**EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE FOR ONE WHO BELIEVES**

Mark 9:14-29

Key Verse 23

“‘If you can’?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”

**Introduction**



Last week we learned Jesus’ transfiguration. Through his transfiguration, Jesus revealed his original image as the Son of God to his three disciples, Peter, James and John. In today’s passage, Jesus comes down from the mountain and sees the unbelieving people at the foot of the mountain. Jesus laments, “You unbelieving generation…” Then he declares, “Everything is possible for one who believes.” Let us learn the meaning of Jesus’ words and grow as men and women of living faith.

1. Read verses 14-19. What did the people do as soon as they saw Jesus? (14-15) What did Jesus ask? (16) How did the father explain his son’s condition? (17-18)

What did Jesus say about the people of His generation? (19)

1-1, Read verses 14-19.

When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. 15 As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him. 16 “What are you arguing with them about?” he asked.

17 A man in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. 18 Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.” 19 “You unbelieving generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.”

1-2, What did the people do as soon as they saw Jesus? (14-15)

***When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. 15 As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him.***

* We don’t know why the disciples were arguing about with the teachers of the law. But what would make all the people wonder and run to greet Jesus?
* They were probably overwhelmed with wonder because they saw the radiance of Jesus still around him after his transfiguration on the mountain.

1-3, What did Jesus ask? (16)

***16 “What are you arguing with them about?” he asked.***

1-4, How did the father explain his son’s condition? (17-18)

***17 A man in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. 18 Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.”***

* Jesus asked the disciples, “What are you arguing with them about?” Then a man from the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.”
* We can understand this father’s frustrated heart seeing his beloved son’s suffering from the evil spirit.
* No doubt, the father had taken his son to many doctors, but they could not heal the boy. But his father had been helpless because he could not do anything for his suffering son.
* One day this father heard that Jesus was around his region. So he brought his son to Jesus, while Jesus was on the transfiguration mountain.
* He asked his disciples to drive out the spirit. The disciples had already experienced to drive out evil spirits from many people during their mission journey.
* So they were confident based on their past experiences. But nothing happened. Then the other disciples one after another tried, but nothing happened.
* Then after watching the disciples’ powerless attempts the teachers of the law began to laugh at them and argue with them, saying, “You guys are powerless.”
* Then the disciples responded in their embarrassment, “You guys are just hypocrites.”

1-5, What did Jesus say about the people of His generation? (19)

***19 “You unbelieving generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.”***

* Jesus lamented over the unbelieving generation. To Jesus’ eyes, all people of the time were unbelieving no matter what the situation they are!
* Jesus then replied, “How long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.” It meant that Jesus wanted them to learn of faith!
* Crowds were unbelieving, the religious leaders were unbelieving. Parents were unbelieving. Children were unbelieving. Even Jesus’ disciples were unbelieving.
* The sign of unbelieving generation was that the evil spirit overpowered them all and everyone was helpless. They were powerless before the evil spirit.
* Unbelief makes people powerless and helpless. Unbelief causes us to stumble into pointless arguments.
* People in an unbelieving generation suffer so much because the demons work freely and powerfully in people’s hearts.
* Our unbelief invites Satan’s powerful works in us and around us. Many people think of unbelief not seriously.
* But unbelief is the channel of the evil spirits. Unbelief is a serious problem because it bears a horrible fruit like the demon-possessed boy.
* Moreover unbelieving people are powerless and helpless before the devil’s work like the boy’s father, the crowds, the teachers of the law and the disciples.
* We are living in so-called a Post Christian era. People don’t believe in God but live according to their own desires and feelings.
* But we see clearly the fruit of unbelieving generation today. We see sexual immorality, extreme violence, murder, terrorism, and all evils everywhere.
* What people today need most is faith in Jesus. The hope for the Post Christian age is Jesus. May God help us to have faith in Jesus!

1. Read verses 20-24. What happened to the boy when he was brought to Jesus? (20) What did Jesus ask the boy’s father? (21a) What did the father ask Jesus? (21b, 22) What did Jesus teach him? (23) What can we learn from the father’s answer? (24)

2-1, Read verses 20-24.

20 So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

21 Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?”

“From childhood,” he answered. 22 “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”

23 “‘If you can’?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”

24 Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

2-2, What happened to the boy when he was brought to Jesus? (20)



***20 So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.***

* When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.
* The evil spirit tried to destroy him as much as possible, for he realized that his time inside the boy comes to the end soon due to Jesus’ power.

2-3, What did Jesus ask the boy’s father? (21a)

***21 Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?”***

* The boy’s condition seemed to get worse. At this moment, instead of focusing on the boy, Jesus turned his attention to the boy’s father.
* The evil spirit tried to frighten the father to prevent him from trusting Jesus. But Jesus wanted to plant faith in the father’s heart through which he could bless him.

2-4, What did the father ask Jesus? (21b, 22)

***“From childhood,” he answered. 22 “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”***

* The father answered, “From childhood. It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him.” After explaining how the spirit harassed his son from his childhood, the father added, “But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”
* No doubt he brought his son to Jesus believing that Jesus would heal him. But when the disciples failed to drive out the spirit in his son, he was greatly discouraged.
* Despair and doubt began to sneak into his heart. But then Jesus arrived there and new hope arose in his heart.
* Seeing Jesus, however, the boy got worse. The spirit threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.
* Seemingly before Jesus, the spirit was not afraid, but tormented the boy just as it had done before. So then the father’s heart sank again.
* So in his doubt, he uttered, “If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” “If you can do anything…” In this phrase, we can see the father’s doubt.
* He should have said, “I believe you can heal my son. Take pity on us and help us.” But instead, he said, “If you can do anything…” He was not sure of Jesus’ power to heal the boy.

2-5, What did Jesus teach him? (23)

***23 “‘If you can’?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”***

* Jesus rebuked him, quoting the father’s words, “If you can?” and challenged him to have faith. Jesus said to him, “Everything is possible for one who believes.”
* What does Jesus mean? We all know that we have human limitation. So when we face our challenges in life, we first see some possibilities to overcome them.
* When we see a possibility we then tackle our challenges. But when we see no possibility, then we simply give them up.
* But when we see God’s divine possibility, we utter believing words. Faith is confidence of what we hope for and assurance of what we do not see!
* Paul had assurance that by faith in Jesus, everything is possible. Paul saw God’s divine possibility to turn the course of Roman history with the gospel.
* So as a prisoner, he went to Rome and served one to one Bible study with prison guards and fellow prisoners.
* Through Paul’s faith, the Roman Empire became Christian. Faith is seeing divine possibility which is limitless.
* And believers are those who see God’s divine possibility in the midst of seeing human impossibility and tackle their challenges by faith.
* That is why we are praying for 300 1:1’s weely and 30 disciples to be raised in this year by faith.
* “‘“If you can”?’ said Jesus. ‘Everything is possible for one who believes,’” Heb 11:6 says, “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”
* Unbelief is displeasing God. God is pleased with people of faith and blesses them. In order to receive God’s blessing, the father needed to have the unbelief removed from his heart.
* Unbelief is like a rock that must be struck in our hearts. May we grow as men and women of faith and confront our challenges boldly and experience God’s victories in our lives.

2-6, What can we learn from the father’s answer? (24)

***24 Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”***

* Thanks to Jesus’ words of rebuke, the father repented and made a decision to believe. So he said, “I do believe.” But at the same time, he felt that unbelief still bothered him.
* He could not overcome this unbelief by himself. So he honestly asked Jesus to help him. He did not blame others, or even ask for the healing of his son.
* He asked for help to overcome his own unbelief first. This can be our honest prayer. Here we learn that having faith or doubting is our heart decision.
* Helping my unbelief is something a man can only say by faith. As soon as we get a little faith, then we begin to ask God’s help in prayer to increase our faith.
* We better decide to have faith rather than to be negative or unbelieving. Let us make a decision to have faith in Jesus today, repenting of our unbelief and doubt.

1. Read verses 25-27. Describe how Jesus healed the boy? (25-27) What was the disciples’ question? (28) What can we learn from Jesus’ answer to them? (29)

3-1, Read verses 25-27.

25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. “You deaf and mute spirit,” he said, “I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.”

26 The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, “He’s dead.” 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up.

28 After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

29 He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24568a)]”

3-2, Describe how Jesus healed the boy? (25-27)

***25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. “You deaf and mute spirit,” he said, “I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.”***

***26 The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, “He’s dead.” 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up.***

* Jesus then turned to the boy and rebuked the evil spirit, “You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again”.
* At Jesus’ command, the spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, “He’s dead”.
* Jesus had no difficulty whatsoever in dealing with the demon, even though the demon made a final display of his terrible strength.
* Knowing he must leave, the demon did the most damage he could before he left. But it was not lasting damage.
* Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up. Jesus blessed the father’s faith and healed his son completely.

3-3, What was the disciples’ question? (28)

***28 After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”***

* Here we can see the disciples’ desire. They wanted to know why they could not drive it out. It is encouraging to see their spiritual desire to serve God’s work. They recognized that they were powerless and ineffective to serve God’s work.

3-4, What can we learn from Jesus’ answer to them? (29)

***29 He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.”***

* The disciples didn’t pray but tried to do with their own power and past experience. They forgot that they were serving not human work, but God’s work.
* We can do human work with human strength and wisdom. But we cannot do God’s work with human strength and wisdom.
* God’s work can be done by God’s strength and wisdom. So we must pray to receive God’s strength and wisdom from God.
* It is still impossible for sinful human beings to serve God’s holy work. But amazingly he called each of us to serve his work.
* Therefore to serve God’s work we must pray to him and ask him to give us his power, his spirit, his love, his wisdom.
* It isn’t that prayer and fasting make us cast out demons. Rather, prayer and fasting draw us closer to the heart of God, and they put us more in line with His power. They are an expression of our total dependence on Him.
* Prayer is to believe that “I can do nothing, but God can do everything,” and to ask him humbly.
* This total dependence on God is the remedy for many spiritual problems. To be disappointed in ourselves only is to have trusted in ourselves.

**Conclusion**

There are many people suffering like the possessed boy. But the more serious problem is believer’s unbelief and doubt. Unbelieving Christians are powerless. Although they see suffering people, they cannot do anything just like the disciples. So they just despair. We must restore our faith in God through deep prayers and serve God’s work powerfully regardless of the situation. May we make a decision to put our trust in God and help one person to have faith in him by sharing the words of God and prayer. Amen.

**One word: Everything is possible!**