



**Sermon Series:** All Jesus All Summer

**Scripture:** Mark 9:14-29

**Speaking:** Reid Robinette

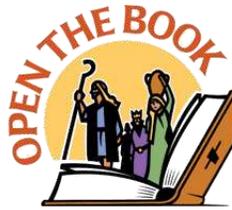


**Before your group study begins, share your first impressions on the message.  
Did the message raise any particular questions?**

*IF YOU WERE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND THE SUNDAY SERVICE, WATCH OR LISTEN TO THE SERMON AT  
<http://www.crossroads140.com/sermons/>*



**Summary** – The scriptures teach that without faith it is impossible to please God. Jesus models, identifies and rewards faith throughout His healing encounter with a father and his son.



**Each week you will open the Bible and explore the Scripture for the week. While you're there, take a look at the verses that surround your text for the week. As you read, you might want to make a list of observations. Try to put yourself in each of the character's shoes. Make a list of questions you may not have answers to. Ask God what He may be trying to teach you.**

READ Mark 9:14-29

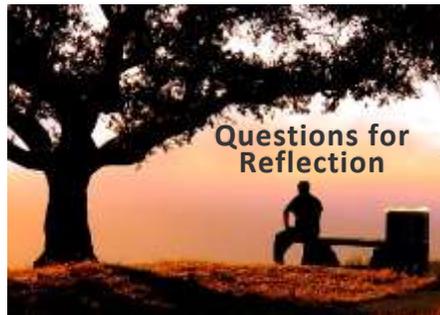
**My first impression of the passage:**

**Observations:**

Scripture surrounding your text-

Characters (Who's listening? Who's in the story?) / Setting / Culture-

**My Questions:**



1. Which of the aspects of faith (occasion, enemy, display or result) were most challenging to you? Why?
2. Why is the object of faith more important than the amount of faith?
3. Why didn't Jesus pray before healing the boy after saying "this kind can only come out by prayer"?



1. What is the Lord calling you to do by faith?



God, let us understand that we can cry out to You for help with the faith we do have. And we thank You that victory over sin comes through faith in Your Son, not through our own efforts. Amen.

## Go Deeper

### COMMENTARY

9:14. After a mountaintop experience, many Christians hesitate to return to the everyday routine. The disciples felt the same. Peter wanted to remain on the mountaintop with Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. They descended the mountain, however, and were confronted immediately with human needs. Jesus' other disciples were not able to meet the need. They were engaged in a dispute with a group of scribes.

9:15. Some interpreters believe the crowds were "overwhelmed" because Jesus' face shone as did Moses' when he descended the mountain of God. The text, however, gives no indication of this. If this had happened, it would have contradicted Jesus' own words to keep the event secret until after his death and resurrection. The more likely meaning is that Jesus' appearance was sudden and unexpected.

9:16. Jesus' question was meant to draw out the person who needed healing. Before we can be healed, we must admit our need. Some interpreters suggest that Jesus' question was meant to draw attention away from the disciples and to himself. This may be parallel with Jesus' writing on the ground in John 8:6. We don't know what he wrote, but we do know his actions drew attention away from the woman caught in adultery and to himself. It is a snapshot of what Jesus did for all believers on the cross.

9:17–18. The father's intention was to bring his son to be healed by Jesus. Since Jesus was not available, he made his request to the disciples. Because Jesus had previously given the disciples authority in his name, the father's request was not inappropriate. But the disciples were unable to meet this pressing need.

The son is described as mute and deaf (v. 25). The description of convulsions is symptomatic of epilepsy, but the father claimed he was “possessed by a spirit.” This has caused many problems for theologians over the years as they try to decide whether epilepsy is always described as demon possession. A few things can be said in response to this. (1) All sickness is not demon possession. (2) The deafness here is of demonic origin; however, not all instances of deafness are attributed to demons. (3) The seizures were the work of an unclean spirit.

Many people with epilepsy and other severe diseases have been traumatized by well-meaning but misguided people who tried to cast demons out of them. Christians need discernment, compassion, and prayer—something that Jesus pointed out in verse 29. The father’s concern for his son was genuine. His graphic detail, recounted possibly by the eyewitness Peter to Mark, shows a brokenness that looked to Jesus for healing.

9:19. Jesus’ words are an indication of God’s longsuffering patience with his wayward and unbelieving children. They remind us of the failure of the three disciples to understand Jesus’ prophecy of his death and resurrection just a little while before. Jesus took immediate action and asked that the boy be brought to him. When we face despair because the task seems too large, we should leave it in God’s hands and do the work that needs to be done.

9:20–22. The demon responded violently when it saw Jesus. This is reminiscent of Mark 5:6. Jesus’ questioning of the father was meant to bring a confession of need. It may seem a strange question. Why would the father not admit his need? And yet, many parents are blinded to disabilities. Psychologist John White admitted that when his son was born with a club foot, he literally did not see it. Denial can be a strong opponent—perhaps the only thing that can forever block Jesus’ healing touch. The Master forced the father to acknowledge that Jesus was his only hope. While the man knew this, he did not know whether this hope was enough. After all, the disciples had been unable to do anything for the son. Perhaps this had shaken his faith somewhat.

9:23–24. Jesus declared that he had the power to heal his son if the man had the faith. “If you can?... Everything is possible for him who believes,” he declared. Jesus did not mean that miracles depend on the strength of a person’s faith. We must pray always with God’s will in mind. The father confessed his belief immediately. It sprang from his heart. But he was aware that he was an imperfect human being; his recent lack of faith proved it. Therefore, he asked Jesus to heal him—the father—first. “Whatever is in me, Lord, that does not believe or want to believe, heal that first.” Like removing the log from our own eye, this request was not only appropriate but life-giving.

### **FOR FUFRTHER STUDY**

**HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MARK 9:14-19.**

**Who were “they” and where had they been? What were the remaining disciples and the scribes arguing about (vv. 17-18)?**

**Why did the disciples think they could cast out demons? (See Mark 6:7,13.) Why were they unsuccessful this time?**

**Who showed a lack of faith? Why was Jesus so disheartened with His disciples?**

The disciples' lack of faith caused Jesus grief. He responded with a cry of exasperation revealing His frustration and disappointment. Most likely in Mark 9:19 Jesus wasn't addressing the crowd or the boy's father, but instead was referring to the disciples. They appeared no different from unbelievers who demanded signs from God. In the crucial moment, during a temporary absence of Jesus, they experienced unbelief. How then would they be able to continue Christ's ministry when He was no longer there?

**What were the questions Jesus asked His disciples in verse 19? What was the significance?**

**Have you ever demanded a sign from God? Why did you feel like you needed visual confirmation of His presence?**

Jesus addressed His closest friends as unbelieving. They had failed because they lacked faith. Could Jesus call us unbelieving? We must learn that fruitfulness in ministry efforts and victory over sin and temptation come through faith in Jesus Christ, not through our own efforts. Apart from Christ we can do nothing.

**HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MARK 9:20-24.**

**Verse 20 says, "When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion." Was this by coincidence? Why would the spirit start his attack at this time?**

**Why did Jesus inquire about how long the boy had been this way if He already knew?**

Point out to your group that the violent seizure the boy experienced demonstrated the enmity and conflict between Jesus and the demonic. By reducing the boy to complete helplessness, the spirit revealed an evil intent to destroy the child as well as total contempt for Jesus.

Mark's focus on detail in describing the boy's condition directs attention to the greatness of Jesus' cure and compassion. Jesus was deeply moved for the child's condition and His question revealed that. The boy had experienced such torment since childhood. Perhaps Jesus' question also had the purpose of demonstrating the hopelessness of the situation to the father. He wanted the man to confess the desperate nature of the boy's case. Jesus was showing this father that he had no other resource but faith in Christ.

**Read verses 23-24 again. How is Jesus' ability to act related to your ability to believe?**

**Why do we sometimes have the same problem with limited faith that the boy's father had?**

**Jesus said, "Everything is possible for him who believes" (v. 23). Does Jesus' statement lead us to conclude that people can have anything they wish by faith? Why or why not? If not, what does this statement mean?**

**How can we resist the temptation to set limits to what God's power can do?**

**What did the father do when he recognized his limited faith (v. 24)? How can you believe when it's hard to believe?**

The father's statement both affirmed his faith and also indicated he was deserving of the rebuke earlier directed to the disciples. He recognized his faith was not perfect and was mixed with unbelief. The father demonstrated both honesty and distress in his response. He desperately needed Jesus to cure his son. Yet he realized that he was completely unworthy of Christ's compassion toward him. His coming to Christ showed a trembling faith. And this was enough. No contradiction exists between this affirmation of faith and the confession of unbelief. All believers at one time or another experience this tension.



*There are free Go Deeper Devotionals available at our Resource Center. The Go Deeper Devotionals will take you through the Bible over a period of three years. There is a commentary for every chapter of the Bible. Reading the commentary will give you some background before reading the scripture text. We encourage you to use the devotionals. Grab as many months as you wish. Share them with your friends, neighbors. Dive into God's word. **Psalm 119:105 - You're word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.***

**July 2016- Ezekiel**