



4/22/26

Tim and I went up north to take his mom out for dinner on Monday. She just turned 85! We ended up spending the night up there and got to spend some time in our old stomping grounds in Naperville. It was cool to go down by the River Walk with its paddle boats and park and beach... where I used to take my kids for play dates all the time when they were little. We went by our old house, and the park where Tim asked me to marry him, and the Burger King where we ate at right after we got home from our honeymoon. Tim had gotten really sick on our honeymoon and that Burger King was the first real food he had eaten in days. I mean... it was food anyway. Hahaha. It was a really sweet time. But I have to admit... it was also really nice to come home. This has been home for us for almost 18 years now, and I'm so grateful.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Mark 9:14-29

So... the weirdest thing happened right before the situation in this passage. Jesus took Peter, James, and John up on a mountain with Him. And there before these 3 disciples' eyes they saw Jesus transfigured before them, so that His clothes were so white and radiant that nothing on earth could compare. They also saw Jesus talking with Moses and Elijah, 2 men who had been taken from the earth hundreds of years before! It's shocking to me that it was soon after this that Peter denied that he knew Jesus, although... I probably would have done the same thing. I'm not sure why this transfiguration happened. Scholars probably know or have a good idea. But I bet Peter, James, and John never forgot it.

They were coming down from the mountain and there was a ruckus going on. The other 9 disciples were arguing with a huge crowd of people and the scribes. When the crowd saw Jesus, they were greatly amazed and ran up to Him to say hi. I imagine Peter, James, and John were thinking, "You're amazed at seeing Him like this? You have no idea what you're gonna be amazed by someday!" They were seeing Jesus as the man, but the three boys had just seen Jesus in a much greater glimpse of His glory.

Jesus asked the crowd, "What are you arguing about with them?" A man from the crowd spoke up. "Teacher, I brought my demon possessed son to You. He can't talk and the demon throws him into full blown seizures. I asked Your disciples to cast the demon out, but they couldn't."

Jesus seemed kind of annoyed. The ESV says that Jesus said, "O faithless generation..." But the original Greek transliteration says that He said, "O UNBELIEVING generation." Jesus was grieved by their lack of faith. My guess is... He was grieved by His disciples' lack of faith. He had been with them for a long time by now ("Until when will I be with you? Until when will I bear with you?") These disciples had been with Jesus all this time and I think they got cocky. I think they thought the power was within THEM to heal this boy. I think they were saying, "I MYSELF command you, demon, to come out of this boy." They hadn't yet understood that we have no authority or power in ourselves. It's Jesus who has the authority and power. It's by the Holy Spirit granting us the privilege of being His vessels that we do anything.

So... Jesus told them to bring the boy to Him. As soon as they did, the boy with the demon saw Jesus and was thrown into another seizure. How awful. It is horrific for a parent to have to watch his child suffer like that. This father was desperate... as I would be. I wonder if the Father in heaven watched this scene not only with compassion for this dad and his son, but with deep emotion as He prepared to watch His own Son suffer with no deliverance.

Jesus asked the boy's dad, "How long has this been happening?" He answered, "Since he was a little boy. This demon continues to throw him around like a rag doll, throwing him into water and fire... trying to destroy him. BUT if You are able to do ANYTHING, please have compassion on us and help us."

Jesus said, "IF You are able? ALL things are possible for the one who believes." The man cried out, "I DO believe! Help me in my unbelief!!!" This has to be one of the most honest prayers anyone can pray. I DO believe! But I don't believe fully. Is my small faith enough?

Jesus didn't shame the dad for his response. He didn't say, "Come back when you have more faith." Jesus IS compassionate!!! Jesus cast the demon out and told it never to come back. He did this quickly because He saw a bigger crowd running toward them. Jesus wasn't about getting notoriety for healing people. He wanted them to hear and believe the gospel! He healed people and cast out demons not so everyone could think He's so cool, but so that they might get the greater healing and freedom from demons... salvation!

After this experience, Jesus and the disciples entered a house and they asked Jesus privately, "Why couldn't we cast the demon out?" Jesus answered, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer."

What was Jesus saying to the disciples? YOU'RE NOT THE ANSWER! YOU DON'T HAVE THE POWER. My job is not to take control in any situation, as though I have the authority or power to do anything. My job is to run to the One who does have the authority and power... to the Father!

This passage can be taken out of context. Some people will say healing doesn't come to people because of their lack of faith. Let me see something really important here. This was NOT healing of a sickness. This was a demon possessed child. 1 John 3:8 says that Jesus "came to destroy the works of the devil."

But of sickness and suffering, we know that everyone eventually dies... even those Jesus physically healed are not living on this earth with us now. Sometimes the greater act of faith is when we trust God even in the suffering. But this passage is about deliverance from demon possession... and there is no faith involved in staying possessed. The only faith we need is that God is greater than the demon and He can set us free. Plus, I don't want to miss the fact that the man admitted that HIS faith wasn't that big. He WANTED to fully believe, but he didn't. Jesus delivered the boy because Jesus is compassionate.

As a believer who will never be possessed by a demon... praise God... He can set me free from the oppression and influence and deception of the demons!!! The answer in how He does that for me is the same answer He gave the disciples. Pray. Pour my heart out to God. Humble myself before Him and pray. O Lord, as David said in Psalm 40:17, "As for me, I am poor and needy, but YOU take thought for me. YOU are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!" 1 Peter 5 tells me that the devil is still alive and evil, seeking someone to devour. O Lord, help me to resist him by humbly, faithfully submitting to You as I continue to ask for Your help. I am poor and needy. You are compassionate. I am helpless. You are able. With You, nothing is impossible.