

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus with Our Doubt: “Help my unbelief.”

Focus Passage: Luke 9:14–29

Larger Context: All of Luke 9, beginning with the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain, with Peter, James, and John accompanying Him while the other disciples were below.

Comments to Leaders

- Please know that I am praying for your group and asking the Holy Spirit to help all of us in our “un-faith”.

Sermon Recap

Peter James and John had been with Jesus on a mountain when Jesus was transfigured before their eyes. Moses and Elijah had also appeared, and everyone heard God say, “This is my beloved Son; listen to him.” It was an incredible moment of experiencing the presence of God in His glory. It was like when being in God’s presence on Mt. Sinai left Moses’ face glowing, but this was even greater.

When Jesus and his three accompanying disciples arrived back in the valley from the mountain, they found a drastic contrast. Instead of experiencing the glory of God’s presence, they found confusion, conflict, and doubt. The nine disciples, who had not accompanied Jesus to the mountain, were confronted with a failed effort to free a boy from a demon. Jesus rebuked their lack of faith and connected their lack power to a lack of prayer. The boy’s father approached Jesus saying, “I believe; help my unbelief.” The Big Idea is that “Our perfect God meets us in our imperfect faith.”

Mark 9:14–29 teach us that to find faith in the valleys of life:

- **Prayer** is a tool for faith in the valley. Sometimes we least feel like praying in the valley, but as Jesus’ disciples learned in their failed exorcism, we cannot overcome the power of sin and evil without prayer. We need to have others pray with and for us, especially in those times when we are struggling to pray ourselves.
- In the valley, we need to **listen** to God’s words through the Bible and prayer.
- **Worship** from the mountain experiences help us experience also God’s presence in the valleys. There is a difference between knowing about God’s presence and experiencing God’s presence. (Grand Canyon illustration)
- The chaos and pain of the valley call us to **surrender** as the father surrendered his precious son in trust to Jesus.

Even after surrender and trust in Jesus, things sometimes appear to go from bad to worse before they get better. Onlookers thought the boy had died after Jesus expelled the evil spirit. The passage uses the same literal word used for *resurrection* when it says, “Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose” (Mark 9:27)

Jesus descended into the ultimate valley for us so that He could lead us to the mountaintop with God.

Interpretation Helps

- The Greek word translated “belief” uses a verb form of “faith” that does not exist in English. The boy’s father in Mark 9:24 more literally says, “I *faith* you; help my *unfaith*.”

Group Gathering

Group Check-in — Care, Celebration, Encouragement (About 1/3 of meeting time)

1. Informal conversation to allow individuals to catch up with one another.
2. Ask if anyone would share how they’ve been hearing and obeying God’s direction.

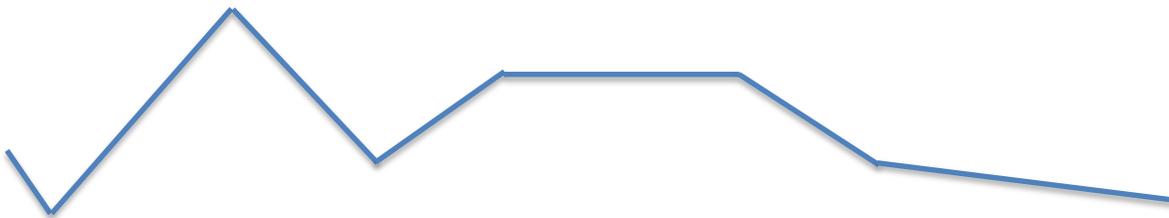
Allow the Word to Speak — Be Hearers of the Word (About 1/3 of meeting time)

READ Mark 9:14–29

1. What from the passage or sermon was most impactful to you?
2. Were you left with any questions or confusion about the passage or sermon?
3. How did Jesus address the people involved in the chaos upon returning from the mountain? (Mark 9:19)?

Put the Word into Practice — Be Doers of the Word (About 1/3 of meeting time)

1. How would you explain the difference between “belief” and “faith”?
2. Can someone believe Jesus is God in human flesh ... born of a virgin, sinless, crucified, and resurrected without “faithing” in Him? How yes or how no?
3. Imagining the diagram below as mountains and valleys, where would you locate yourself at this moment in time ... on a mountaintop experiencing the powerful presence of God ... in a valley of chaos and conflict, plateaued?



4. How would you invite the rest of the group to pray with/for you?
5. What are you hearing as you listen to God’s word?
6. Is there a next step of surrender you need to hand over to God?

The Big Question: What do you sense God's Spirit saying to you and what concrete action will you take in response? Share your answer with the group or another trusted Christian and ask them to pray for you.

What We Hope Members Glean from the Passage

1. No set answer.
2. No set answer.
3. “O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you?”

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES: Click [here](#) for some good opportunities.