

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE Mark 9:14–29

To Him Who Believes

Introduction:

1. **Jesus has just been on the mountain with Peter, James and John...**
 - a. A bright cloud enveloped them and Jesus glowed with glory
 - b. And then Moses and Elijah appeared and were Talking with Jesus
 - c. It was an incredible moment that left the disciples speechless (except Peter of course!)
 2. **But We Can't Always Stay on the Mountain Top...**
 - a. And the chaos that greets the Lord as He comes down from the mountain...
is like a microcosm of the fallen, broken world...
 - There is a Heated Dispute... • A suffering child • a desperate father...
 - The Disciples are powerless to help...
 - The Scribes arguing and Accusing them aren't helping either!
 - If They're So Smart Why Aren't They Casting the Demon Out?
 - Because they Can't! — Only Christ Can!
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I. WHAT SATAN WANTS FOR US...

A. SATAN WANTS US DISPUTING (v.14-16)

1. **As Jesus descends from Mt of Transfiguration there's a heated disputed**
 - a) And He Goes Directly to the Scribes: "What are you discussing with them?"
 - b) But They Don't Answer—"Their Silence is a Smirk" (Preachers commentary)
 - c) Apparently the Disciples' Failure Here was an opportunity for the Scribes to Ridicule
2. **Satan Wants us Disputing, Dividing, Discouraged and Defeated**
 - a) Satan Has Us Arguing Over the Corona Virus... Masks, restrictions, protocols
 - b) We argue over the Protests and Riots, over the cause of the fires...
 - c) Over Differences of Opinion—and Different Interpretation of Scripture
3. **When We're arguing we're not helping—We're Divided, Distracted, Discouraged and Defeated! — Exactly What He Wants!**

B. SATAN WANTS US SUFFERING (v.17-18)

1. **Satan Oppresses People with the power of darkness—
—but the children of God seem powerless against it**
 - a) This Family is Suffering... This Child is Suffering...
 - b) Satan is Oppressing this child with Demonic Possession
 - c) This child is under spiritual attack
2. **Even Today, Satan is Oppressing People with the power of sin & Darkness**
 - a) The Enemy Wants to Kill, Steal and Destroy
 - b) The Assassin in Eden is Still Killing Souls, Stealing Joy, Destroying Hope
3. **And We Seem Powerless Against It All**

C. SATAN WANTS US POWERLESS (v.18-20)

1. The Father is Powerless against this Spiritual Enemy

So he brought his son to Jesus' disciples...

- a) He wasn't able to find Jesus so He Brought His Son to the Disciples...
- b) Which was appropriate because Jesus had given the disciples power over unclean spirits (Mk 6:7)

2. But They Were Powerless to Help!

- a) They Could Not Help This Poor Child
- b) They Were Powerless against a spiritual enemy beyond their ability
- c) So They Were Powerless to Help

3. Satan Wants God's People Powerless

- a) Because Then We Will Be Weak, Pitiful, Useless, Defeated
- b) Faith so anemic we can't hardly help ourselves—much less anyone else
- c) Powerless to Help, Powerless to Trust, Powerless to Change, or Encourage

D. SATAN WANTS US HOPELESS (v.21-22)

1. This desperate Father only wants help for his son!

—But He's Losing Hope Fast!

- a) The Enemy is Killing, Stealing and Destroying our Hope
 - (1) Our Society has become depersonalized
 - (2) Families are Fractured and uprooted
 - (3) Trust is Replaced with Suspicion... Kindness is replaced with Accusation
- b) And People Are Left Feeling Empty and Alone

2. I Read About A Woman Named Judy Bucknell...

- a) She was 38, attractive and a successful secretary in Miami...
- b) But She was tragically stabbed and strangled to death on June 9th, 1980
- c) **The Police found a diary—**
- d) **The *Miami Herald*** ran the news story "*Judith Bucknell has failed to connect... many lovers, much love offered, none returned.*"
- e) **In A Diary excerpt she wrote:**
"What about me?!... Who's going to love Judy Bucknell? I feel so old. Unloved. Unwanted. Abandoned. Used up. I want to cry and sleep forever... I'm alone, and I want to share something with somebody."

3. Do You Understand What Satan Wants for You?

- a) He Wants Suffering for You, Powerlessness, Hopelessness
- b) because Hope is the Last thing that Dies—and when Hope Dies—it's over
- c) Whatever it Takes to Make You Give Up on God—The Enemy Doesn't Care

II. WHAT GOD WANTS FOR US...

A. GOD WANTS US TO HAVE FAITH IN HIM (v.23-24)

1. The characteristic cause of all spiritual failure—is a lack of faith in God.

a) **EXAMPLE:** It's Like Asking a Group of People For the Answer to a Life Problem...

b) Does Anyone Know the Answer? (God says: I have the answer)

c) Anyone Else have the Answer? (God says: I have the answer)

2. **Trusting in ANYTHING Except God! —This Grieves the Lord! (v.19)**

a) Our Unbelief Leaves us Weak and Powerless

b) Drowning in a Flood of Problems in this Broken World

3. **Without Faith it is Impossible to Please God—**

—But With Faith All Things Are Possible!

a) Faith Will Change Your Life — Faith Will Move Mountains

b) Faith is Our Shield in Battle — Faith is Our Victory!

c) Faith Means Rejecting Lies and Admitting the Truth...

That God Exists, He is in Control, and He rewards those who diligently seek Him!

4. **Faith Opens Up Possibilities That Remain Closed to Unbelief**

a) Faith Does Not Make Things Easy—But Makes them Possible!

B. GOD WANTS TO SET US FREE (v.25-27)

1. **Which is Why Jesus Came to Earth—to Set the Captives Free!**

a) To Heal the Broken Hearted!

b) To Give Sight to the Blind!

c) To Give Freedom from the Bondage of Satan, Sin and Death!

2. **Notice what Jesus Did Here:**

“He found disputing scribes, a distracted father, a demon-possessed boy, and defeated disciples... He silenced the scribes, He comforted the father, He healed the boy, He instructed the disciples.” (Morgan)

3. **God Wants us to Be Free—**

a) And He Set This Oppressed Child Free

b) And He Went to the Cross to Set Us Free

C. GOD WANTS US TO TRUST HIM IN PRAYER (v.28-29)

1. **The Disciples asked Jesus Privately—what went wrong?**

a) Why Were We Not Able to Cast The Evil Spirit Out?

2. **Remember, Jesus had Given Them Power to Cast Our Demons**

a) And They Had Already Been Able to Cast Out Demons...

b) What Changed? — Jesus Tells Them...

3. **This Kind Can Come Out by Nothing but Prayer and Fasting...**

a) Jesus is Talking About the Power of Intense, Focused Prayer

b) Prayer by Faith and Complete Trust in God

4. **But What About Fasting?**

a) Nearly all major ancient Greek manuscripts have “prayer and fasting” here 9:29.

A few manuscripts do not, (NIV places in margin)

b) What Does Fasting Have to Do With Prayer? **FASTING IS FOCUSING...**

“Fasting is a practical means of focusing one’s attention more fully on God for a specific purpose, for a limited period of time.” (BKC)

III. WHAT WE MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER...

A. ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE

1. We Can't Always Remain on the Mountain Top...

- a) Life Still Has Peaks and Valleys
- b) When We Come Down Off the Mountain We Have to Face the Problems of This Life
- c) The Divisions, Distractions, Disputes and Discouragements

2. LORD I BELIEVE, HELP MY UNBELIEF!

- a) The characteristic cause of all spiritual failure—is lack of faith in God
- b) It is Why the Disciples Could Not Help This Child

3. But Notice what Jesus said to His Disciples (Matthew 17:19–21)

a) Faith as a mustard seed can move a mountain...

- (1) A Mountain of ADDICTION... A Mountain of GUILT...
- (2) of DEBT... of ANGER... of RESENTMENT, FRUSTRATION

b) A Mountain Impossible to Move—can be Moved by Faith in God! (Mark 10:27)

B. SPIRITUAL POWER IS AVAILABLE THROUGH PRAYER

1. Usually We Think of Prayer as the Last Resort... Worry is Our First!

- a) But God's Word is Very Clear—Prayer Can Dramatically Change
PEOPLE, SITUATIONS, Even the Course of HISTORY

2. Prayer Can Change a Person's Eternity: Leo & Helen searching for truth

- a) Leo thought He found it in Worldwide church of God—by observing Sabbath and teaching a Future Thousand Year Paradise on Earth.
- b) It was very strict regarding the Sabbath and Helen Had her Doubts—
- c) One Night she was praying intensely: “Lord, if this is what you want us to do, we will do it. But if it is not what you want, please send someone to show us!
- d) The Next Morning was a knock on the door—Barry Kersheville & Bernice Boyes!
GOD ANSWERED HER PRAYER—And Changed Their Life, and Eternity!

3. Prayer Can Also Change the Course of History!

a) One of the most unique prayers I've ever heard of was in Winter 1944...

- (1) A surprise attack—a final NAZI death plunge—known as Battle of the Bulge
- (2) The Problem was Rain and cloud cover gave the NAZI army total advantage
- (3) The 101st Airborne was surrounded in Bastogne, running out of supplies fast
- (4) Patton's Third Army was to Relieve those men and Stop the NAZI advance
- (5) Patton's army was Slowed by Rain/Mud—Allied fighter planes were grounded
- (6) The War Took a Dark turn—and Victory Hung in the Balance

b) So Patton went to his chaplain—chaplain of U.S. 3rd Army—asking for a prayer

- (1) The Chaplain told Patton: It is not a customary practice to pray for clear weather, in order to kill fellow men.
- (2) Patton was Direct: “Chaplain, are you teaching me theology or are you the Chaplain of the 3rd Army? I want a prayer.”

- (3) Patton wanted to make his petition known before God — and let God decide, not a subordinate—but God Himself!

**c) So a prayer was printed on cards for every soldier of the 3rd Army:
Approx. 250,000 soldiers at the time.**

- (1) **THE PRAYER:** Almighty and most merciful Father, we humbly beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to restrain these immoderate rains with which we have had to contend. Grant us fair weather for Battle. Graciously hearken to us as soldiers who call upon Thee that, armed with Thy power, we may advance from victory to victory, and crush the oppression and wickedness of our enemies and establish Thy justice among men and nations. Amen.

d) The Next Day the Rain had Stopped and Skies were clear for 6 straight days.

- (1) The third Army reached the 101st Airborne and relieved them
(2) The NAZI Reign of Terror, which was supposed to last 1,000 yrs, was defeated in 3 months

> May We NEVER Discount the Power of Prayer—

—Make Your Requests Before God and Let HIM Decide what is Best

C. SATAN WANTS YOU CAPTIVE—CHRIST WANTS YOU FREE

1. Satan Knows He is Ultimately Defeated...

- a) He Is Heading For the Abyss—eternal separation from God

(1) and He Knows He Has a Short Time....

(2) But He Still Wants to Claim Victory—By Taking As Many People to the Abyss As He Can With Him

b) Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.”

2. This is What Satan Wants—He Wants You Enslaved in Sin...

As much pain as is experienced in the world—there is something worse:

“Thistles, thorns and sweat—better than sin.

Sorrows, sickness, suffering—better than sin.

Pain, poverty, affliction—better than sin.

Wars, plagues, famines, disease, destruction, death—better than sin.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, our mortal coil destined to the invasion of a million worms—ALL better than sin. (L.E. Maxwell)

3. The Enemy Wants to Enslave You—God Wants to Save You

Satan Wants You Captive—Christ Wants You Free

a) (Rom 6:23) The Wages of Sin is Death—but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord!

4. Jesus Came to Earth to Set the Captives Free

a) To Destroy the Works of the Devil (Hebrews 2:14–15)

b) To Set Us Free from the Power and Bondage of Satan, Sin and Death

c) All By His Blood Shed on the Cross For Our Sins

CONCLUSION:

1. We Read the End of the Book—We Know Who Wins!

2. Faith in God Gives us the Victory in Him (1 John 5:4 ESV)