

Series: Standing on the Promises

IF THOU CANST BELIEVE

MARK 9:14-29

Text: Mark 9:24

Mark 9:24

²⁴ *And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

Introduction:

They say that “time is an excellent teacher.” One thing that time has taught me is that I still have lots of room to grow when it comes to my faith.

I want us to consider the statement made by the Lord, “If thou cast believe.”

Note:

1. SHEER HONESTY

- This man was being as honest with the Lord as he possibly could.
- He was saying, “Yes, Lord I believe in what you can do ... I think.”
- He was saying, “Lord, I believe in your power, ... or at least I want to believe in your power.”
- We can criticize him if we want to, but at least the man was being honest.

What good would it have done him to claim a complete and perfect faith that he did not have?

The Lord already knows the strength and weakness of our faith.

The disciples had to learn over and over again that they weren't as strong in their faith as they pretended to be!

In fact, this man's son the disciples were unable to help him.

Here is a lesson for us that WE NEED TO BE ACUTELY AWARE OF AND HONEST ABOUT OUR DOUBTS.

Which is the greater sin? Faltering in our faith, or faking our faith?

Remember:

Even the best Christians have time of doubt

Illustration: John the Baptist had a time of doubt

Matthew 11:1-6

¹ And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. ² Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, ³ And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? ⁴ Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

The Lord didn't condemn Him but rather reassured him.

We too like John often ask questions like:

- Is it true God?
- Are you real?
- Do you really care about me?
- Will you really take care of me?
- If you care about me, why did you let this happen to me!

The truth is all of us at times have doubts – we just need to be honest about it.

Notice not only is this a “Statement of Sheer Honesty” but also:

2. SERIOUS CONCERN

Why did this man make such a forthright statement?

He made it because he was concerned.

He identified a problem.

He knew he had a measure of trust for Christ, but that it could be stronger!

The truth is God has shown me over and over again that I need more faith. I have faith in Him, but I need more.

Can you think of some times when your faith didn't rise to the occasion?

Have you discovered some "chinks in the armour" of your faith?

Are there some areas in your life where you STILL haven't done what God wants you to do?

Quote:

George Mueller said:

"God delights to increase the faith of His children...I say, and say it deliberately—trials, difficulties and sometimes defeat, are the very food of faith...We should take them out of His hands as evidences of His love and care for us in developing more and more that faith which He is seeking to strengthen in us".

Notice not only is this a "Statement of Sheer Honesty" and a "Statement of Serious Concern" but also:

3. SINCERE DESIRE (VS. 24)

Mark 9:24

²⁴ *And straightway the father of the child **cried out**, and said **with tears**, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

Did you notice the manner in which this man made the statement to the Lord?

He cried out – With Tears

He was absolutely desperate. He was at his wit's end!

There is probably no feeling of desperation so intense, as a parent who cannot help their child!

It's an awful feeling to be helpless, especially when it comes to your children.

Notice the utter helplessness and desperation of this father:

Mark 9:17-18

¹⁷ *And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;* ¹⁸ *And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.*

Mark 9:20

²⁰ And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

Mark 9:22

²² And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

Can you imagine this! His son was being burned and cut and foamed at the mouth like a rabid animal!

We can only imagine the distress this dad was feeling!

When we are most desperate, then the truth will come out!

It's easy for us to say, "O Lord, I have great faith in you!"

But when tragedy, or heartache, or trials come, then we shall see!

But the good news is, when we face up to our faltering faith, when we admit it that gives God room to do what **ONLY HE CAN DO!**

That leads us to:

4. THE SOURCE OF FAITH (VS. 23)

Mark 9:23

²³ Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

The Lord said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

We need to be reminded that the Lord is the source of our faith.

Notice what the Lord did and didn't do:

He didn't say, "Sorry, you don't have enough faith"

He didn't say, "Muster up more faith, and come back later."

He didn't say, "Oh, I 'm so sorry, but a miracle can only happen if you have a certain quota of faith!"

The Lord simply cast the demon out. And that was that!

Close:

Remember “Great Faith is Not Necessary to Pray. If You Have Enough Faith To Pray – We Have Enough Faith to Be Heard.

The best thing we could possibly do is stand before the Lord and say from the bottom of our hearts, “I believe Lord, but please help me with my unbelief”

THE AFRICAN IMPALA is capable of jumping nearly 9 feet into the air, although it is a very small creature, only about 3 1/2 feet tall. Yet, did you know that any zoo can keep the impala confined to a yard with a stone wall only 4 feet high?

WHY?

Because the impala will NEVER JUMP anywhere, unless it can see the place where his feet will land!