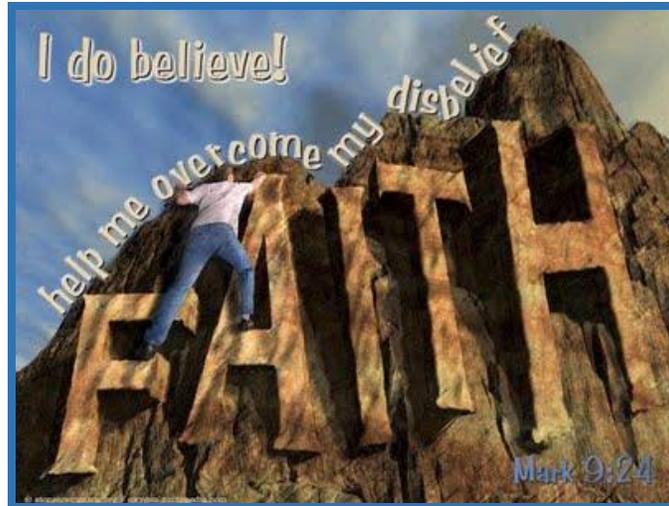


SPRING QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2016

THEME: FORSAKING ALL I TRUST HIM...THE FAITH STORY UNIT ONE – “TESTS OF FAITH”

“HOW POWERFUL IS YOUR FAITH?”



Sunday School Lesson No. I – March 6, 2016 Presented by Rev. Frank A. Davis, III, Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: Mark 9:14-29

Required Reading: Matthew 17:14-21; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43

Motto Text: Mark 9:23, *“Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.”*

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Standard Lesson Commentary; Precepts for Living (UMI Publishing); Word Search 10 Electronic Library

INTRODUCTION

Mountain top experiences are often followed by valley experiences. But the believer in Christ cannot live his or her life according to life's circumstances, but according to their faith in God. It's not about mental toughness, but about full surrendering of one's trust in the Saviour Jesus Christ, in everything.

We are beginning a new series that will be centered around the subject of “**Faith.**” This is a word that is tossed around like a volleyball. Faith is a word that encourages some and despises others. It is sometimes a word used to chastise some and cause others to strive until the end.

The average Christian has faith and it is measured at different levels, but it is given by God. Romans 12:3 says, *“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”*

Faith is not only measured, but it should also be exercised. Like our muscles and minds, the more we exercise it, the stronger it becomes. But what is Faith? This great word has been defined by a great passage of scripture, found in Hebrew 11:1 (R. V.), *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen.”* R. A. Torrey declares, “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, a conviction (or proving, putting to the test) of things not seen. The foundation upon which this assurance of things hoped for, this conviction of things not seen, rests, is God's Word.” The New Century Version Dictionary defines it as *“belief and trust.”* An acronym for faith that has been popular to define it is simply, “**F**orsaking **A**ll **I** Trust **H**im.” For the next 13 weeks we will examine several life lessons concerning believers and their faith. Our theme is entitled “**F**orsaking **A**ll **I** Trust **H**im...**The Faith Story.**”

The awesome talented voice of Vanessa Bell Armstrong inspires us with the lyrics, *“I have faith to see the invisible, Expect the incredible, Receive the impossible. Faith that can conquer anything.”* Our first lesson is entitled “**How Powerful is your Faith?**”

Anticipated Power Points are:

- **Faith's Power Distracted. Mark 9:14-20**
- **Faith's Power Doubted. Mark 9:21-24**
- **Faith's Power Demonstrated. Mark 9:25-29**

“How Powerful is your Faith?”

The Lord Jesus and three of His disciples had been up to Mt. Hermon, where Jesus transfigured and Moses and Elijah appeared before them. The experience was so powerful that it left the disciples overwhelmed by Heaven's glory and even the presence of God was manifested in audible words. Faith was surely present but the presence of the heavenly sights left little to the imagination or human doubt! (Read Mark 9:1-13). Now while heavenly ecstasy was at the mountain heights, there was turmoil down below. Their very faith was being tested as they faced major distractions.

LESSON OUTLINE

I. Faith's Power Distracted. Mark 9:14-20

Mark 6:7-10 describes how Jesus prepared the 12 disciples with power and authority to go forth and preach the Kingdom of God. With that commission, they received everything they needed to present Christ and His Kingdom. Note in verse 7 how they were to have authority and power over every obstacle.

But note in Mark 9:14-16, the nine disciples are arguing with religious scribes about who knows what and were so distracted that they could not deliver a demon from a young boy. Why not? Because their faith's power was distracted. H. L. Wilmington describes the particulars as: “A helpless father, a hopeless son and hapless disciples,” all whose faith and its power were rendered helpless because of distractions. Beloved, what's distracting our faith's power today?

II. Faith's Power Doubted. Mark 9:21-24

Jesus had empowered His disciples as we read in Mark 6:7-10, but in the moments of confusion and distractions, doubt was cast upon them and even in the mind of the boy's father, concerning Jesus Christ. The demon's activity in the boy caused Jesus to interrogate his father. Upon learning the details, Jesus then seeks to encourage the boy's father of what He could do if he would have faith. Jesus, in verse 23, encourages the father that distractions and doubts have met their match. Why? Because anything is possible if a person has faith to believe in God! The father, in verse 24, confesses that distractions and doubt has weakened his faith. Beloved, these things will weaken the best of our faith, but we should be honest and keep on trusting! Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us to, *“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”*

III. Faith's Power Demonstrated. Mark 9:25-29

Wilmington's description is awesome...

- “Jesus rebukes the demon. vv. 25-26
- Jesus restores the son. v. 27
- Jesus reveals the secret. vv. 28-29”

The disciples could not figure out why they failed in the boy's case. Even the best of Christians must be mindful to not allow distractions and doubt to upstage the person, power, and plan of God. Faith must be encouraged by prayer and sometimes fasting in order to give our full attention to God and not allow Satan to distract us into acting in the flesh! The Matthew account shares that Jesus explained the disciples' failure on unbelief and a need to totally live by faith (Matt. 17:20).

CLOSING

Beloved, let us so walk in faith with Christ that we might avoid distractions, doubt, and learn to walk in the demonstration of our Saviour: **FAITH! FAITH! FAITH! Praise God! Forsaking All I Trust Him!**

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Looking Ahead:

March 13, 2016

Mark 10:17-31

Please join us each Wednesday at noon at Bibleway where you can ask questions and make comments as Pastor Davis teaches the weekly Sunday School Lesson. All are welcome!

