



## Bible Study: Gospel of Mark

July 20, 2022 // Life Church Smyrna

P. Christian Salzillo // Mark 9:14-50

-Coming out of the Transfiguration

-Coming down from the mountain into back to back scenes that require Jesus' wisdom and intervention

-We're leaving Phase 1 of Mark (miracles and kingdom) and entering Phase 2 (teaching and discipleship); there is a clear transition

### **Argument #1: Disciples vs. Teachers of the Law/Scribes (14-29)**

- Father brings demon possessed son to disciples
- 9 Disciples cannot cast out demon
- Unbelieving generation!!
- If you can (cf. with earlier if you are willing)
- Everything is possible for one who believes
- I do believe; help my unbelief

Disciples ask in private, "Why couldn't we cast it out?"

- Is God's power leveled? Are there certain levels that are available to us?
- Can belief be leveled? Is there a way to strengthen our belief?
- They (we) are not going to have power unless they (we) remain close to Jesus!

### **Argument #2: Disciples vs. Disciples (33-41)**

- Who is the greatest? (not just egos, but status and honor in Hellenistic society)
- Consider the repetition of "On the way."
- Who is the greatest servant of all?
- This is not a teaching on being child-like; this is a teaching on social status and privilege

- The person performing the miracles is equal to the person offering a drink of water

### **Continuing Teachings (42-50)**

- Jesus is not expecting a literal removal of body parts. The hyperbole is intentional to make a big point. FALLING AWAY IS SERIOUS!
- It begins with those who cause others to fall away; it then turns to those who end up falling away. THIS IS SERIOUS!
- Don't fall away for something that is temporal; not when eternity is at stake!!! (Have I mentioned how serious this is??)
- Hell is Gehenna; a place which served for child sacrifice and idol worship in OT Kingdom of Judah. Became known as Valley of Slaughter; in later times it became a metaphor for judgment and ultimate punishment

**Q1:** Jesus' response to the father was "If you can? Everything is possible for the one who believes." His response, "I do believe; help my unbelief," presents a juxtaposition that many of us are familiar with. How did the man exercise faith and still have unbelief at the same time? How do we do the same?

**Q2:** The disciples had cast out demons in Jesus' name before, but this time they could not. Do you believe that God's power is leveled? Why/Why not? If it's not, then can our belief/faith be leveled? How do we make sure we are able to walk in the power that God has called us?

**Q3:** Knowing that the disciples were concerned with societal status, honor and privilege, what is the significance of Jesus' teaching that they be last and a servant of all? Who had made Himself the servant of all? Are we also at times guilty of missing the point the way the disciples did here? How can we better follow Jesus' example?

**Q4:** Jesus talks about a "millstone being hung around a neck" of one who causes a little one to fall away; he then talks about cutting off hands, feet and gouging out eyes to keep ourselves from falling away. How do we make sense of these sayings? How can we keep ourselves from falling away?