



JESUS: The Servant of God

A verse-by-verse study of the Gospel of Mark

The Gospel Can

Mark 9:14-29

Message #21

Sermon given on May 24, 2026



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Gospel Can

Mark 9:14-29

Opening Comments

- **Happy Mother's Day!**
- Open your Bibles to **Mark 9**
- Today, we continue a series through the gospel of Mark – **JESUS: The Servant of God**
- Let's open this time in our service with a word of prayer. - **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Gospel Can**
- Our last time in Mark's gospel, Jesus took Peter, James, and John up onto a mountain where He was transfigured and joined by Moses and Elijah.
- The three disciples were in awe and Peter suggested they build three tabernacles so they could experience the glory of Christ forever.
- God's voice from heaven interrupted Peter and told them to listen to Jesus.
- The glory on the mountaintop was a temporary experience.
- At the foot of the mountain were people who needed to be brought to Jesus for healing, deliverance, and salvation.
- One of our goals here in the church is to help you enter the presence of God through prayer, worship, and the Word.
- But we can't stay here.
- There is a world of lost, hurting, and broken souls who need an encounter with the living God.
- That encounter is most likely to happen through one of Christ's followers, walking with Him in faith and obedience.
- One of those people is waiting for Jesus at the foot of the mountain.
- **Mark 9:14-16**
- The nine disciples that Jesus left behind and being confronted by some scribes and they are surrounded by a great multitude.
- The scribes were the so-called religious experts of the Scriptures.
- The scribes often challenged Jesus about the things He was doing and saying.

- They believed they were right and anyone who disagreed with them was wrong.
- You are seldom going to win an argument with people like that.
- So, why should you even bother to dispute with them?
- Because of the ‘great multitude’ that was surrounding them.
- People like the scribes may never humble themselves to receive and believe the truth, but someone who is listening in on the conversation might have a tender heart toward the Lord and His Word.
- Before the scribes can tell Jesus what they are disputing about they are interrupted.
- **Mark 9:17-18**
- This man comes to Jesus because he is desperate.
- Anyone who has been a parent probably knows what it feels like to have a child that is going through something you can’t help them with.
- The greater their need, the greater the desperation and helplessness you feel.
- This father had a child, just a boy, who was possessed by a demon.
- A parent with a child who has a substance abuse problem might have a sense of what he was feeling.
- He had come to find Jesus, but Jesus wasn’t there, so he spoke to Jesus’ disciples to cast out the demon, but they could not do it.
- But why? **Matthew 10:1**
- **¹And when He had called His twelve disciples to *Him*, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.**
- They came back and excitedly told Jesus about it. **Luke 10:20**
- **²⁰Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.**
- Were they trying to do it based on their own strength and experience?
- Jesus will address that later in the text.
- Jesus then seems to address everyone who is listening.
- **Mark 9:19**
- Jesus refers to them as a faithless generation.
- He is not saying that they have no faith.
- He is saying their faith is lacking, incomplete, or ignorant of the truth.
- They are not trusting God as they should.

- It does not please God when the people He created to glorify Him and fellowship with Him do not fully trust Him.
 - Referring to the Lord's response to the Israelites in the wilderness, the psalmist wrote... **Psalm 95:10-11**
- ¹⁰For forty years I was grieved with *that* generation, and said, 'It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they do not know My ways.' ¹¹So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'
- Jesus tells them to bring the boy to Him.
 - The disciples were unable to deliver this boy from the horrors of demon possession.
 - Our ability to minister on behalf of Christ is directly related to our proximity to Christ ourselves.
 - Everything we need to minister to the needs of others is found in Christ
 - If you are a Christ-follower, you are surrounded by people who need grace or mercy from God.
 - God could dispense His grace and mercy directly to them, but for reasons we may not fully understand, He chooses to use us to be the conduits of those blessings.
 - As I grow in my faith, my desire grows to be as great a blessing to as many people as I can.
 - To be that blessing, I must walk as close to Jesus as I am able.
 - And the closer we walk with Jesus and allow Him to bless others through us, the more we are blessed.
 - We are blessed to be a blessing.
 - So they bring the boy to Jesus.
 - **Mark 9:20-22**
 - The moment the boy sees Jesus the demon inside him causes the boy to convulse and foam at the mouth.
 - Notice, Jesus doesn't panic.
 - He starts a conversation with the father.
 - Jesus knows the boy will be healed, but the father needs a lesson about faith first.
 - Parents, take note. Is God waiting to act in the life of your child until you have learned a lesson of faith.
 - Jesus responds to the father's request for compassion.

- **Mark 9:23**

- The NASB may be a better translation of this verse. **Mark 9:23**
NASB

²³**And Jesus said to him, “If You can?’ All things are possible to him who believes.”**

- Jesus is asking him, why are you saying, “If you can do anything?”
- Jesus is challenging this father’s faith.
- Do you believe that I am the Messiah, the Son of the Living God?
- Do you believe that I have the power of God to heal and deliver your son from this demon.
- The question is not if Jesus can do it, but if you believe He can do it.
- Faith, the kind that sees the miraculous works of God, is that which believes that God can.

- Lacking that faith is a problem. **Hebrews 4:16**

⁶**But without faith *it is impossible to please Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.***

- When we pray, we must believe that He is there in heaven, that He is listening to our prayers, and that He is able to respond to our prayers.
- The father responds as his beloved son lies convulsing on the ground.

- **Mark 9:24**

- He admits that he believes that God can heal.
- But he also admits that he is struggling to believe that Jesus has the power of God to heal his son.
- This man is not much different than any of us.
- We all believe things about God and His Word.
- We also may have doubts and are struggling with some things.
- Faith is manifested when we act upon what we do believe.
- Don’t spend too much time wrestling with your doubts and the things you are struggling to believe.
- You walk with Jesus in the things you do believe and when God wants you to work on your faith the Holy Spirit will bring you to a lesson that will cause you to grow in those areas you need to work on.
- Be open to the work of the Holy Spirit choosing to walk with Christ and your faith will grow and your doubts will shrink.
- Real faith is growing faith.

- Growing faith is only possible with the help of the One who is its object!
- The lesson in faith is over, and it is time for Jesus to act.
- **Mark 9:25-27**
- Jesus exercises His authority over the spiritual realm and commands the demon to leave the child.
- He also tells the demon to never return to the child.
- Once the demon was gone, the boy was as one dead.
- He wasn't dead, it just seemed that way because moments before he was convulsing and foaming at the mouth.
- Even if you believe he was dead, it was no more difficult for Jesus to raise him from the dead than it was for him to cast out the demon.
- Jesus is the prime example of all things are possible.
- Jesus now has to address the faith of His disciples.
- **Mark 9:28**
- Jesus had empowered and sent them out with the power to heal the sick and cast out demons.
- And they had done it.
- Jesus doesn't tell them that this was too hard but that they were not prepared for it when it came.
- **Mark 9:29**
- This was a spiritual battle they were unprepared for.
- When is the right time to prepare for a battle?
- Not after the battle starts.
- If you fail to prepare for the battle before it begins you should be prepared to fail.
- To prepare for a spiritual battle you use spiritual disciplines, like prayer and fasting.
- Elite military forces are always training.
- They train much more than they fight.
- The same is true for elite athletes.
- If we are going to be prepared for the spiritual battles that might come our way, we must be willing to put in the work.
- There is a reason why only a very small number of people make it to the level of elite.

- The cost is just too high for most people.
- The reward for being an elite in this life might be victory on the battlefield or awards on the winner's platform.
- The reward for putting in the spiritual work might be healing, restoration, deliverance, blessings, grace, mercy, or hope.
- The Bible has many promises to those who put in the spiritual work of God, especially when it comes to drawing people to Christ. **Daniel 12:2-3**

²And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

- I can't say that I understand what it means to shine like the stars forever and ever, but it sounds like a good thing, right?
- A desperate father comes to Jesus to save his son from demon possession.
- Jesus dealt with the demon, but He also helped that father to believe.
- Jesus rebuked the crowds and called them a faithless generation.
- Everyone has faith – everyone believes in someone or something.
- But in God's view, faith in anything or anyone other than the One True God is not faith at all.
- You may believe in something or someone, but only trust and belief in Almighty God matters to God.
- Everything else is false, vain, and ultimately ends in destruction.
- Only faith in God based on the finished work of Christ leads to the good life.
- The father of the boy had doubts about whether Jesus could save his son.
- Jesus said, "...all things are possible to him who believes."
- When you pray, remind yourself and then confess to God, I believe God can...
- True faith believes God can do anything.
- Let's pray and confess that right now.
- **Pray – Last Song**