

## **Recap of 9/24/23 (Mark 9:14-29, part 1):**

*In Mk 8:31 Jesus starts teaching His disciples that He will be rejected by Jewish leaders, killed, and rise three days later. He tells them the same thing again in Mk 9:31. This is shocking information for the disciples who thought the Messiah would be a conqueror. Between these two teachings, Jesus encourages His disciples by letting three of them see Him in glory and power on the mount of transfiguration. He then uses Mk 9:14-29 to encourage all twelve disciples by showing them that:*

- 1) His meekness is not weakness*
- 2) the disciples' failures in no way impugn the power of God*
- 3) God calls his followers to a life of ongoing faith.*

**Meekness is not weakness:** *Jesus going to the cross is not a sign of His weakness. Jesus is following God's plan to reconcile sinners to himself. Jesus reminds His disciples of His power by casting out the demon they failed to cast out. The disciples, us, and the world should not make the mistake of thinking Jesus is weak because of the cross. He went to the cross out of love for us and obedience to God the Father. His power was veiled a bit at His first coming, but He is still Almighty God. At His second coming, His power will be on full display.*

**Our failures in no way impugn the power of God:** *The disciples' failure to cast out the demon caused the boy's father to doubt Jesus' power. He says, "But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" (Mk 9:22, NASB). Jesus responds that anything is possible for those who believe. In other words, we make a mistake when we look at man's failures and attribute them to God or think God is weak because man is weak.*

*But why did the disciples fail to cast out the evil spirit? Jesus twice refers to a lack of belief (Mk 9:19, 23) then says this kind cannot come out by anything but prayer (Mk 9:29). Taking into account the parallel passages in Mt 17:14-21 and Lk 9:37-43a we can deduce that the disciples failed because they were not fully submitted to God; they were relying on themselves. They were not abiding in Jesus. Jn 15:5 says that apart from Him, we can do nothing. Therefore, Jesus' stating that prayer was essential was not a formula for exorcism, it was an admonition to live a prayerful life with God. To access the power God gave them (and us) we must be rightly related to Him and that happens through prayer.*

*We will cover the third principle, God calls us to a life of ongoing faith, today in part 2 of this message.*