



The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Christ, the Rock, is our sure hope

TRUTH FOR THE WEEK:
Solid-rock faith sees even the darkest deed of all history, the death of God's Son, as a necessary prelude to the brightest moment in all history—His resurrection and triumph over death.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold
(Ps 18:2 NKJV)
(from "Our Daily Bread", Apr 6, 2015)

Series: The Gift of Faith

UNIT: Tests of Faith

NEXT WEEK

Simple Faith
(Mark 10:17-31)

Powerful Faith Mark 9:14-29

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson teaches about the role of **Powerful Faith** in our daily Christian lives. The **study's aim** is to understand the power of faith in God to change situations. The **study's application** is to pray with greater confidence and faith in the power of God in our daily struggles.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

Some believers say that miracles were only for biblical times, while others insist that they are still happening. Still others fall in between, and there are those who are not sure what to believe. There are just some things that seem to be beyond the scope of the possible. That is what the father in this lesson was facing. His situation seemed impossible, beyond hope. He was almost ready to give up. Try to place yourself in his shoes. His only child was suffering, caught in a demon's grip for years. He was forced to watch as his child was destroyed more each day, and he was absolutely helpless to find a remedy. From the passage, we know that this father loved his son. I would say that he had exhausted his resources to find a cure. He had sought out rabbi after rabbi and tried remedy after remedy. Still, his son grew worse. When he approached Jesus, he was desperate. He did not know where else to turn, and he had heard stories about the healings this Prophet had performed. Initially, he asked the disciples for help, but they were unsuccessful (Mark 9:18). By then, discouragement and despair were foremost. That was when Christ stepped in. He had just come down from the mountain after the transfiguration. He found His disciples being mocked because of their failure. Curiously, Christ did not heal this child immediately. Instead, Jesus asked the father how long his son had been that way. The father did not hesitate to say. However, he did show doubt in Christ: "if thou canst do anything" (Mark 9:22). Christ told him that anything was possible if he would just believe. I think this was a challenge. Jesus was checking just what this man was willing to risk when it came to faith. The man's response is one we all have cried: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief (Mark 9:24). If we think, all of us can remember a circumstance that seemed hopeless. It was not that we did not believe but rather that the situation seemed impossible. We find ourselves setting limits on our Saviour. Belief and unbelief often reside within the same person, since faith is not always perfect. Watch what happened. After this man's exclamation, Jesus did not expound on some message concerning the necessity of faith in daily life. Instead, He cast out the demon, and the boy was healed. All of us know from reading Scripture that the boy would be healed. That seems obvious to us. To this father, it was not. Like Abraham, he was being asked to place his only child completely in God's hands (Gen. 22:1-19). In both instances, that faith was rewarded. It requires unwavering trust in God and His work even when we cannot see Him working (Heb. 11:1). It reaches beyond what we see and clings to God's. Faith that is powerful has conviction and confidence in God's authority over all. Someone with powerful faith believes that he has been given that faith through Christ. If we believe this, then we have faith to go out and do even the most formidable task for His glory. Let us cultivate and practice such a powerful faith

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

FAITH DURING WAVERING TIMES (MARK 9:14-19)

Wavering because of confusion (14-15)

Confusion caused by someone who influences toward disobedience (Gal 5:7-10)

Confusion caused by a different gospel (Gal 1:6-7)

God is of peace, not confusion (1 Cor 14:33)

Confusion caused by envy and selfish ambitions (James 3:14-16)

Wavering because of disappointment (16-18)

Disappointment because of depression (Ps 42:5-6)

Disappointment because of believing that God has forsaken us (Isa 49:14-15)

Disappointment because of afflictions and bitterness (Lam 3:19-23)

Disappointment that can be combated by a living hope in God (1 Peter 1:3-7)

Wavering because of unbelief (19)

Unbelief in the promises of God (Rom 4:18-21)

Unbelief because of ignorance (1 Tim 1:12-14)

Unbelief that can be avoided by standing firm in the faith (1 Cor 16:13)

Unbelief because of weaknesses and persecutions (2 Cor 12:10)

Unbelief that can be combated by being strong in the Lord (Eph 6:10)

FAITH IN GOD'S WILLINGNESS (MARK 9:20-24)

Willing to try Jesus (20-21)

Try Jesus to see that He is good (Ps 34:8)

Try Jesus like a newborn baby (1 Peter 2:2-3)

Try Jesus as a gift from God that provides eternal life (John 4:10-15)

Try Jesus as the bread of life (John 6:35)

Try Jesus as if thirsty and find out that He has inexhaustible water (John 7:37-39)

Willing because of desperate need (22)

A desperate need that only Jesus can fulfill (John 6:66-69)

A desperate need for help from Heaven (Ps 73:25-26)

A desperate need that requires prayer night and day (1 Tim 5:5)

A desperate need that only at the Throne of Grace can be helped (Heb 4:16)

Willing because of wanting to believe (23-24)

Wanting to believe because of weak faith (Matt 17:20)

Wanting to believe that prayers will be answered (Matt 21:22)

Wanting to believe for a healing (Acts 14:9-10)

Wanting to believe because of wanting to please God (Heb 11:6)

FAITH THAT DELIVERS (MARK 9:25-29)

Deliverance from uncleanness (25-27)

Uncleanness that the blood of Jesus completely sanctifies (Heb 9:13-14)

Uncleanness that is cleansed by hearts being sprinkled through faith (Heb 10:22)

Uncleanness that is cleansed by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:11)

Uncleanness that is cleansed by a willingness to trust God (Matt 8:2-3)

Uncleanness that is not just on the outside, but on the inside (Matt 23:25-26)

Deliverance from doubt (28)

Deliverance from doubt by those who are merciful (Jude 20-23)

Deliverance from doubt by an increase in faith (Luke 17:5-6)

Deliverance from doubt by God's grace (2 Cor 12:9)

Deliverance from doubt by relying on God's strength (Phil 4:13)

Deliverance from doubt by focusing on Jesus (Heb 12:2-3)

Deliverance through prayer (29)

Deliverance through prayer offered in faith (James 5:15-16)

Deliverance through prayer to the One who is worthy of praise (2 Sam 22:4)

Deliverance through prayer when we are in trouble (James 5:13)

Deliverance through prayer because of obedience to God (1 John 3:21-23)