

The Gospel of Mark

The Faith Needed by the Disciples

Mark 9:14-29

1. A _____
At some point while Jesus and the three disciples were up on the mountain (Mk. 9:2), a crowd had gathered around the rest of the disciples. The disciples had failed in their attempts to exorcise a demon from a boy and this had caused an argument with the scribes (Mk. 9:14). As soon as Jesus learned of the situation He immediately rebukes the disciples for their unbelief (Mk. 9:19). The disciples' lack of faith in this situation is the most recent example of just how slow they were to really learn what Jesus was teaching them (Mk. 7:18-20; 8:17-18; cf. Lk. 24:25).

2. A _____
One of the many people who sought out Jesus in a desperate quest for healing was a man who brought Him his demon possessed son (Lk. 9:38). This demon afflicted the boy so severely that it prevented him from hearing or speaking (Mk. 9:17, 25) and was likely attempting to kill him (Mk. 9:22a). He came searching for Jesus but found the disciples, and they had been unable to help his son. So when he finally speaks to Jesus, he is at a point of absolute desperation (Mk. 9:22b).

3. A _____
Jesus seizes on the expression of the man's doubt in order to emphasize the necessity of believing in Him (cf. Mt. 21:22). The man articulates the smallest and weakest faith in Jesus, and Jesus responds by healing his son (Mk. 9:24-25). Jesus further clarified to the disciples that the reason they could not cast the demon out was because of the littleness of their faith (Mt. 17:20; cf. Mk. 9:29). The faith that is necessary for successfully serving the Lord is not defined by its size or by the fact that it is wholly confident, but rather that it is humbly reliant upon the Lord.