

**THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS – p. 29**

**“Lord, Help My Faith!”**

**Mark 9:14-29**

**Context**

Jesus has just left the mountain top, along with Peter, James, and John –

-They come down the mountain, back to real life, and are instantly amid a controversy!

-While they just had the opportunity to live by sight, the “real world” for a Christian is living by faith!

Controversy Sandwich –

-The narrative begins with a controversy and ends with the disciples referring back to the controversy –

The Compassion and Power of Jesus –

-What we get in the middle is another brilliant example of the compassion and power of Jesus.

**Read Mark 9:14-29**

**Pray**

**How to Live by Faith**

We need faith –

-Paul said to the Roman Christians – “...*The righteous shall live by faith.*” (Rom. 1:17)

-He wrote to the Corinthians – “...*for we walk by faith, not by sight.*” (2 Cor. 5:7)

-Peter wrote – “*Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*” (1 Peter 1:8-9)

The New Testament Epistles (not including the Gospels) talk about faith, believing, trust, etc. over 250 times –

-Christians live by faith!

**1 – *Never minimize your need for Jesus* –**

-v. 14 – “*And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and the scribes arguing with them.*”

-As this controversy sandwich begins, what is the greatest need of the disciples?

-Their greatest need is the presence of Jesus!

-Something that we see in the gospels is that when Jesus is not present, the disciples get into trouble!

-The need for God’s presence is a theme of Scripture –

-What did Adam and Eve lose in being banished from the Garden? The Presence of God.

-What did the Israelites need as they were rescued from Egypt?

-The Presence of God – the cloud and pillar of fire.

-Then, after the golden calf and God saying He was not going with them, Moses said, “If you don’t go with us then don’t send us!”

-How precious, then, was the promise of Jesus to send the Spirit who would be with them and in them!

**2 – *Behold and be amazed at Jesus* –**

-All the gospels are written to reveal to us the true nature of Jesus – He is awesome because He is God!

-And as God, we see repeatedly His power and His compassion.

-So, behold and be amazed at this Christ!

-His power makes Him able – His compassion makes Him willing!

-In this story is a man who, because of what He saw and heard about Jesus, believed Jesus could help his son

-Unfortunately for him, he gets the nine disciples left at the bottom of the mountain and they can do nothing.

-But when Jesus arrives, everything changes!

- Faith increases the more you love and admire Jesus Christ – Faith increases as your confidence in Christ increases.
- Faith increases as your affection for Christ increases. Faith increases as your hope in Christ increases.
- If you want to grow in faith then grow in your knowledge, appreciation, and awe of Jesus!
- And what is so awesome about this is that anyone can grasp and apprehend the glory of Jesus Christ –
- John Piper in *Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ* –
  - It starts with the conviction that divine truth can be self-authenticating. In fact, it would seem strange if God revealed himself in his Son Jesus Christ and inspired the record of that revelation in the Bible but did not provide a way for ordinary people to know it. Stated most simply, the common path to sure knowledge of the real Jesus is this: Jesus, as he is revealed in the Bible, has a glory – and excellence, a spiritual beauty – that can be seen as self-evidently true. It is like seeing the sun and knowing that it is light and not dark, or like tasting honey and knowing it is sweet not sour. There is no long chain of reasoning from premises to conclusions. There is a direct apprehension that this person is true, and his glory is the glory of God.
- I want you to see the comprehensive nature of Jesus' compassion –
  - God's grace is needed for this special young man – And His grace is needed for the family!
  - Read verses 21-22 - Since the time this young man was a boy, his father had been saving his life
  - v. 22 – *"...have compassion on us and help us."*

### **3 – Focus on the object of your faith, not the amount of it –**

- We need to pause to consider something that is so important when learning about faith and how to increase faith – What is most important is not the amount of faith, but the object of faith.
- Notice how this massive point about faith is revealed in this story – Let's read it again – verse 22b-24
- This father speaks for all of us!
  - I believe, help my unbelief! That is a sincere prayer that the Lord delights to answer.

### **4 – Let evidence build your faith –**

- Christian faith is not evident-less; it does not lack evidence –
  - *"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork."* (Ps. 19:1)
  - Romans 1:18-23
- This story gives evidence to the life-giving, life-restoring, life-changing power of Christ.
  - And all of this after a death-like experience.
- This is a beautiful picture of the new life Jesus gives us –
  - Like this young man, we must die to the devil and his world system –
  - We must die to our natural inclination to self-rule.
  - But then Jesus takes us by the hand and raises us to new life!
    - v. 25 – *"...come out of him and never enter him again."*
    - Because once you belong to Jesus, you belong to Him forever!
- Testifying of the change – and people seeing it – builds the faith of one another.

### **5 – Pursue a life of prayer –**

- It is a "Controversy Sandwich" as the story ends with the disciples circling back to the controversy that it began with –
- The Lord's answer, v. 29 – *"And he said to them, 'This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.'"*
  - Here is a massive lesson for their faith and ministry –
    - No matter what great things you will do for Me, you will never be beyond your need for Me.
  - Prayer is the recognition we cannot do it alone –
  - Prayer is our collective recognition that we need God!