

Mark 9.

- Disciples were arguing with the scribes over a boy with an issue
- Jesus asked what they were arguing about

Mark 9:17-22

17 One of the men in the crowd spoke up and said, "Teacher, I brought my son so you could heal him. He is possessed by an evil spirit that won't let him talk. 18 And whenever this spirit seizes him, it throws him violently to the ground. Then he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast out the evil spirit, but they couldn't do it." 19 Jesus said to them, "You faithless people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy to me." 20 So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth. 21 "How long has this been happening?" Jesus asked the boy's father. He replied, "Since he was a little boy. 22 The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." 23 "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes." 24 The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"

pisteuó (pist-yoo'-o)

Definition: to believe, entrust

From pistis (pis'-tis)

Definition: faith, faithfulness

To say "I believe" is to say "I have faith."

Hebrews 11:1 NKJV

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 MSG

The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see.

It is easy to believe when we can see.

John 20:29

Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

But when we cannot see, that is when believing is difficult.

## 1. "I do believe"

Mark 9:24

The father instantly cried out, "I do believe..."

Most people say they believe God. Do we really believe? Sometimes we have knowledge but not belief.

**Belief is different from knowledge.** Knowledge addresses ignorance. You may be less ignorant, but that doesn't mean it impacted what you believe. We see this in people who do

something wrong even though they know better. What you believe, however, determines what you do.

Your actions will always reveal what you really believe because they will always follow what you really believe. This is one reason why believing what God says is so important. You will act upon what you believe.

***First question: Do I really believe what God says?***

Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Your belief is anchored in God's Word.

***Second Question: Has God been faithful?***

Mark 9:17

Teacher, I brought my son so you could heal him.

He knew Jesus was a healer. This was not faithlessness. He really believed Jesus could heal him.

Has God been faithful in your life? Our history with God will reveal his faithfulness, even we are not.

***Last question: Do you really believe God?***

It can be easy to find ourselves in the distance between belief and unbelief.

## **2. "Help me overcome my unbelief"**

This is one of the most honest, raw requests ever recorded in the Bible. The father was desperate, shaken, afraid, overwhelmed, and had just seen one of his last efforts fail.

We see this in Mark 9:18

"I asked your disciples to cast out the evil spirit, but they couldn't do it."

In the moment between belief and unbelief, we see the enemy with one of his best weapons, ***fear***.

***Fear is the enemy of faith.***

Faith is an assurance. Fear is instability. It gives birth to doubt. What does doubt do? Creates instability

James 1:6

...let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

We see this same attack in the story of Jesus healing Jarius' daughter. The messengers sent to tell Jarius not to bother Jesus as his daughter had died. Yet we see Jesus' immediate response - even before Jarius said anything -

Mark 5:36  
Do not fear, only believe.

Satan will always challenge your belief. and he often uses fear to drive the wedge between you and what God said. This creates distance between you and God. Distance literally means “stand apart” and we get the word distance from the word “distazo,” which is the Greek word for unbelief.

***How would your life change if, rather than diving into doubt, you asked God to help you overcome your unbelief before doubt had the chance to sprout seeds?***

We need to abandon doubt and stop it from having drastic negative effects on our lives. So what do we do?

### **3. “I will believe”**

John 14:12-14  
“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do”

How do we believe?

#### **1. You have to know Jesus**

1. 2 Timothy 1:12 But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed

#### **2. You have to get close to Jesus.**

1. You have to spend time with him to trust him more
2. I trust Monique more now than I did when I first met her.
3. Prayer is Faith CrossFit, it is Belief Training.

#### **3. You have to choose to believe**

1. Belief is just as much a choice as doubt. Choose to believe.
2. *Believe God? or believe what he said?*
3. We see this no better than with Abraham:

1. Romans 4:19-21

”He (Abraham) did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.”

***This is not just believing that he is good - but what has God said?***

Believe God. Really believe. Even when it isn't logical to do so.

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this message?