

Faith working in times of trial (Quality: Average)

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[0 : 0 0] the Lord may help me and I should attention to Mark Gospel according to Mark chapter 9 and I'll read verses 19 to 23 and he answereth him and saith O faithless generation how long shall I be with you how long shall I suffer you bring him unto me they brought him unto him and when he saw him straightway the spirit tear 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 oft times have cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him if thou canst do anything have compassion on us and help us

Jesus said unto him if thou canst believe all things are possible 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 I read those verses it is particularly verses 23 and 24 I want mainly to comment as helped upon this evening but as we look at this subject before us what a great contrast is there both from that solemn and sacred scene and that was those favoured disciples experienced as they in that mount that the Lord was transfigured before them and as they heard that voice speaking to them out of the cloud this is my beloved son hear ye him and from that scene as they come down from the mountain with the Lord to this hear that they they came again to the other disciples surrounded as they were by a crowd contention with these scribes a situation of obvious very confusion but deep distress as well and also we see the sad fact and reality what is spoken of as satanic satanic satanic power even in that poor child afflicted so grievously as he was and obviously his father greatly distressed as a result for this was no sudden affliction that had come upon the child but as the father said it has been with him even from a child he's experienced these these sad episodes as was evidenced here as described so then to this scene of confusion and distress that we find the Lord coming there in the midst the question the question with regard as he addresses that situation and what there are a number of things

I just want to notice which surely is that both was for the instruction of his disciples then but also it is that which speaks to us as well and what a mercy we have that ear to hear what the spirit saith unto us both not only here but throughout that this holy word of our God we see we find the disciples concerned and troubled that they were not able to deal with that situation to cast the devil out of that child this they had known you remember on the occasion when they returned the Lord had sent them the various places where afterwards he could come they returned saying even the devil were subject unto us in thy name but here at this time though undoubtedly they endeavoured to do so they were not successful in dealing with the situation of this child and what a lesson was that to them even as afterwards they asked the Lord why could not we cast him out and his reply to them is this kind cometh not out but by prayer and fasting and I would suggest that there is a clear indication in those words of the Lord with regard to his disciples that that which is a very reminder to them yes they have been successful in the casting out of devils but with regard to the ongoing in that ministry how they needed to be reminded and we likewise in matters that concerns ourselves our whole and utter dependence upon the

Lord but does not prayer and fasting indicate that it is both unto the Lord we are both upon the Lord's name we are to call unto the Lord we are always to look conscious and believing realisation our whole and utter dependence upon him and indeed regard to the faithful pursuing of the ministry that the Lord may thus have appointed unto us even as here with the disciples that it is not within our own ability nor does it arise from our own supposed wisdom either that in every aspect of our lives whatever we may in that sense be called or appointed unto we must never lose sight

I say about utter dependence upon the Lord and we do need there is very in a sense it was a painful reminder to the disciples here oh it was that which in a sense was a very humbling situation to them and how we need likewise and in a sense constantly reminding that it is not by might nor by power but by my spirit saith the Lord but just to leave that with regard to the disciples we come here to the situation of this very grievously afflicted child and the obvious distress of the father of the saint now it is evident that here with this man true we know little about it apart from the information that we glean from the account that is given us here in the record of the gospels but surely there is one thing evident that though there was this great distress with him there was also an evidence of a faith a faith which was which and it was here with this man so it is wherever friends a faith is manifest so that whether it be weak or strong whether and certainly there was much weakness here and much infirmity and indeed of afflicted and distressed the father was with the sinful staggerings of unbelief but where there is real and genuine faith though it be very small it is that it is that which it not arises from the working of fallen human nature but is that which is the gift of

[9 : 15] God and I just want to add this and in sense it follows on what I brought before you on Sunday evening and that is we have here again an evidence of what is true and genuine faith in in the sense of what is what what is what the whether true and genuine faith is it will surely manifest itself in this indeed even such a time a great distress as was here evident with this father but true faith friends always even though it be the very weak as here in this man it always leads the soul to Jesus Christ as I said Sunday evening it manifests itself as we read it is there in the portion of the song of

Solomon in a seeking and a true seeking unto the Lord that even though we may be beset and burdened out we find still the working of sin and its defilement in our hearts and sadly oftentimes evidence it is in our lives what the mercy of the Lord it is that we are brought years as often as sin defines not in that sense to turn away but to turn unto him even unto him unto the Lord the very one against whom we have sinned faith always brings the soul even the distressed and troubled soul as here with this man unto the

Lord Jesus Christ is there any other to whom we can go are I know that often faced with issues and situations that we do in our own lives and each of us in that respect the respect of those matters that concern and trouble and distress us but oh friends how great is the mercy in spite of all we find and feel utter undeserving yet what a mercy it is that there is that way of access and acceptance with God by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is that way that is never a shut up it is as that we read in the word the Lord has never yet said unto the seed of Jacob seek ye me in vain so then we notice that there is even with this man that there is faith weak that coming to the

Lord Jesus Christ yes initially the Lord was not present there was a disciple and he inquired of them to help they endeavoured to do so but they failed now as the Lord was not friend that a great great about that which added surely to the distress of his father that the disciples though in the past they evidenced the ability to deal with such a situation as this and this time they failed and when the Lord inquires with regard to the child then we know obviously the Lord knew all about it but see how the Lord draws the hearts of his people out unto himself see how friends we are reminded here of this yes there is the

Lord's inquiry as I said he knows all about it but is it not an important principle as said before us in the word that he will be inquired of by his people to do these things for them oh friends it is no wasted breath as we are brought to pour out our hearts before the Lord to make known all the case and situation unto him but we find then the father informs him how this affliction and distress been with his son even from his childhood and he says oft times it cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him but if thou canst do anything he says have compassion on us and help us now as I said there's the evidence of faith in this man and yet how weak was his faith he says if thou canst do anything have compassion on us and help us you know surely was there not that which in a sense was very staggering things here to him both in the ongoing distress and trouble of his son and also the inability of the disciples and a question as well well could their master do indeed really help you know how active is the enemy of souls he's seeking as it were in casting those as it were questions of doubt regard to ourselves with regard to matters of issue even here as it was with this man if thou canst do anything compassion on us and help us and the

[15 : 41] Lord puts this to him if thou Jesus said unto him if thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believer now how important it is for clear understanding what is here in these words of our Lord if thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believer does the man in a sense add that if that question thou canst do anything says the Lord thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believer understand the Lord is emphasizing here it is not friends our faith even that faith which is the gift of God to which all things are possible but it is in him in whom is a great and glorious object of faith to whom it can be said all things are possible to him that believe out see essentially the attention of the

Lord even when he speaks here to this man is unto himself and is not this surely what is in we might put it this way the nature of that God given faith it is being brought to have that implicit trust and confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ oh there is no question regard to his ability remember what the Lord on more than one occasion has brought before us his dealings with his people in the old testament scriptures the case of Abraham and Sarah you know when Sarah laughed at what she overheard that she should the following year according to the time of life have a child oh and in that reproof to her why did she laugh is anything too hard for the

Lord again what the Lord spoke to his servant Jeremiah he says I am the Lord the God of all flesh is anything too hard for the Lord and that truth he brought before us all things are possible to him that believeth and that faith we're in which is a nature of real and genuine faith as I said earlier it always leads to Jesus Christ and to him not as one unknown by us but as one we're brought to know and the teaching of the Holy Spirit in that revelation that he's given unto us in the word so as that grace of God not only to look to him but to trust trust in him only and wholly and that confidence in as here in a sense believing in the committing and casting the whole case and issue both into the hands of the

Lord it is as the Lord speaks through his servant Peter in this what Peter writes in his first epistle casting all your care upon him for he careth for you all things are possible to him that believer what a great mercy friends it is that there is nothing that is impossible with our God and you know in those matters and issues that concern us in our lives as here in the case of this man as if the Lord essentially is drawing his attention wholly unto himself as that one who is able and how blessedly true it is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we can ask or think but also we must not overlook this vitally important point all things are possible to him that believe and I repeat nothing is too hard for the

Lord but in all that concerns his people both personally and collectively there is this which we never should lose sight of and that is as subject to his holy and sovereign will and friends were again in the very nature of a God given faith it is that true which leads us to Jesus to trust in him holy and that always in submission to his holy and sovereign will this we may be assured of in all the laws ways and dealings with his people that he is too wise to earn too good to be unkind he says if thou believest all things are possible to him the believer oh we read that the man straightway the father the child cried out and said with tears lord i believe help thou mine unbelief you know there was a word a faithful a loving reproof here of the lord to this man and the man owns and recognises it as well we straightway cried out with tears lord i believe help thou mine unbelief oh lord indeed pardon as it were any questioning and doubting of thyself lord i believe in thee and thee only thus would i not let that look to but thus commit the whole way and case and situation into thy hand he said it with tears expressive my friends as i say of this that loving reproof even here these words of our lord when he says if thou believest friends what a question is that do we do we find that to believe and trust only and wholly and always in the lord is that which is an easy thing it comes to us naturally the product the working of our fallen nature no we find friends we find that even in that believing and trusting in the lord oh how dependent we are upon the lord that gracious ministry of the lord the holy spirit the lord as faith is a gift of god in the first imparting of the blessing of the same so the constant exercise of that faith in the life of a believer and that in the face of all the difficulties temptations and even in the situations in life with which we are faced and what we find still are the working of sin in our own hearts and lives oh how dependent we get it to the lord we are that for the maintaining of the very life of faith and that life of faith as I have said and of our occasion manifests itself in that coming and that continual coming unto him yes as a needy sinner utterly helpless in ourselves and brought to recognise that and yet cast thus as a needy sinner wholly upon it so we see here with this man he said it with tears the faithful reproof the words

[24 : 44] of the lord to him and his acknowledging as well that very sin that sin which does so easily beset us that which is rooted in the nature the very sin of unbelief lord i believe he says help thou mine unbelief and indeed in this very cry of this man can it not also in a sense echo the very language of the disciples when they said lord increase our faith oh lord enable us truly to believe those things that we profess to believe that trust and confidence in thyself and that in the face of all that we find that is so opposing to the so opposing and does oppose and confront us with regard and to the very exercise of that faith lord i believe help thou by an unbelief he said it with tears just a further thought here as well we noticed friends with this man i said yes there was a sad experience can we say we're free from it the sinful staggerings of unbelief but there was the evidence that the reality of faith that faith which is the gift of

God yes it was weak in a sense we might say it was small and yet friends though it be as faith as a grain of mustard seed it is not in that sense a quantity it is a quality that is the vitally important point whether weak or strong faith yet whether weak or strong faith surely what each thus has taught of God the Holy Spirit are brought and that increasingly to realise that the very exercise of that faith is not of themselves that which we're wholly indebted unto the Lord for and that which brings us and how great is the mercy to be brought daily in the realisation of it that that is of our indebtedness to the

Lord our dependence upon the Lord our need to upholding keeping and teaching in every step of life's journey and it says here Lord I believe help thou mine unbelief are here is a cry true of a needy set needy soul and yet friends we see not only the cry of a needy soul but also see how gracious is our God how gracious is our Lord Jesus Christ faithful in all his dealings with his people in manifesting both of his power to deliver as here the case of this man his compassion also unto his own but his grace manifest in his very dealing with them in their very personal lives and issues and situations in which they are found the

Lord and his blessing Amen