

Discussion Guide

Week of April 7, 2013

Mark 9:14-29

Passage Overview:

Chapters 9-10 of Mark describe the journey of Jesus and his disciples to Jerusalem. This is the way to the cross. In these chapters Jesus explains what it means to be his disciple. This teaching is built around three predictions of his death (8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34). We learn that to follow Jesus is to accept the way of the cross—a life of service and sacrifice. Specifically, in 9:14-29, Jesus (along with Peter, James and John) descends from the Mount of Transfiguration and is immediately confronted by a dispute between the scribes and his disciples, and by a lonely father struggling desperately for both the life of his son and the existence of his faith. The father confesses that he has some faith but also acknowledges his spiritual weakness and appeals to Jesus to create in him a heart that believes more firmly.

Understanding God's Word—Read Mark 9:14-29.

Explain in your own words what is going on in this passage. What does Jesus say to his disciples, to the desperate father, and to the evil spirit? What does he do for the son?

Living and Applying God's Word

- Why do you think Mark put this story here, sandwiched between two passages on how the Messiah has to die (8:31-9:13 and 9:30-32)?
- From vv19-23, what does Jesus see as the basic problem of all who are involved? Why does Jesus speak so sharply to the disciples? Why can't they handle the situation?
- What do we learn about faith from this passage? About prayer? How is this father's plea (v24: "I believe; help my unbelief!") an appropriate description of the Christian life?

Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- The boy is a picture of the human race—we are spiritually possessed by evil, blind and deaf. We are completely unable to help ourselves.
 - Why then is it not enough for Jesus to come *primarily* as a teacher or moral example, but as a Savior?
 - How does this illustrate that our biggest problem isn't lack of education or morality, but our sin against a holy God?
 - How can you communicate this to your co-workers, neighbors, among family and friends?
- Jesus uses this encounter with a desperate father to teach the disciples that his way is the way of the cross—humility, service, sacrifice. Examine your life. How do you fail to live in a way that commends the way of the cross? Encourage those Christians in your CG by telling them specific ways that they are following the way of the cross. Then praise God for these evidences of God's grace.

Prayer:

Pray for the needs of your group. Call out to God together: "We believe; help our unbelief!" Praise God for his patience and mercy. Pray also for Clayton Dye with Campus Outreach and his ministry to college students in Houston.

Announcements

- Young Adult (18-25yo) Fellowship, April 12 @ 7pm—robert@insidecrosspointe.com
- Ladies Lunch, April 16 @noon—sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com
- Register for Base Camp today (June 24-28)—robert@insidecrosspointe.com