

Series: None

Title: They Could Not

Topic: Our impact (or lack of) on others



Mark 9:14-24

1. The desperate \_\_\_\_\_ of people:

We all are desperately needy. In some sense, every human being is fragile.

- A. The \_\_\_\_\_ father and his spirit-possessed son:  
In Luke we learn: "Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only boy."

Problems like this affect the whole family. The family becomes defined by their problem. Often others in the community feel uncomfortable being around them and so they avoid them.

About 80 percent of couples who have a handicapped child or whose child dies cannot handle the pressure and end their marriages in divorce? As a church family, we need to be sensitive to families that have problem children—be it physical, emotional, or spiritual problems—and surround them with the love of Christ. We need to listen without condemnation and we need to help in practical ways.

- B. The \_\_\_\_\_ disciples:

"They could not" cast out the demon and later in this passage, "they did not understand" Jesus' statement. In other words, the disciples were lacking in spiritual power and they were lacking in spiritual understanding.

The disciples' lack of spiritual understanding shows us our need to depend totally on God for spiritual insight and truth. It's so easy for anyone to get swept downstream with the spiritual climate of the day.

- C. The \_\_\_\_\_ generation: And unbelieving really points to weak faith, not unbelief.

As Christians, we would like to think that we are independent thinkers who are not influenced by our generation. But the fact is, we are often like fish in the water that don't know that they are wet. We live in an *unbelieving and perverted generation* (Matthew's version) and this shows us our desperate need for God.

And they could not... How sad, how tragic!

As tragic as that is...as destructive as that has been to the lives and souls of people who have entered our doors, or any church doors...think on this:

And they would not...

Imagine the story and the disciples said "no" to the father. "We can heal your son, but we don't like the way you asked...we don't like the way you look...or we are tired right now...or we are too busy at the moment... or we are spiritually in a dry spell because Jesus has been away for a while on the mountain, and we just aren't feeling it right now."

- ✓ We must be \_\_\_\_\_ - God cannot bless and use a church that is not separated from the world, 2 Cor. 6:17-7:1. It is God's will that we place everything we have, are and ever hope to have or be on the altar for His glory, Rom. 12:1-2.

- ✓ We need to become \_\_\_\_\_ dependent on the Lord for everything - until we reach the place where we understand that the power of God does not come because of our preaching, our singing, our working or our manipulation of people and things. The power of God rests on us as we learn to rest in Jesus, John 15:5. The cure for what ails the modern church is found in our Lord's words to the church in Ephesus; we need to fall in love with Jesus once again, Rev. 2:1-7.

An effective church...a powerful church is one:

- That treasures and teaches God's Word of truth accurately and practically to equip the saints for the work of service.
- Where the gospel is proclaimed without compromise.
- That emphasizes loving God and one another and worshipping God in spirit and in truth.
- That emphasizes making obedient disciples who live by God's grace in the power of the Spirit, apart from legalism.
- Where loving fellowship among the saints is edifying and healthy.
- Where the ordinances of baptism and communion are practiced regularly and biblically.
- Where prayer undergirds everything.
- That emphasizes reaching the lost, both locally and globally.
- Whose leaders are mature, godly men of integrity.
- That deals lovingly and biblically with sinning members.

And depends on God for the fruit that He wills from our living out His Truth.

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ power of the enemy:

While most of our problems are due to the flesh, not directly to demons, we need to be on guard against the terrible destructive power of Satan. We should not be naïve: we face an enemy who is far more powerful and cunning than we are. We should not fear him because our God is more powerful. But neither should we underestimate his power! The destructive power of the enemy further underscores our desperate need for God.

3. The \_\_\_\_\_ power of God in Christ to deliver us:

It is easy to mistake our will for God's will, even when we think we're following God. For example, if you knew of a godly, powerful young evangelist whose messages were turning many to God, you would not think it to be God's will for him to be cut down after less than a year's ministry.

If we had heaven's perspective, we would realize that it is a far greater miracle for Jesus Christ to save a lost sinner from Satan's power than it is for Him to heal someone from a physical ailment. Physical healing is only a temporary extension of life, but spiritual deliverance goes on for eternity. Our earthbound minds hear of a miracle of physical healing and marvel. But the angels in heaven marvel over a soul saved from hell. "If we would see this, we would spend more time pleading with God for His greater miracles of saving lost people and less time praying for miracles to make us more comfortable." Steven Cole

4. The vital \_\_\_\_\_ for faith and obedience:

This story should encourage us when our faith is weak and our understanding is misdirected. Christ didn't wait until this father had great faith to deliver his son. He didn't wait until the disciples arrived at strong faith and crystal-clear understanding before He used them in His purpose. He is full of compassion and mercy. If we bring our troubles and problems to Him, even though our faith may be weak and our understanding may be cloudy, He is often gracious to deliver us by His mighty power.

The here-and-now:

Our EBC Body usually has everything it needs to exist. We have nice facilities in which to meet. We have dedicated people preaching and organizing the work of the church. We normally have the money needed to function. Normally the seats are full, and we have enough "servants" to do the jobs that need to be done around the church.

One person's thoughts on a church:

A church building is making a promise to the world. This building tells every person who passes by that this is the place God meets with His people. This church house promises a needy world that they can find help when they come here. This church says, "If you need God, we can help you get to Him. If your life is broken, we can show you how God can fix it. If your family is coming apart, we can show you how God can put it back together again. If you are lost, we can show you how to be saved."

What churches need the most: \_\_\_\_\_.

When Jesus hears this man's words, "if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us", He responds immediately! "What do you mean, if you can? Believe! All things are possible to him that believes!"

Jesus rebukes the father for his doubt and commands him to place his faith in Jesus for the healing his son desperately needs. When the father hears this, he makes one of the most honest and transparent prayers in the entire Bible. He looks at Jesus and says, "Lord I believe; help my unbelief." He is saying, "Lord, I do believe in You and in Your power. But, my faith is weak! Help me to grow in my faith."

✓ A powerless church portrays Jesus Christ in a bad light – Because the disciples lacked power, the father assumed Jesus lacked power too. The same is true about the house of God. When a lost world walks into a church building and it sees deadness, coldness and apathy; the lost assume that Jesus is just as lifeless, just as powerless and just as dead. They claim to have something to offer the world, but they have nothing but cold, dead religion and that helps no one!

It's time the church told the truth about Jesus! He \_\_\_\_\_ lives! Knowing Him is \_\_\_\_\_! His church is \_\_\_\_\_ and active in the world. His Gospel has \_\_\_\_\_.

✓ Weak faith is better than no faith at all – This father was filled with doubt, but there was still a kernel of faith in his heart. God is not put off by our doubts, but total unbelief slams the door on His power in our lives. We need to remember that it isn't large faith that receives big answers from the Lord. It is simply genuine faith that sees Him move in great power. Weak faith is still faith.