

# 07

MARK 9:14-29

## NOTHING BUT PRAYER

### THIS WEEK'S **focus**

When things are going well, it's easy to believe good things will keep happening. But when things are going poorly, it's sometimes hard to see how they will ever get better. When we're really feeling down and discouraged, the encouraging words of others can even be annoying sometimes. We would almost rather accept the bad than muster up the energy it takes to hope for something good—especially if we have been disappointed before. The man in today's story had lived with trials for a long time, but he still took his son to Jesus, hoping for better days. Disappointment had caused his faith to lag a little, but Jesus met him where he was and gave him the faith he needed. Jesus will do the same for us if we let Him.



### CENTRAL **truth**

Jesus strengthens our faith in Him.



## EXPLORE scripture

MARK 9:14-29

### MARK 9:14-19

14 When they came to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and scribes disputing with them. 15 When the whole crowd saw him, they were amazed and ran to greet him. 16 He asked them, "What are you arguing with them about?" 17 Someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you. He has a spirit that makes him unable to

speak. 18 Whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive it out, but they couldn't." 19 He replied to them, "You unbelieving generation, how long will I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him to me."

### MARK 9:20-24

20 So they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw him, it immediately threw the boy into convulsions. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. 21 "How long has this been happening to him?" Jesus asked his father. "From childhood," he said. 22 "And many times it has thrown him

into fire or water to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." 23 Jesus said to him, "If you can? Everything is possible for the one who believes." 24 Immediately the father of the boy cried out, "I do believe; help my unbelief!"

### MARK 9:25-29

25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was quickly gathering, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you: Come out of him and never enter him again." 26 Then it came out, shrieking and throwing him into terrible convulsions. The boy became like a corpse, so that many said, "He's dead."

27 But Jesus, taking him by the hand, raised him, and he stood up. 28 After he had gone into the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" 29 And he told them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer."

# DAILY devotions

## MEMORIZE MARK 9:24

### 7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about humans?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

# MARK 9:14-16

## DWELL

When Jesus saw the crowd surrounding the disciples at the bottom of the mountain, His first concern was to draw the scribes' attention off the disciples and onto Himself. When we are doing our best to follow Jesus, it can feel sometimes like we are all alone, but we aren't. He has our backs. Even when we mess up, like the disciples did in His absence, we can relax knowing His response to our distress is always going to include concern.



What does this teach you about how God responds when you make mistakes that cause problems?



How does this encourage you to treat brothers and sisters when they make mistakes that cause problems?

## MEMORIZE

Write Mark 9:24 on a few sticky notes, and put the notes in places you will see them throughout the day. When you see one, stop and read it out loud.

## PRAY

Thank God for always being concerned for and about you. Ask Him to remind you of this when you are tempted to let your brothers and sisters suffer the results of their mistakes on their own.

day 2

# MARK 9:17-19

## DWELL

Jesus was frustrated with His disciples for their lack of faith, but He didn't let His feelings get in the way of His doing what was right. He called the disciples out so no one would let their mistake affect their faith in God, stayed focused on challenge at hand, and assumed responsibility when no one else had proven capable. God doesn't leave us to sink or swim. When we mess things up, He intervenes for His own glory (see Eph. 1:11). We can always count on Him.

↪ How should God's faithfulness impact the way you receive correction from Him?

→ How can I protect Jesus's reputation when I make mistakes and act in ways that don't honor Him?

## MEMORIZE

Write down Mark 9:24 in a journal or on a note card, and circle any words that feel important. Look at just those words for a few moments, then close your eyes and say them. When you can get them all right without looking, try doing the same thing with the whole verse.

## PRAY

Thank God for always knowing what's going on and for being in control. Ask Him to make you aware of how your personal choices impact others.

day 3

# MARK 9:20-24

## DWELL

The desperate father in this story was so used to disappointment that he had almost forgotten how to hope. His words revealed what was in his heart: lack of faith. Jesus didn't shame him for it. Instead, He helped the man listen to himself and reminded him of the truth that had brought him to Jesus in the first place: with God, all things are possible (see Matt. 19:26). The man didn't take offense, but received Jesus's correction in the spirit it was intended.

→ Knowing Jesus sees and loves you, how should you respond to His gentle correction?

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↔ How should Jesus's response to this man influence the way you respond to people who doubt Jesus?

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## MEMORIZE

See how much of Mark 9:24 you can remember by writing it down without looking. Check your work. Add or change as necessary and study it. Practice doing this throughout the week until you get it!

## PRAY

Thank God for revealing to us the contents of our own hearts so we know what to ask Him for. Ask Him to give you the faith you are lacking.

day 4

# MARK 9:25-29

## DWELL

Jesus cast the demon out of the boy, but the demon abused the boy so badly on the way out that looked like Jesus might have killed the boy instead of setting him free. But things aren't always what they seem. When you reach out to God for help, it might sometimes feel like things are getting worse before they get better. But you can always trust Him to work things together for your good and His glory in the end (see Rom. 8:28; Eph. 1:11).



Why do you think the disciples were unable to cast out the demon? How do you think they responded to Jesus's answer in verse 29?

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What can you do to make sure your prayer life is strong enough to withstand challenges and help people?

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## MEMORIZE

Try singing Mark 9:24 to the tune of a song you know well. Practice singing the verse to yourself as best as you can throughout the week.

## PRAY

Thank God for being able to do what is impossible for you. Thank Him for the opportunity to participate in His plan through prayer.

day 5

# MARK 9:30-32

## DWELL

Jesus was about to be arrested, brutally executed, stay dead for three days, and rise again, but that didn't keep Him from helping people who needed His help. If God put something on Jesus's to-do list, He did it without complaint or question. What's more, He never made people feel like a burden or imposition. He did it in a way that made people feel loved and seen. This encouraged people to put their faith in the gospel He preached. We have a lot to learn from His example.



Why do you think the disciples were so confused by what He was teaching them?



Jesus had never been unwilling to teach the disciples, but they hesitated to ask Him questions. Why? How can you do better?

## MEMORIZE

Try reciting Mark 9:24 from memory. Ask a friend or family member to help you by reminding you of any words you've forgotten.

## PRAY

Thank God for sending Jesus to rescue us from our sin. Ask Him to correct you when you are tempted to make excuses instead of helping people.