

DIVINE SON OF GOD

The demonized boy in Luke 9:37-45 was powerless against his demonic oppressor. The disciples were powerless to cast it out. His father pleaded, the crowds argued. The needy people needed the necessary Savior, powerful and merciful! And Jesus said, "*bring your son here.*"

DEMONIZED BOY - Luke writes, "*While he was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.*" Mark 9 adds that first Jesus asked how long this had been happening. The father said, "*from childhood, and it has often cast him into fire and water. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.*"

"*If you can!*" Jesus repeats, and replies, "*All things are possible for one who believes!*" And immediately the distressed father cried out, "*I believe; help my unbelief!*" The man believed enough to bring his son to the disciples, but since they could not help, his faith wavered.

DISTRESSED FATHER - "Let us learn to bear with ignorance in others, and deal patiently with beginners in faith," notes JC Ryle. As soon as Jesus informs him that all things are possible for one who believes, he declares his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to meet his need." *Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.*"

By just a word, the divine Deliverer sets this captive free, as He said in Luke 4:16-21. Mark 9 adds that Jesus commanded it to "*come out of him and never enter the boy again.*" And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse. Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. Hallelujah to our merciful and all-powerful Savior!

ASTONISHED PEOPLE - Luke writes, "*And all were astonished at the majesty of God.*" Well they should be! But if you were writing this, wouldn't you have spoken of the power of God? Luke uses the word for "*great majestic glory*" that Peter also uses in 2Peter 1:16-17 to describe the disciples' eyewitness testimony of the majestic glory of Christ in His transfiguration.

Here in Luke 9, the crowd's saw Jesus exorcize a boy and were struck with the majesty of God. Both the majesty above and the majesty below belong to Christ. As IH Marshall writes, "what was visible only to the chosen three on the mountain is here visible to a great number."

PUZZLED DISCIPLES - Amidst the rejoicing, consider the disciples' dilemma. Why could they not cast out the demon? they asked Jesus privately. In Mark 9:29 He replies, "*this kind can not be driven out by anything but prayer*" and some manuscripts have "*prayer and fasting.*"

Remember that in Luke 9:28 Jesus had gone up on the mountain to pray. "True prayer is an act of faith," notes RK Hughes, "and vital, authentic, believing faith exists only in a life of perpetual, dependent prayer." Note, the disciple's prayerlessness and unbelief developed over a week.

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE - Matthew 17 records Jesus telling them, "*If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed you will say to this mountain, move from here to there and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.*" They had already experienced this in Luke 9:1-6, when Jesus gave them power and authority over all demons and diseases, to proclaim the kingdom of God.

"The root of the apostles' powerlessness was unbelief," says Hughes, "not because they did not try. They did their best, no doubt repeatedly, using previously successful formulas. But they had subtly moved from trust in God to faith in the process, which is faith in themselves."

FAITH IN WHAT? - Whether you realize it or not, you are engaged in a spiritual battle, daily, against demonic powers as well as the ways of the world and the lusts of the flesh. You too may feel powerless against these invisible forces, much like this boy and his father.

Let us not become like the disciples whose faith slid from believing Jesus to trusting in their own experience. Remember, we must judge our life experience on the truth of the Bible, not the other way round. Evidence strengthens faith, but just like the resurrection, our faith is not in the multitude of evidence for it, our faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ who rose. Jesus saves!

Our faith is in Him, what He is, which extends to what He has done, and to what He says He will do. Our faith is not in things, or in faith itself. Our faith is in our living hope, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the only Son of the one true and living God. He alone is our divine Deliverer! ☐