

EFCDP SERMON NOTES • February 25, 2024

Series: *Help My Unbelief* # 3

*“Hope for the Desperate Doubter”* • Mark 9:14-29

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The Big Idea: *Victory comes to the desperate doubter who depends on Jesus.*

**1. Our past success can lead to present failure.**

**Vv. 14-19**

**2. The power of faith is in the object of our faith, not the quantity of our faith.**

**Vv. 20-27**

**3. The power of faith is released through prayer.**

**Vv. 28-29**

# *Digging Deeper*

A guide for personal and small group study for the week of February 25, 2023.



→ Was any part of the message unclear? Which aspect of the message do you think will be the most challenging to apply to your own life?

→ Do you agree with the “big idea” of this passage? Why or why not?

1. What are some aspects of life (any topic) do you feel certain about?

2. What aspects of life do you have some doubts about? (E.G. global warming, the presence of life on other planets, various conspiracy theories, your salvation, etc.)

3. Are there people you struggle to believe when they comment on certain topics? Why?

4. Is it possible to believe in something or someone, yet still have some doubts? If it is, how do you reconcile this seeming contradiction?

5. How would you define what it means to have “saving faith?”

→ Is it possible to have saving faith, yet still have doubts?

6. Put yourself in the place of the father in Mark 9:14-27. Describe his state of mind and probable thoughts about Jesus and his disciples, etc.

→ If you had a son that was similarly afflicted, what would be your perspective on the cause and the remedy?

7. Describe Jesus' attitude toward the nine disciples who could not cast out the demon who afflicted the boy? (check all that you think apply):

- A. Critical of their lack of faith
- B. Curious
- C. Sympathetic
- D. Encouraging
- E. Confrontative/challenging
- F. Compassionate

8. Have you observed Christians who seem to have become more dependent on themselves than Jesus as they try to do ministry? If so, what was the result? What, if anything, did you do about it?

9. Describe Jesus' attitude toward the father of the boy (check all that you think apply):

- A. Critical of his seeming lack of faith
- B. Curious
- C. Sympathetic
- D. Encouraging
- E. Confrontative/challenging
- F. Compassionate

10. How did the nine disciples' inability to cast out the boy's demon impact the father's faith? Why was Jesus so upset with the nine?

11. Why do you think the demon caused the violent reaction in the boy when he was brought before Jesus in Mark 9:20?

12. Based on Mark 9:23-27, explain why the boy who was not healed previously was NOT because his father lacked a sufficient **quantity** of faith.

→ When the boy was healed, what was the reason? (I.E. What change had occurred in the father's faith?)

13. What might we conclude about the agenda of demonic forces from Mark 9:14-29?

14. Have you observed Christians being harsh to fellow believers who struggle with doubt? If so, why do you think this happened? What has been the impact on their lives, ministries, and relationships of this critical spirit?

15. What would it look like today, for a Christian to follow Jesus' example in relating to other believers who struggle with doubt and faith?

16. Do you feel comfortable today expressing your doubts? If not, what conditions would help you become willing to express your doubts in an appropriate setting?

17. What is the connection between faith, doubt, and answered prayer? Do you think the father in Mark 9:20-27 is a model for us to follow today? If so, in what way(s)?

18. How can we avoid repeating the mistake the nine disciples made in doing their ministry?