

## Mid-Week Devotion



### Doubting Our Doubts

**Read Mark 9:14-29 “I do believe...help my unbelief!”**

One day a man approached Jesus and told Him that His disciples had tried to exorcise an evil spirit from his son, but had been unsuccessful. Bring him to Me, Jesus told the man. The man brought his son to Jesus and immediately the spirit threw the son into convulsions. The father said to Jesus, “...if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” Jesus immediately picked up on the man’s doubt, “if you can,” Jesus repeated, “all things are possible to him who believes.” Then the father of the boy cried out, “I do believe, help my unbelief!”

Doubt among Christians has received a bad reputation over the years. We feel as if to doubt anything about God is a bad thing, we must simply believe, we just must. Yet shunning our doubts is not biblical. The Gospels are filled with people that had great doubts, but this doesn’t seem to bother Jesus. When the man doubts Jesus’ power to cast out his son’s evil spirit, he yells, I believe, help my unbelief. This was all Jesus needed to hear to heal the boy. When Peter, after walking on the water with Jesus begins to sink, Jesus rebukes him saying ye of little faith; notice however, that He doesn’t rebuke Peter because of his doubt. After the resurrection, after witnessing the greatest miracle of all times, scripture tell us that some of His disciples doubted. But even then, Jesus did not rebuke them because of their doubt, and as a result they chose to worship him in spite of their doubts.

M. Craig Barnes writes, “Few things are more dangerous to our spirituality than certainty. That is because spirituality only thrives in the context of choices that we have to make when we are not certain.” The love we all experience in our relationships and with God is a prime example of this. The best any of us can hope for is that when we give our love to someone, they will reciprocate, however, there are no guarantees, no certainty that this will happen. This is because love is always a choice, a choice that has its roots in doubt. Our belief in the love of God is no different. We all want to claim certainty in this area of our relationship with God; however, certainty would only serve to destroy our relationship with God, who insists on being bound to us only in love, which again, has its roots in doubt. With love, there is no certainty, and with certainty, there is no love. It is only by faith that we are bound to the Savior in pure love.

Have you ever found yourself lost in the desert of life, doubting if God was even present? Have you prayed, and prayed, and prayed some more only to have your prayers appear to go unanswered? Have you ever felt so alone, and unloved, that you have doubted even the existence of a God who claims to be love? It is at those times in your life that you need your doubts most of all, because it is only in rising above your doubts that you will encounter faith. And only faith will see you through. Only after confessing our doubts can we move forward to doubting our doubts, which always leads to faith. Doubt makes room for faith, while certainty pushes faith aside. If we were always completely certain of God, we would not have faith to believe and without faith, we can have no relationship with the God of love.

So perhaps the father of the possessed boy had the right prayer after all. Perhaps our journey toward having a loving relationship with the Savior should also begin by falling to our knees and confessing, I believe..., help my unbelief.

Blessings, Pastor Ed