

A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

✝ THE BOOK OF LUKE

WHAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY BELIEVE

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, ASSOCIATED

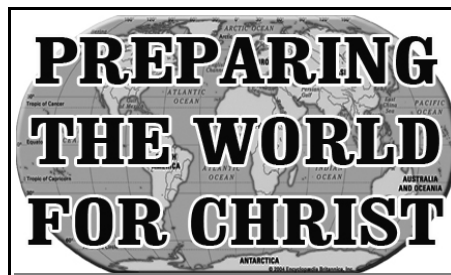
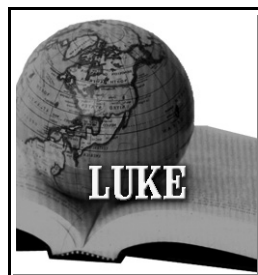
An overview of the Gospel of Luke, by Given O. Blakely

LESSON NUMBER 33

COMMENTARY ON: 9:37-50

A DIFFICULT CASE AND A HARD SAYING

Coming down from the Mountain on which He was transfigured, Jesus and the three disciples with Him are confronted by a man who had brought his son, possessed by a demon, to the nine disciples that remained at the foot of the mount. He tells Jesus that His disciples were not able to expel the demon. After rebuking His disciples, Jesus commands that the boy be brought to Him. The demon, apparently seeing what was about to happen, violently threw the boy to the ground. Jesus rebuked the demon, healed the boy, and delivered him to his father. The people were all amazed at "the mighty power of God," wondering at all the mighty things Jesus did. Jesus again tells His disciples to hear what He says, declaring that He would be delivered into the hands of men. They did not understand what He said, and began to reason among themselves in an unprofitable manner – to which Jesus responded with some things they needed to consider.

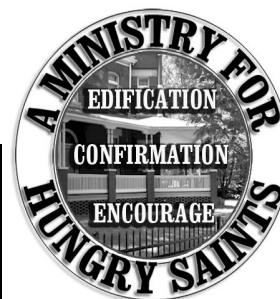


Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ



The Book of Luke, 2/19/2016

Lesson Number 33



54 VERSIONS OF THE ENGLISH SCRIPTURES

ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETH=Etheridge Translation (1849); ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), NIRV=New Int'l Readers Version (1998); ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literat Translation of the Bible (1976), LEW=Lewis Translation (1896); LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MGI=Peshitta Translation (2006); MIT=Idiomatic Version; MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NOY=George Noyes Bible (1869); NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), ROT=Rotheram Bible (1999); RPT=Revised Patriarchal Greek Orthodox New Testament; RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

FRIBERG; LOUW-NIDA; LIDDELL SCOTT; THAYER; VGNT GREEK DICTIONARY; GINGRICH

A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

PERSUADED OF THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CERTAINTY OF THE THINGS WE BELIEVE, LUKE MAKES US MORE FIRM BY BUTTRESSING OUR FAITH, AND CONFIRMING WE HAVE NOT EMBRACED FABLES.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

A DIFFICULT CASE AND A HARD SAYING

LUKE 9:37 "And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him. ³⁸ And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. ³⁹ And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. ⁴⁰ And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not. ⁴¹ And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. ⁴² And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. ⁴³ And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, ⁴⁴ Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. ⁴⁵ But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying. ⁴⁶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. ⁴⁷ And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, ⁴⁸ And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great. ⁴⁹ And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us. ⁵⁰ And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us. Luke 9:37-50

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Coming down from the Mountain on which He was transfigured, Jesus and the three disciples with Him are confronted by a man who had brought his son, possessed by a demon, to the

nine disciples that remained at the foot of the mount. He tells Jesus that His disciples were not able to expel the demon. After rebuking His disciples, Jesus commands that the boy be brought to Him. The demon, apparently

seeing what was about to happen, violently threw the boy to the ground. Jesus rebuked the demon, healed the boy, and delivered him to his father. The people were all amazed at "the mighty power of God," wondering at all

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

CONTENTS

- ▶ INTRODUCTION
- ▶ ON THE NEXT DAY (9:37)
- ▶ LOOK UPON MY SON (9:38-39)
- ▶ I BESOUGHT THY DISCIPLES (9:40)
- ▶ O FAITHLESS AND PERVERSE GENERATION (9:41A)
- ▶ BRING THY SON HITHER (9:41B)
- ▶ THE DEVIL THREW DOWN AND TARE HIM (9:42A)
- ▶ JESUS REBUKED THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT (9:42B)
- ▶ THEY WERE ALL AMAZED (9:43A)
- ▶ WHILE THEY WONDERED HE SAID (9:43B)
- ▶ THE SON OF MAN SHALL BE DELIVERED (9:44)
- ▶ IT WAS HID FROM THEM (9:45)
- ▶ THERE AROSE A REASONING AMONG THEM (9:46)
- ▶ THE SAME SHALL BE GREAT (9:47-48)
- ▶ WE SAW ONE CASTING OUT DEVILS (9:49-50)

the mighty things Jesus did. Jesus again tells His disciples to hear what He says, declaring that He would be delivered into the hands of men. They did not understand what He said, and began to reason among themselves in an unprofitable manner – to which Jesus responded with some things they needed to consider.

In this text we will again see the focus of Christ shifting to His coming death – an appointed death. When getting wrapped up in the affairs of this life throughout history, the church has tended to neglect the death of Christ. God has, from time to time, raised up men who once again shined the light on the death of Christ, powerfully declaring its centrality in redemption. At this point I want to promote a proper remembrance of Christ's death. You may recall, that when He was transfigured, Moses and Elijah appeared in glory, speaking with Him about *"His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem"* (Luke 9:31). No person,

church, or age can afford to adopt an emphasis that results in the minimization of the death of Christ, which is the pivot upon which salvation is positioned. A brief review of the inspired associations made with the death of Christ will sufficiently illustrate why Jesus began to speak of His death.

64 THINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEATH OF CHRIST

1. RECONCILIATION: *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life"* (Rom 5:10).
2. BAPTISM: *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"* (Rom 6:3). *"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection"* (Rom 6:5).
3. HIS OBEDIENCE: *"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection"* (Rom 6:5).
4. CONFORMING. *"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death"* (Phil 3:10).
5. THE NEW COVENANT: *"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the Testator"* (Heb 9:16).
6. PREACHING: *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God"* (1 Cor 1:18).
7. DIVINE POWER: *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God"* (1 Cor 1:18).
8. PERSECUTION: *"As many as desire to*

make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ" (Gal 6:12).

9. SANCTIFICATION: *"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all"* (Heb 10:10).
10. GLORYING: *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"* (Gal 6:14).
11. ENMITY. *"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ"* (Phil 3:18).
12. PEACE: *"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven"* (Col 1:20).
13. ORDINANCES: *"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross"* (Col 2:14).
14. SHAME: *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God"* (Heb 12:2).
15. LOVE OF GOD: *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren"* (1 John 3:16).
16. THE UNGODLY: *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly"* (Rom 5:6).
17. COMMENDED LOVE: *"But God commendeth his love toward us,*

- in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8).*
18. **BEING LORD:** *"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Rom 14:9).*
19. **SINS:** *"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3).*
20. **LIVING:** *"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor 5:15) "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor 5:15).*
21. **LIVING WITH HIM:** *"Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (1 Thess 5:10)*
22. **PROPITIATION:** *"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom 3:25).*
23. **JUSTIFICATION:** *"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom 5:9).*
24. **REDEMPTION:** *"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;" (Eph 1:7) "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col 1:14).*
25. **SHOWING LIGHT:** *"That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:23).*
26. **THE POWER AND WISDOM OF GOD:** *"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:23-24).*
27. **LIFE MANIFESTED:** *"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. "For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor 4:10-11).*
28. **DEVIL'S DESTRUCTION:** *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb 2:14).*
29. **REPENTANCE:** *"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30-31).*
30. **PURCHASE OF THE CHURCH:** *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28).*
31. **OUR OFFENCES:** *"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom 4:25).*
32. **SIN CONDEMNED:** *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom 8:3).*
33. **GIVING US ALL THINGS:** *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom 8:32).*
34. **PURGING:** *"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor 5:7).*
35. **BEING BOUGHT:** *"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor 6:20).*
36. **MEN BEING MADE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.** *"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor 5:21).*
37. **BEING MADE RICH:** *"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor 8:9).*
38. **DELIVERED FROM THE WORLD:** *"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal 1:4),*
39. **REDEEMED FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW:** *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal 3:13).*
40. **BEING MADE NIGH:** *"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph 2:13).*
41. **UNBLAMEABLE PRESENTATION:** *"In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprieveable in His sight" (Col 1:22).*
42. **BEING RANSOMED:** *"Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim 2:6).*

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>43. PURIFY A PEOPLE: <i>"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).</i></p> <p>44. TASTING DEATH FOR EVERY MAN: <i>"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb 2:9).</i></p> <p>45. BRINGING MANY SONS TO GLORY: <i>"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb 2:10).</i></p> <p>46. DESTROY THE DEVIL: <i>"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb 2:14).</i></p> <p>47. DELIVERANCE: <i>"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb 2:14-15).</i></p> <p>48. PURGING THE CONSCIENCE: <i>"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb 9:14).</i></p> <p>49. RECEIVING THE PROMISED INHERITANCE: <i>"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of</i></p> | <p><i>death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb 9:15).</i></p> <p>50. PUT AWAY SIN: <i>"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb 9:26).</i></p> <p>51. SANCTIFICATION: <i>"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:10).</i></p> <p>52. PERFECTION: <i>"For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb 10:14).</i></p> <p>53. BOLDNESS TO ENTER THE HOLIEST: <i>"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, "By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb 10:19-20).</i></p> <p>54. THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM: <i>"Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb 12:2).</i></p> <p>55. MEDIATORSHIP: <i>"And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb 12:24).</i></p> <p>56. ELECTION: <i>"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied" (1 Pet 1:2).</i></p> <p>57. REDEEMED FROM VAIN LIVING: <i>"Forasmuch as ye know that ye</i></p> | <p><i>were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:18-19).</i></p> <p>58. AN EXAMPLE: <i>"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pet 2:21).</i></p> <p>59. HEALING FROM THE STROKE OF SIN: <i>"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pet 2:24-25).</i></p> <p>60. BRINGING US TO GOD: <i>"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pet 3:18).</i></p> <p>61. CLEANSING FROM ALL SIN: <i>"But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).</i></p> <p>62. PROPITIATION: <i>"And He is the Propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2).</i></p> <p>63. THE LOVE OF GOD: <i>"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16).</i></p> <p>64. MAKING US KINGS AND PRIESTS: <i>"And from Jesus Christ, who is the Faithful Fitness, and the First Begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and</i></p> |
|--|--|---|

washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Amen" (Rev 1:5-6),

During this juncture in the ministry of Christ, He was focusing on His appointed and commanded death. He

would speak about it more frequently to His disciples. Of even more importance, His mind would be dominated by the commandment to lay down His life, and take it up again.

ON THE NEXT DAY

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT: *"And when they were come to the multitude . . ." (Matt 17:14)*

MARK'S ACCOUNT: *"And when He came to His disciples, He saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld Him, were greatly amazed, and running to Him saluted him. And He asked the scribes, What question ye with them?" (Mark 9:14-16)*

^{" Luke 9:37} ***And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met Him."***

IT CAME TO PASS

" And it came to pass, that on the next day . . . "

After the transfiguration – one of the most significant occasions in all of time – the ministry of Jesus simply resumed. This was not a disappointment for Jesus, but was rather a time when He would say and do as the Father directed Him. In the most superior and exemplary way Jesus *"delighted to do"* the Father's will. He fulfilled the Davidic utterance and prophecy, *"Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; Mine ears hast Thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within My heart"* (Psa 40:7-8).

Something Else Involved

There is something else involved in this kind of holy mindset. The person who delights to do the will of God will be especially discontent with the revelation of inadequacies and ineptitude. This may not be the sort of thing people like to think about it, but it is worthy of some serious consideration

On this occasion, the chief

adversary will surface, and his work through certain demons will be made known. The devil will hold before men what he is capable of doing – no doubt to incite fear, and hopefully find some weakness in Jesus of Nazareth.

HE CAME TO HIS DISCIPLES

Mark reports, *"He came to His disciples."* They were the people of preference – there was a great multitude, but He *"came to His disciples."* In this case, it was only nine of them: *"Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him"* (Matt 10:3-4). Jesus had taken *"Peter, John, and James,"* up into the mountain, leaving the remaining nine behind (Lk 9:28). **There are still times when Jesus takes some disciples further than others.** They will see more, be tested more, and their deficiency will be more closely examined. This is not a condition in which men may boast. It is the result of Divine choice, not human attainment – and **no man can glory in Divine choice!**

Also, Jesus always returns to the rest of the disciples, bringing with Him those who were especially blessed. Further revelations are always followed by a rejoining with the disciples. There are no permanent separations among brethren.

HE SAW

Accenting the precise view of the Lord, Mark reports, *"He saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them."* This, we will find, caught His attention. He does note the circumstances of His disciples, doing so with especial interest.

MUCH PEOPLE MET HIM

" . . . when they were come down from the hill, much people met Him."

Other versions read, *"a great multitude,"* ^{NKJV} *"a large crowd,"* ^{NIV} *"A great crowd,"* ^{NRSV} *"a great band of people."* ^{BBE}

Matthew calls this group *"the multitude"* (Matt 17:14), and Mark refers to them as *"a great multitude"* (Mk 9:14).

In the flesh, and among men, a great crowd reduces the possibility of a single individual receiving special attention. People tend to become, as they say, *"lost in the crowd."* And, for sure, a leader does not generally make himself available for any extraordinary involvement with one individual. **How different it was with Jesus of Nazareth.** His manner is lived out in this very incident. One person in a massive crowd can receive unique access to, and the special attention of, Jesus Christ. In this way, there is always a door of hope opened when Jesus is present.

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Mark reports a most interesting response of Jesus – one that confirms how great a Shepherd He really is. He had noted that Jesus had seen the scribes questioning the disciples. He

adds, *"And straightway all the people, when they beheld Him, were greatly amazed, and running to Him saluted him. And He asked the scribes, **What question ye with them?**"* – and that is in the midst of *"all the people"* running

to Jesus and saluting, or greeting, Him. Even though there is a great crowd gathering about Him, Jesus' first concern is for His disciples. How were people talking with them? What kind of questions had they asked them?

LOOK UPON MY SON

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT: *"And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a certain man, kneeling down to Him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is a lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water."* (Matt 17:14-15)

MARK'S ACCOUNT: *"And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto Thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit. And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away"* (Mark 9:17-18)

"³⁸ And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech Thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. ³⁹ And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him."

A MAN OF THE COMPANY

"And, behold, a man of the company cried out . . ."

Matthew reports, *there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him* (Matt 17:14). Mark reports, *"And one of the multitude answered and said"* (Mark 9:17).

One man breaks through the crowd to gain the attention of Jesus. I suppose he was like most people in not desiring to capture the attention. **However this man is not driven by pride, but by need, and "need" does not make for pride.** Further, the greatness of Jesus did not move the man to imagine He would pay no attention to him. It rather emboldened him to seek a special benefit from Him.

At the root level, he saw Jesus as a *"a very present Help in trouble"* (Psa 46:1). **I am more and more becoming uncomfortable with any tendency to seek help from men first.** Such a tendency cannot be defended, neither, indeed, is it right. For the child of God,

no man should seem to be most able to help in the time of need. There is, of course, a very definite place for the assistance of men – but it is always a secondary place, not a primary one. This, of course, is from the perspective of the one requiring help, not the ones giving the help. When confronting a brother or sister who is *"naked and destitute of food,"* it is never right to *"say unto them, 'Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body.'"* All theology notwithstanding, *"what doth it profit?"* (James 2:16). No person of sound spiritual mind will look at such a person and say, *"the Lord will provide,"* when it is in their hand to do so. Here, we are speaking of the one who is in need. That person must first resort to the Lord – just like this man did. Of course, that will require faith – but God expects His people to have faith, as this incident will confirm.

LOOK UPON MY SON

" . . . saying, Master, I beseech Thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child . . ."

Matthew reports, *"have mercy on my son."* Mark reads, *"I have brought Thee my son."*

This man knows that if Jesus will pay attention to his son, He will do something about his condition. That is

how faith reasons. That is why David cried out, *"Look Thou upon me, and be merciful to me"* (Psa 119:132). With holy expectation Isaiah cried out, *"Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of Thy holiness and of Thy glory"* (Isa 63:15).

O child of God, you must be convinced that the Lord *"heareth the cry of the afflicted"* (Job 34:28). It is ever true, *"The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry"* (Psa 34:15).

A SPIRIT TAKETH HIM

" . . . And, lo, a spirit taketh him . . ."

Other versions read, *"a spirit seizes him,"* ^{NKJV} *"takes control of him,"* ^{GWN} *"takes hold of him,"* ^{MIT} *"will suddenly take hold of him,"* ^{NJB} *"keeps seizing him,"* ^{LIVING} and *"attacks him."* ^{CEV}

This is the same kind of affliction the Gadarene demoniac experienced. It is said of the unclean spirit that dominated him, *"For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was . . . driven of the devil into the wilderness)"* (Luke 8:29). This was a very real circumstance, not a parabolic one, and certainly not an imagination or superstition. We know this because Jesus addressed the situation, speaking directly to the spirit, which was apparently like a kind of lieutenant over

a legion of demons Lk 8:30-33). Furthermore, that incident occurred not long before this incident.

It is arresting to consider that there are evil spirits that at times can dominant men, driving them to do things they would never do otherwise, forcing physical limitations upon them, and much more. We know that demonic activity did not stop when Jesus died, was raised from the dead, and exalted to the right hand of God. Some time after Pentecost a multitude of people came from other cities to Jerusalem *"bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one"* (Acts 5:16). Several decades after Christ's exaltation, from Paul's person *"were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them"* (Acts 19:12). Shortly after that, there were seven sons of Sceva who encountered a man with an *"evil spirit."* When they tried to cast him out in the name of *"Jesus whom Paul preached,"* the man leaped on them, and so prevailed against them that all seven of them *"fled out of that house naked and wounded"* (Acts 19:14-16). Paul wrote to the Corinthians of idolaters in their time, which was past the middle of the first century: *"But I say, that the things*

which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor 10:21). Paul wrote to Timothy speaking of a condition that would exist in the *"latter times"* – *"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils"* [demons] (1 Tim 4:1). James wrote that at that time demons *"believe and tremble"* (James 2:19). In his vision on the Isle of Patmos, John saw *"the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty"* (Rev 16:14) – and that was written when the first century was nearing its close.

I say these things to alert us to the very real presence and influence of demons. They are not superior, but they are influential. Men have come up with physiological explanations for the kind of infirmities credited to demons in Scripture. I think it is easy for a powerless church to accept those explanations. However, I see nothing in what Jesus or His apostles taught that

would lead us to believe such spirits are not confronted in our day.

The thing to see here is that the father of this oppressed boy was able to identify the problem – and Jesus did not suggest that he was wrong.

THE DREADFUL EFFECTS

" . . . and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him."

Other versions read, *"he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him,"* ^{NKJV} *"he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming at the mouth, and as it mauls him, it scarcely leaves him,"* ^{NASB} and *"making him scream; and it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth; it is always hitting him and hardly ever leaves him alone."* ^{LIVING}

This demon induced screaming, convulsions, foaming at the mouth, and some form of pummeling. Further, we will find that this had been going on for some time. But this man heard of Jesus, and brought his son to Him in hopes of him being healed. **That is how much he was convinced of Jesus' power!**

I BESOUGHT THY DISCIPLES

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT: *"And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not cure him."* (Matt 17:16)

MARK'S ACCOUNT: *" . . . and I spake to Thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not"* (Mark 9:18).

⁴⁰ *And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not."*

Remember, this is being said publically, and was probably the topic of discussion initiated by the scribes.

I BESOUGHT THY DISCIPLES

Other versions read, *"implored Your disciples,"* ^{NKJV} *"begged Your disciples,"* ^{NASB} *"made a request to your*

disciples," ^{BEB} *"desired thy disciples,"* ^{DOUAY} and *"beseeched."* ^{ABP}

In the absence of Jesus Himself, this father brought his afflicted son to the disciples of Jesus. Perhaps he knew about their success, when not long before this they had gone throughout Judaea healing the sick, casting out demons and even raising the dead (Matt 10:8; Lk 9:10). He evidently had

expectation that the nine disciples of Jesus would be able to do for his son what they had done for others.

THEY COULD NOT

Other versions read, *"were not able to do it,"* ^{BEB} and *"they were not able to deliver him."* ^{LEW}

This was actually a humiliating situation: *"they could not."* This

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

suggests they had tried, but failed. While I realize this can be taken too far, into the area of human speculation, I must admit that when we are faced with things we know are possible, yet we must often acknowledge *"we could not!"* The older I get, the more this bothers me. I remember what Jesus said one time when the disciples marveled that the fig tree He had cursed withered from the roots upward:

"Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:22-24).

On this very occasion, Matthew reports that Jesus said, *"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you"* (Matt 17:20). I will touch on this later.

In the meantime, let us note how Jesus responded to this report of the inability of the disciples.

O FAITHLESS AND PERVERSE GENERATION

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT: *"Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?"* (Mat 17:17A)

MARK'S ACCOUNT: *"He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?"* (Mark 9:19A)

^{41A} **And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?"**

FAITHLESS GENERATION

"And Jesus answering said, O faithless . . . generation . . ."

All three Gospel writers record this response – an instant one, and a stern one. Matthew underscores that this was Jesus' answer to the father: *"He answereth him."* But the text clearly suggests by the word *"generation"* that His words are not confined to the father of the oppressed, but were addressed to the entire crowd: the scribes, the crowd in general, the father, and the disciples – all of them.

Other versions read, *"unbelieving . . . generation,"* ^{NASB} *"generation without faith,"* ^{BBE} *"without any trust,"* ^{CJB} *"faithless people,"* ^{LIVING} *"a generation with no faith,"* ^{IE} *"You people do not have any faith,"* ^{CEV} *"unsteadfast,"* ^{YLT} *and "[faithless ones] unbelieving and without trust in God."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

Those are undeniably strong words. *"Faithless"* is the word Jesus used when addressing Thomas: **"be not faithless, but believing"** (John 20:27). Once Jesus, after He had calmed a

storm, asked His disciples, **"How is it that ye have no faith?"** (Mk 4:40). Luke reports Him saying, **"Where is your faith?"** (Lk 8:25). When Jesus lifted Peter out of the stormy sea, He said, **"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"** (Matt 14:31). In His sermon on the mount, after admonishing those to whom He spoke to *"Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on,"* He added *"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"* (Matt 6:30). When the disciples, awakened Jesus in the midst of a fierce storm at sea, saying *"Lord, save us, we perish,"* He responded, *"Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith?"* (Matt 8:26). When the disciples thought Jesus had spoken to them about not bringing any bread with them, Jesus responded, **"O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?"** (Matt 16:8-9).

When in His own hometown, *"He did not many mighty works there*

because of their unbelief" (Matt 13:58). It was there, where He had been brought up, that He *"marveled because of their unbelief"* (Mk 6:6). After He had risen from the dead, He appeared to His disciples and *"upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen"* (Mark 16:14).

Men may think that Jesus is tolerant of unbelief, and even expects it from His people – but nothing can be further from the truth. Unbelief, not believing, and doubting, are **never** acceptable. It is always wrong, and to be zealously avoided. In our day, the church is too tolerant of unbelief, a lack of faith, and little faith. Unbelief makes one *"stagger"* at the promises of God (Rom 4:20). An *"evil heart of unbelief"* will constrain one to *"depart from the living God"* (Heb 3:12). In fact, it was not believing that kept an entire generation of Israelites from entering the promised land (Heb 3:19; 4:6).

It certainly is not pleasant to say it, but it still must be said: **There is simply too much unbelief and lack of faith in the church of our time!** It is to be rebuked, resisted, and eliminated from those who wear the name of Jesus.

PERVERSE GENERATION

O . . . perverse generation . . ."

Other versions read, "perverted generation," ^{NASB} "false in heart," ^{BBE} "crooked generation," ^{CEB} "twisted generation," ^{ESV} "distorted generation," ^{MIT} "evil people," ^{NIRV} "corrupt people," ^{NLT} "stubborn," ^{LIVING} "difficult people," ^{PHILLIPS} "No focus to your lives!" ^{MESSAGE} and "perverse (wayward, crooked and warped)." ^{AMPLIFIED}

The word "generation" is an important one, distinguishing the word from being delivered to a single individual. **Solomon spoke of "a generation" that transcended a certain place or period of time** (Prov 30:11-14). The Psalmist spoke of a single generation that spanned all of time – a "seed" that served the Lord (Psa 22:30). The Psalmist also spoke of a generation that was "a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God" (Psa 78:8).

Now Jesus addresses such a generation, represented by certain who were then standing before Him. A "perverse generation" is one that is distorted, in some way deformed, and spiritually non-productive. It is a generation that is turned aside from the right path. ^{THAYER}

In our text, this accounts for the **disciples being unable to heal the son that was brought to them.** It accounts for the approach of the scribes, and those who remained critics of Jesus. These people were operating outside the perimeter of Divine power. Jesus did not hide His feelings about such a matter. Technically, He was not condemning, but expressing His discontent with the condition.

HOW LONG SHALL I BE WITH YOU?

"...how long shall I be with you as suffer you?"

Other versions read, "suffer you and bear with you," ^{NKJV} "how long shall I be with you, and put up with you." ^{NASB} "stay with you and put up with you." ^{NIV} and "Until when and how long am I to be with you and bear with you?" ^{AMPLIFIED}

Behold the crowd before the Master. There is an afflicted son, a disappointed father, some skeptical scribes, vacillating watchers, and incapable disciples. It was not the kind of crowd that pleased the Master, even though He was patient and longsuffering. **It was an environment He had to overcome in order to work.** He was not pleased with what He saw and heard.

This is one of the things Jesus had to confront in order to save us. It

was the the slowness of heart that displeased Him, as He also confronted with the two on the road to Emmaus: "*O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoke*" (Luke 24:25). Although it was a mild expression, that He said to Philip on the eve of His betrayal was similar: "*Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*" (John 14:9).

This is the kind of Divine disappointment Jesus articulated when, as He was lifting up Peter to the surface of the stormy wave, He said "*O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*" (Matt 14:31).

I have found that the closer you are to Jesus, and the greater your fellowship with Him, the more sensitive you will become to unbelief, slowness of heart, and spiritual ineptitude. There will be a certain intolerance of lukewarmness and inconsistency.

Care must be taken not to adopt an erroneous view of Jesus that allows indifference toward unacceptable responses and conditions within us. Our view of the Son of God must be right. We must not be lulled into a state of spiritual sleep in which we become incapable of assessing our environment.

BRING THY SON HITHER

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT: " . . . bring him hither to Me." Matt 17:17b).

MARK'S ACCOUNT: " . . . bring him Me" (Mk 9:19b)

^{41B} **Bring thy son hither."**

One wonders why the father had not done this already. However, failure and disappointment often cause us to linger, so to speak, at a distance from Jesus. I would also note that no one of understanding speaks hastily before Jesus. Now, however, confirming that He is gracious and compassionate,

Jesus urges that the afflicted boy be brought into His immediate presence.

Jesus could have healed the boy at a distance, as He did the nobleman's son (John 4:46-53), or the centurion's servant (Matt 9:5-13). **However, for reasons known only to Him, there are cases that must be addressed by Him directly, and not at a distance.**

Sometimes Jesus even went where the afflicted person was located, as with the Gadarene demoniac (Mk 5:1-15), and the daughter of the Syrophenician woman (Mk 7:26-30). However, there are times like this, when Jesus wills to confront the situation directly, with no other mediating agent or representative. This is done according to the will of God, to whom Jesus was submitted.

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

THE DEVIL THREW HIM DOWN AND TARE HIM

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT: Matthew omits this, simply stating *"And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour."* (Matt 17:18).

MARK'S ACCOUNT: *"And they brought him unto him: and when he saw Him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And He asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."* (Mark 9:20-24)

^{42A} *And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him."*

We learn something here about the nature of the powers against which we now wrestle (Eph 6:12). They will endeavor to inflict as much damage as they can. If men choose to delay coming to Jesus, the powers of darkness will continue to work.

AS HE WAS COMING

"And as he was yet a coming . . ."

Other versions read, *"as he was still coming,"* ^{NKJV} *"as he was still approaching,"* ^{NASB} *"while the boy was coming,"* ^{NIV} *"as they brought him near,"* ^{ETH} *"While the man's son was coming forward,"* ^{MIT} *"while he was bringing him."* ^{MRD}

Some versions focus on the father bringing his son to Jesus. Others depict

the son himself coming. Still others say *"they brought him near."* It seems to me that those whom Jesus addressed when He said, *"bring him hither,"* are the ones who brought him. The father is the one who brought the matter to the attention of Jesus. Jesus had also addressed the crowd with a word.

As the account progresses, it seems clear that the father was bringing his son to Jesus, as he had formerly brought him to the disciples.

THE DEMON THREW HIM DOWN

" . . . the devil threw him down, and tare him."

Other versions read, *"threw him down and convulsed him,"* ^{NKJV} *"dashed him to the ground and threw him into convulsion,"* ^{NASB} *"he was pushed violently down and twisted by the evil spirit,"* ^{BBE} *"threw him down and shook him violently,"* ^{CEB} *"knocked him down*

and threw him into severe convulsions," ^{CSB} *"threw him into a fit,"* ^{NIRV} *"rent him, and tore him sore,"* ^{YLT} *"dashed him to the ground and cruelly convulsed him,"* ^{WEYMOUTH} *and "threw him down and [completely] convulsed him."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

Left unchecked, this is the kind of power demons possess. Their control of the human body is challenging to consider. They emphasize what sin has done to humanity. Not only has it brought them into a life of moral depravity, it has placed them where the devil and his hordes can control them. Paul addressed this briefly when he wrote, *"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"* (Eph 2:2). The extent of this working goes far beyond what men ordinarily think. There is every reason to *"resist the devil,"* and no valid reason not to.

JESUS REBUKED THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT: *"And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour."* (Matt 17:18)

MARK'S ACCOUNT: *"And He asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father."* (Mark 9:21-27)

^{42B} *And as he was yet a coming, | the devil threw him down, and tare him | And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit,*

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father."

THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- ⇒ AS HE WAS COMING THE DEMON THREW HIM DOWN AND TARE HIM (Mk 9:20; Lk 9:42). A last effort of this demon to take the life of the boy. The hatred that our adversary the devil has for humanity is evident.
- ⇒ JESUS ASKS THE FATHER HOW LONG SINCE THIS CAME UNTO HIM (Mark 9:21). Jesus does not ask this question to obtain information, but to set the stage for the greatness of the work He will do. For the sake of the people beholding this occasion, He also draws attention to the utter inability of anyone else to address this situation successfully.
- ⇒ SINCE HE WAS A CHILD (Mark 9:21). A grievous condition that had remained with the boy from the time he was very young. Still, this father sensed in his spirit that Jesus could do something about this seemingly helpless situation.
- ⇒ OFTEN HE CAST HIM INTO THE FIRE, AND INTO WATERS TO DESTROY HIM (Matt 17:15; Mk 9:22). Behold how the demon had attempted to take the life of this boy – throwing him in both fire and water *"to destroy him."* But he was not able to do so. Notwithstanding, what that demon was able to do to the boy makes for great sobriety on our part.
- ⇒ IF THOU CANST DO ANY THING (MARK 9:22). The father cries out, *"but if Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us."* The man has a *"little faith,"* but not enough to see the full picture. But the faith he did have helped him to be bold in bringing the case to Jesus. His faith will be honored.
- ⇒ IF THOU CANST BELIEVE. (Mark 9:23). *"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."* Jesus leads the man to know that it is not a question of what **He** can do, but whether or not the man can believe.

- ⇒ I BELIEVE, HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF (Mark 9:24) *"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."* This is one of the great statements of Scripture. **It reveals what a persuasion of Jesus will move a person to request.** If you have ever felt the need for help to believe, let me encourage you to make that known to Jesus. **The one who commands men to believe, will surely help you to do so.**
- ⇒ JESUS REBUKED THE FOUL SPIRIT. *"Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him"* (Mark 9:25). Notice the thoroughness of the Lord's command. He first identifies the foul spirit for what he is – a *"dumb and deaf spirit."* That is, it was a spirit that made people incapable of speaking or hearing.
- ⇒ THE SPIRIT CRIED OUT, RENT HIM SORE, AND CAME OUT. (Mark 9:26). *And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead."* The boy shrieked, experiencing terrible convulsions. A modern physician might have traced this to certain physiological conditions. However, in this case, a demon had caused the reaction.
- ⇒ JESUS LIFTED HIM UP. *"But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose"* (Mark 9:27). **Jesus is in complete charge of the situation.** The boy is not harmed, and our blessed Lord simply helped him to his feet. In some way, when a person is recovered from a sin, Jesus has reached down, and helped him to his feet, so to speak.
- ⇒ JESUS REBUKED THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT. *"And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit . . ."* (Luke 9:42). This was more than simply speaking a word of reprimand. By speaking this rebuke he caused the power of the demon to leave, and it was no longer able

to oppress the boy.

- ⇒ JESUS HEALED THE CHILD. *"And Jesus . . . healed the child."* (Luke 9:42). Whatever had contributed to this condition, and whatever effects it had caused were removed. I gather there was no evidence that the attack, or any of the previous ones, had ever occurred.
- ⇒ JESUS DELIVERED HIM AGAIN TO HIS FATHER. *"And Jesus . . . delivered him again to his father."* (Luke 9:42). The father had brought the boy in an oppressed condition. At the very time the boy was being brought to Jesus, the demon displayed his dominancy over the boy. But when Jesus delivered the son back to the father, he saw his son as he had not seen him since he was a child – before the demon began oppressing him. If you have ever experienced the return of a child from the clutches of the wicked one (and I have), Jesus has given your child back to you in a state of wholeness.

NOTICE HOW THIS DEMON WAS DESCRIBED

The supernatural versatility of this demon is made known in the manner in which the Lord referred to it.

- ⇒ *"A spirit"* (Lk 9:38). A non-material entity. Someone without a body, that could control another person's body.
- ⇒ *"Dumb spirit"* (Mk 9:17). A spirit that could render an offspring of Adam incapable of speaking.
- ⇒ *"The devil"* [demon] (Matt 17:18; Lk 9:42). An unchangeable spirit who did not apparently have a life-span as a man.
- ⇒ *"The foul spirit"* (Mk 9:25). Other versions read *"unclean spirit."* NKJV/NASB/NIV/NRSV *"impure spirit."* ROT
The idea is that of an evil spirit that caused people to be unclean, and unsuitable to traffic in society.
- ⇒ *"Dumb and deaf spirit"* (Mk 9:25). A

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

wicked spirit that rendered a person incapable of speaking and hearing.

⇒ *"The unclean spirit"* (Lk 9:42). Making a person unsuitable to traffic in society.

All of these effects, together with seizures, rigidity, foaming at the mouth, and severe pain confirm the total lack of regard Satan and his hosts have for humanity. If they were not being held in check by the Lord Jesus Christ, they would have plagued men in ways we

are incapable of even imagining.

These are among the hosts of wickedness against whom we *"wrestle"* (Eph 6:12), and, together with their leader Satan, are to *"resist."* You can see how serious believers must be.

THEY WERE ALL AMAZED

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT: Matthew omits this.

MARK'S ACCOUNT: Mark omits this.

^{43A} *And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God."*

Other versions read, *"And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did,"* ^{NRSV} *"the greatness of God,"* ^{NASB} *"God's wonderful power,"* ^{GWN} *"God's magnificence,"* ^{MIT} *"majestic display of God's power,"* ^{NLT} *"struck with astonishment, at the majesty of God,"* ^{ROT} and *"astounded at the evidence of God's mighty power and His majesty and magnificence."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

These people, in a sense, had grown accustomed to outbursts of wicked supernatural powers. People in

the synagogues, for example, had grown accustomed to a woman in their midst, bowed over and who could by no means raise up. They grew used to a man with a withered hand sitting among them.

They could not do anything about these circumstances, and they knew it. But now, they had witnessed a greater power, and it astounded them. Although they were noted for believing there was a God, and had been tutored in the ways of God, with a history of mighty deliverances, yet *"they were all amazed at the mighty power of God."*

From one perspective, growing up into Christ in all things involves **not** being

constantly amazed when God works. That is when thankfulness begins, and being simply *"amazed"* is replaced.

A similar thing has taken place in the nominal church. Professed "Christians" have grown accustomed to people who cannot cease from sinning, and are slaves to iniquity. O, some of them are willing to hire some social experts, or purchase a plan for correcting human behavior. However, that is only because they have grown accustomed to the one soundly defeated by the Lord Jesus operating with relative freedom among them. May we experience full freedom from such a state. It is time for the church to cease being accustomed to conditions that contradict salvation.

MATTHEW AND MARK'S REPORT

Luke omits the disciples asking Jesus why they could not cast the demon out of the boy.

WHY COULD WE NOT CAST HIM OUT

"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?" (Matt 17:19). *"And when he was come into the house, His disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?"* (Mark 9:28).

One thing we note here is that the disciples were not accustomed to failure. They had recently returned from a mission in which they healed the sick,

cleansed lepers, cast out demons, and even raised the dead (Matt 10:8; Lk 9:10). There were no reports of failures. But in this case, nine of them could not cast out a single demon. They asked why they could not, for, to them, this did not make sense – and it was something they could not deny.

It seems to me that when we find ourselves unable to do something God has told us to do, we should also ask why we were not able to do so. Why is there such a thing as the absence of power in doing something perceived to be the will of the Lord?

BECAUSE OF YOUR UNBELIEF

"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief . . ." (Matt 17:20a).

Jesus does not hesitate to answer: *"because of your unbelief."*

Other versions read, *"Because of the littleness of your faith,"* ^{NASB} *"because you have so little faith,"* ^{NIV} *"because of your little faith,"* ^{NRSV} *"Because you have such little trust!"* ^{CJB} *"Because you have so little faith,"* ^{GWN} *"The reason is the deficiency of your faith,"* ^{MIT} *"Because your faith is much*

too small, ^{NIRV} “You don’t have enough faith,” ^{NLT} “Through your want of faith,” ^{YLT} “because you don’t have enough faith!” ^{CEV} “Because you’re not yet taking God seriously,” ^{MESSAGE} and “Because of the littleness of your faith [that is, your lack of firmly relying trust].” ^{AMPLIFIED}

The word translated “unbelief” {ap-is-tee'-ah} has the following lexical meaning: “WANT OF FAITH AND TRUST,” ^{THAYER} “AS FAILURE TO TRUST, UNBELIEF, LACK OF TRUST, LACK OF FAITH,” ^{FRIBERG} AND “WANT OF FAITH, FAITHLESSNESS, UNBELIEF.” ^{LIDDELL-SCOTT}

This is a strong word, and there is no way of softening it, or making it more palatable. Those who have a thin skin, and are easily offended, will have great difficulty being around Jesus! There is a certain tenderness of spirit, completely dissociated from hardness, that enables a person to receive what the Master says, even when it takes the form of a rebuke.

IF YE HAVE FAITH AS A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED

Jesus goes on to clarify that faith itself has no weakness. Therefore He affirms, “*verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you*” (Matt 17:20b). Other versions read, “the size of a mustard seed,” ^{NRSV} “as much as is a grain of mustard seed” (Matt. 17:20

^{GENEVA} and “*if you have faith [that is living] like a grain of mustard seed.*” ^{AMPLIFIED}

Later Jesus will say to His disciples, “*If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you*” (Luke 17:6).

Here we are not considering if a matter is or is not the will of God. That this boy should be released from the domination of this demon was clearly the will of God, for Jesus cast the demon out.

The point Jesus is making is that **they could have cast the demon out, if only they had the faith to do so.** It was their lack of faith that had prohibited them doing it. Remember, this is said to a group of men who recently had gone throughout the cities of Judaea casting demons out of many. We will now find that there is not an equanimity of strength and power among the devil’s horde. There are personalities of especial power and strength, just as there are among the holy angels - like Michael (Dan 10:13).

THIS KIND COMETH OUT

Matthew reports that Jesus said, “*Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting*” (Matt 17:21). Mark reports, “*This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting*”

(Mark 9:29). Other versions read, “*This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting,*” ^{AMPLIFIED} “*This kind can come out only by prayer,*” ^{NIV} “*Throwing this kind of spirit out requires prayer,*” ^{CEB} “*This kind can by no other means come forth, but by prayer and fasting.*” ^{GENEVA} Most modern versions omit the reference to “**prayer AND fasting.**” The following versions altogether omit Matthew 17:21:”

NIV/NRSV/RSV/BBE/CEB/CJB/ERV/NAB/NIB/NIRV/NJB.

The Psalmist wrote that he “**humbled**” his soul with **fasting and prayer** (Psa 35:13). Daniel set his face to seek the Lord by “**prayer and supplications, with fasting**” (Dan 9:3). Paul wrote that the married could refrain for a season from intimacy that they might give themselves to “**fasting and prayer**” (1 Cor 7:5). Cornelius **fasted and prayed** (Acts 10:30). When Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in very city, they did so when they had “**prayed with fasting**” (Acts 14:23). In my opinion, the omission of the phrase “**prayer and fasting**” cannot be satisfactorily justified. In fact, I do not understand why such a posture can even be taken or what objective is met by doing so.

Suffice it to say, there are demons who do not yield to mere routines, casualness, or simplistic methodologies. Kingdom exploits are not accomplished by stereotyped routines and words. Often more effort is required.

WHILE THEY WONDERED, HE SAID

^{43B} “*...But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did...*”

Luke now takes up the dialog from the point where Jesus had just freed the boy from the dominion of a demon. While the boy was being brought to Jesus, the demon threw him on the ground, causing him to convulse. Jesus had “*rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and*

enter no more into him” (Mark 9:25). The spirit “*after giving a [hoarse, clamoring, fear-stricken] shriek of anguish and convulsing him terribly, it came out; and the boy lay [pale and motionless] like a corpse, so that many of them said, He is dead*” ^{AMPLIFIED} (Mark 9:26). The boy was apparently not harmed by the demon’s last effort, for “*Jesus took [a strong grip of] his hand and began lifting him up, and he stood*” ^{AMPLIFIED} (Mk 9:27).

Jesus also took Peter’s mother-in-law by the hand “*and lifted her up*” (Mk 1:31). He did the same to Jairus’ twelve year old daughter who had died (Mk 5:31). Peter did the same thing when he healed the lame man at the Gate Beautiful (Acts 3:7). **In this we see the tender care of the Good Shepherd who extends Himself to assure the formerly oppressed boy that all was well with him.** One greater than the oppressing demon had made him

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

free.

Now our attention is briefly turned to the watching multitude.

WHILE THEY WONDERED

"But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did. . ."

Other versions read, *"But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did,"* ^{NKJV} *"While everyone was astounded at all the feats Jesus was doing,"* ^{MIT} *"Meanwhile, as they were exclaiming over all the wonderful things he was doing,"* ^{LIVING} *"All of the*

people were shocked at the great power of God," ^{IE} *"were overwhelmed and all at the magnificence of God,"* ^{ABP} and *"They all shook their heads in wonder, astonished at God's greatness, God's majestic greatness."* ^{MESSAGE}

These people did not expect God to work in such a manner. They had heard about the greatness of God, and knew that various and powerful manifestations of that greatness was woven into their history. Still, however, they did not think of God as actually doing great things. And, for sure, they did not expect Jesus of Nazareth to do

such things as they were seeing.

The flesh is so obtuse that it can eat miraculous bread every day, and yet not like the way it tastes (Num 21:5). It can see a miraculous healing, and object that it was done on the Sabbath day (Matt 12:10ff).

As I see things, we must strive to get to the point that where our prayers are answered, we do not marvel, but thank and praise God. I am grateful to our Lord that some of this is beginning to take place among us. For the glory of God, may it continue to increase.

THE SON OF MAN SHALL BE DELIVERED

^{43b} . . . **He said unto His disciples,** ⁴⁴ **Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men."**

While the people were marveling, and no doubt speaking to one another about what they had witnessed, Jesus turns His attention to His disciples. We know from Mark's Gospel that Jesus had come into a house, and was speaking privately with His disciples (Mk 9:28). The crowd was marveling outside, but what follows took place on the inside.

LET THESE SAYINGS SINK DOWN INTO YOUR EARS

" . . . He said unto His disciples, Let these sayings sink down into your ears . . . "

Other versions read, *"Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you,"* ^{NIV} *"go deep into your ears,"* ^{BBE} *"Take these words to heart,"* ^{CEB} *"Lay you up in your hearts these words,"* ^{DOUAY} *"Mark these words diligently,"* ^{GENEVA} *"Put these sayings in your ears,"* ^{LEW} *"Store these words in memory,"* ^{MIT} *"Lay up these words in your minds,"* ^{MRD} *"Pay attention to what I am telling you,"* ^{NAB} and *"For your part, you must have these words constantly in mind."* ^{NJB}

These were words the disciples were to mark for remembrance. They were not to be dismissed as irrelevant or meaningless because they were not immediately comprehended.

There is a certain posture of spirit, when something that is not comprehended is tagged, so to speak, for future consideration. This is the kind of saying Jesus now delivers to them.

There is a certain mental posture that characterizes this age. Things that cannot be comprehended or understood are considered to be unimportant. What this does, is lock a person into a state of ignorance from which it will be very difficult to be delivered.

Those who attempt to simplify the truth assist people in thinking in this non-productive manner. They do not realize there are some expressions of truth that simply cannot be dumbed down, or made so a child can understand them.

THE SON OF MAN SHALL BE DELIVERED

" . . . for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men."

This is now the third time the looming death of Christ has been the

point of emphasis. When Peter had confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, it is written, *"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day"* (Mat 16:21). When He was transfigured, Moses and Elijah appeared in glory with Him, speaking of *"the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem"* (Lk 9:31). Then, coming down from the mountain of transfiguration, Jesus had said to the three, *"Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them"* (Matt 17:12). Now Jesus mentions it again: *"for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men."*

This was a central and pivotal thing to be continually remembered. Jesus did not come to make the world a better place to live, but to lay down His life, that He might take it up again (John 10:17). His appearance was not a mere novelty or a break in the monotony of life.

It is most unfortunate that with the advent of automation, there is a marked tendency to neglect thought, meditation, cogitation, and deep consideration.

IT WAS HID FROM THEM

"⁴⁵ But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask Him of that saying."

THEY UNDERSTOOD NOT

The saying certainly may seem clear enough to you – **but it was not understood by the disciples**. At this time, they did not have a view of Jesus that allowed for Him to be delivered into the hands of men. They could not even think of Him in that manner: *"they understood not this saying."* They thought of Jesus within the context of this present evil world, not the purpose of God. **Men still have great difficulty thinking of Jesus correctly**. That is why many only think of Him when they are in great difficulty, or death is knocking at the door, or some aspect of life has become very difficult.

IT WAS HID FROM THEM

The Spirit explains why the disciples did not understand what Jesus said: *"it was hid from them."* Toward the end of His ministry, this same kind of hiding is mentioned. *"For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death: and the third day He shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken"* (Luke 18:32-34).

Their hearts were not yet ready to discern this. Even after He had died and risen from the dead, they still did not comprehend it (Lk 24:21-24; Mk 16:11; Lk 24:41). Had they been convinced Jesus was going to be given into the hands of men, they would probably have taken up arms to ensure it did not happen (Matt 26:51; Lk 22:38; John

18:10).

Nevertheless, there comes a time when this truth must be comprehended – that Jesus came to die, and take away the sins of the world.

THEY FEARED TO ASK HIM

They had been around Jesus enough to know how He thought about certain kinds of questions (Matt 21:20-22; Mk 7:17-18).

Blessed is the person who knows when it is best to keep silence before the Lord. There are times when the Lord says, *"Keep silence before Me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment"* (Isa 41:1).

There are still some questions that are driven by unbelief.

THERE AROSE A REASONING AMONG THEM

"⁴⁶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest."

A REASONING AROSE

"Then there arose a reasoning among them . . ."

Other versions read, *"a dispute arose,"* ^{NKJV} *"an argument arose,"* ^{NASB} *"a discussion,"* ^{BBE} *"there entered a thought into them,"* ^{DOUAY} *there arose a disputation,"* ^{GENEVA} *"Some difference of opinion occurred,"* ^{MIT} *"the thought arose among them,"* ^{MRD} *"there entered a reasoning among them,"* ^{YLT} *and "a controversy arose among them."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

The word "arose" comes from a Greek word {ice-er'-khom-ah-ee} which means, "TO GO OR COME INTO OR IN; TO ENTER," ^{THAYER} "COME INTO, ENTER, BEGIN TO EXPERIENCE, MEET, ENCOUNTER," ^{FRIEBERG} "TO

MOVE INTO, TO COME INTO, TO GO INTO, TO ENTER." ^{LOUW-NIDA}

What caused this contention to enter – this thought that resulted in argumentation and disagreement? It is something the Spirit says *"arose,"* or *"entered."*

I am going to affirm this was an imagination and thought **fomented by the devil** – a thought that should have been *"cast down,"* although, at this point, the disciples lacked the weaponry to do so, for it had not yet been given to the sons of men, at least not to the degree it would be given (2 Cor 10:1-3). Suffice it to say, Satan now seeks to stir up trouble among the disciples.

WHICH ONE OF THEM SHOULD BE GREATEST

" . . . which of them should be

greatest."

I do not doubt that this was furthered by the fact that only three of the disciples had witnessed the transfiguration. Did this suggest they would be *"the greatest?"* I can see the devil beginning with that event, and provoking an argument such as this among the disciples. That apparently was what they commenced to argue about. The complicating factor was that the Lord Jesus was privy to their conversation, and would not let it pass without His illuminating remarks.

It is good for us to seek the spirit of discernment to be sensitive when Satan scatters thoughts and imaginations among us, provoking argumentation, unwarranted and wicked imaginations, and thoughts that cause alienation and variance.

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

THE SAME SHALL BE GREAT

MARK'S ACCOUNT: *"And He came to Capernaum: and being in the house He asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. And He sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when He had taken him in His arms, He said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me."* (Mark 9:33-37)

"⁴⁷ And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, ⁴⁸ And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great."

PERCEIVING THE THOUGHT OF THEIR HEART

"And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart . . ."

Jesus looks at WHY a person thinks as he does. **He does not get caught up in the details of the thought, but in its foundation or basis.** Men may not know why people think as they do, but Jesus knows, and we are to reckon upon that incontrovertible fact.

TOOK A CHILD AND SET HIM BY HIM

"...took a child, and set him by Him, ⁴And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in My name receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive Me receiveth him that sent Me..."¹

Notice, he placed the child BY Himself. That is an important point to grasp. He is not merely speaking of a child, but of a child that is *"by Him."*

Mark points out that Jesus *"had taken him in His arms"* as He began to speak to them. This action will determine how they are to think about this child.

WHOSOEVER RECEIVETH THIS CHILD

"This child" is the one that Jesus has picked up. It is one that He has set before them, and has taken into His arms. They are not to ask what kind of child this is, or inquire concerning his parents, or his upbringing. He is to be considered a child Jesus has selected, placed beside Him, and is holding in His arms. **Those facts outweigh any other considerations or conclusions.**

Jesus affirmed that the individual who received that child was actually receiving Jesus Himself. He is the one who chose and placed that child, and He would be honored by those who

respected His choice and placement.

THE SAME SHALL BE GREAT

" . . . for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great. "

This child represented *"the least."* But the fact that Jesus chose and placed Him made him great. Further, the child could not boast in the Divine choice. In fact, that is not even the way a child reasons.

As Jesus beheld **the disciples**, they were, in a very real sense, *"the least"* among men. None of them were among the religiously elite. None of them were officials in the Temple, or teachers in the synagogues. None of them were priests. **But they had been chosen by Jesus, and placed where He wanted them.** They had all been exalted, and there was no reason to seek further distinction among themselves. Jesus will decide who will receive more, and have more responsibility because of it. He had already made a distinction among them by taking only three into the holy mount.

WE SAW ONE CASTING OUT DEVILS

MARK'S ACCOUNT: *"And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me. For he that is not against us is on our part."* (Mark 9:38-40)

"⁴⁹ And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us. ⁵⁰ And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us."

JOHN ANSWERED AND SAID

"And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name . . ."

The disciples were certainly alert

to what was going on around them. John now reports they had seen one *"casting out demons in Thy name."* ^{NKJV} Mark adds *"and he followeth not us."* Other versions read, *"does not follow us,"* ^{NKJV} *"who does not follow us,"* ^{DARBY}

Taking three of His disciples with Him, Jesus goes into a mountain to pray, and is transfigured while He is praying– Given O. Blakely

"He was not following us!,"^{IE} and "who does not follow along with us."^{AMPLIFIED}

This man was not among the multitudes that were following Jesus wherever He went. It was precisely because of this that John continued.

WE FORBADE HIM

*" . . . and we forbad him, **because** he followeth not with us. . ."*

John and those with him did not think it was proper to cast out demons in the name of Jesus if the person was not traveling along with the other disciples:—i.e. *"He does not follow WITH US."* Perhaps you, like myself, have been introduced to this manner of thinking. That is, the all important thing is if the person is identified with the right group, which, of course, is "our group." **No matter how distinctive a group may be, it is not the group that sanctifies or validates.** Even though Judas traveled with the disciples regularly, it did not validate him. He was still *"a devil"* (*"diabolos,"* not "demon." Other versions read, *"Yet one*

of you is the Devil!"^{CSB} and from you one is Satan,"^{ETH} "one even of you is Satan,"^{LEW} and "a son of the Evil One."^{BBE}

It is personal identity with God through Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit, that validates us – not identity with an organization, particular assembly, or sect.

FORBID HIM NOT

" . . . And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not . . ."

Other versions read, *"do not hinder him,"^{NASB} "Do not stop him,"^{NIV} "Stop disallowing such people,"^{MIT} "Do not prevent him,"^{NAB} "You must not stop him."^{NJB}*

The person to which John referred was not operating in his own name, or the name of a false God, or an erroneous Messiah. He was casting out demons in the name of Jesus. He was successful in what he was doing, and Jesus said they must cease any efforts to stop him. By the same token, those

who do speak in the name of Jesus, but are **not** effective, **are** to be held in question.

HE THAT IS NOT AGAINST US IS FOR US

" . . . for he that is not against us is for us."

Other versions read, *"he who is not against us is on our side,"^{NKJV} "he who is against you is for you."^{NASB}*

This man was coming in the name of Jesus, and had an obvious respect for and devotion to that holy name. He opposed the same enemy. He did cast out demons. There was no fault to find in what the man did, or how he did it. It also ought to be noted that while the nine disciples had failed to cast out a demon, this man had succeeded.

In my mind, it is a mark of significant advance when the people of God can receive any person who honors Jesus and is successful in what He does in and through His name. We are never to condone someone who wrests the Word of God, no matter what he does.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 3/4/16. In our next lesson, we will continue our series in the Gospel of Luke. The THIRTY-FOURTH lesson will cover verses 51 thru 62 of chapter 9: "THE TIME COMES FOR JESUS' DEPARTURE." Jesus now enters into the final phase of His ministry. He focuses on going to Jerusalem, where His betrayal, death, burial, and resurrection will occur. He sends messengers before Him to alert the people to His coming, and the Samaritans, seeing He is determined to go to Jerusalem, refuse to receive Him. The disciples respond in an inappropriate way, which Jesus rebukes. Then some followers say they want to be Christ's disciples, and Jesus clarifies what it meant to be His disciple. **Our meeting will begin at 6:30 P.M.** You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.