authenticity, grace).

CONNECT (30-40 MIN)

You can use these suggestions to foster connection and build community in your group. You can break your group into smaller parts if needed, pick a question to discuss, and let each member get to know one another.

- Spend a few minutes catching up with one another. Discuss what you are most or least looking forward to during the Christmas holiday.
- Ask the second question in the Connect section of the passage guide and give each person a chance to respond.

GROW (30-40 MIN)

Gather back as a big group if you broke up earlier and have one person pray over your time discussing God's word. As you discuss, don't worry if there are questions left unanswered or unresolved. Reach out to ministry leaders or pastors for any needed clarification.

- Select 1-2 questions from each section. Pick questions that stand out to you, or that you believe would be most helpful for your group.
- Read any cross-references together and discuss.

ENGAGE (30-40 MIN)

Reflect on the biblical truth God revealed to you this week and discuss a plan of action to apply what you have learned. Gather in smaller groups of 2-4 again. Discuss your plan of action and pray for one another.

- Discuss the last question of the passage guide. Encourage your group to discuss without judging the state of other members' prayer lives.
- Close group time by sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.