

Ninety-Nine And A Half Won't Do! Part 8 – Why Couldn't We Do It?

Description

14And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and
17Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who
19He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with
21So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?"
And he said, "From childhood. 22And often he has thrown him both into the fire
23Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who b
24Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I
25When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean
28And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why
29So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fastin

Mark 9:14-29 NKJV

I believe that this text is insignificant if not understood in the context that the disciples had previously been give the authority to heal the unwell and cast out demons successfully (Read Mark 6:7-13). Their experience with the man and his son was new to them because in their earlier experiences, everything they had prayed for and/or commanded, happened immediately. What was wrong this time? Could it be that the disciples had become complacent operating at 99.5%? One must understand that when Jesus gave the disciples authority in Mark chapter 6, the text doesn't mention them asking for his spirit/power. Until that time they had only responded to the call by Jesus but they had done no real seeking or inquiring of God on a personal level for the spirit or power that Jesus possessed. The disciples had been spoon-fed, having the privilege of walking closely with Jesus, receiving insight into the parables, learning how to pray, and being taught the principles of the kingdom. It's possible in the course of their success and comforts, they had lost their discipline, and the practices that Jesus had been demonstrating during their relationship. During their travels after receiving the holy spirit, they could do nothing but rely on Jesus, and the faith/belief that what he had promised and imparted to them could sustain them. The farther they became removed from that experience where they had traveled and walked in the authority of Holy Spirit imparted to them by Jesus, their focus weakened, and possibly even their effectiveness. I can see the disciples approaching the man and his son with the same approach as other situations, and possibly without seeking the Holy Spirit. It's possible the 9 disciples who were left at the foot of the mountain with the people were disgruntled, disappointed, and complaining at the fact that they weren't chosen by Jesus to accompany him up the mountain; as he had extended the invitation to James, John, and Peter.

In this moment as I'm writing this, the Holy Spirit is reminding me of the Exodus 32 when the Israelites constructed the golden calf in response to a loss of discipline, focus, and faith while Moses received the commandments from God on Mount Sinai. How do you handle your waiting period? Is it similar to the children of Israel, where you grow frustrated and impatient, and create idols, or lose faith in the process? Or do you do like the disciples possibly did, and lose discipline and focus with your disappointment or lack of understanding of God, and miss an opportunity to set others free who God has sent to you for deliverance?

Back to the topic

It was in this time of distraction and vulnerability and vulnerability that they were presented with an opportunity to represent Jesus and bring deliverance to someone's life. You don't want to be caught of position because of your own lack of discipline or disobedience. What we must learn from in this passage is not the disciples failure, but rather their willingness and humbleness to ask of Jesus how they can be successful in the future. The disciples knew the power of the Holy Spirit, because they had experienced it previously. I don't believe the disciples were moved by ego here, I believe they were genuinely confused that for the first time, a demon spirit hadn't responded to the authority of the Holy Spirit, which they believed they possessed. I believe the 3 disciples who had been with Jesus on the top of the mountain didn't even feel arrogance in this moment as though they would've handled it better, but they probably were appreciative that they had been spared the embarrassment that the others experienced; while being given the opportunity to learn what needed to be done to prevent this outcome in the future. Jesus saw the disciples hunger and willingness to be; "whole and complete, lacking nothing (James 1:4-5)," so he gives them the recipe to be fully developed to 100%. Prayer AND fasting! Jesus says this in verse 29 of the text above because I believe he was trying to get them to understand the importance of consistency when it comes to fellowship, and communication with God. Pray is the opportunity for us to express our thanks, needs, explain our heart to God. Fasting is us positioning ourselves in right alignment with God through intentional sacrifice, reflection, and honor of God. When you put prayer and fasting together, it enables us to hear from and be led by God in addition to conquering our flesh which is required to walk with God. Jesus was telling his disciples in this moment to develop a better personal relationship with God, and better management of self, which leads to the Holy Spirit being able to dwell in us which provides power and clarity. Jesus is not introducing a new principle, but rather re-introducing the importance of a principle that God had instructed the Israelites to do in several instances in the Old Testament, which was to pray to God, and fast in a humble heart/mind. Jesus provided his disciples, and us with the secret to experiencing God's 100%, it takes prayer AND fasting.

Reflection Time

Have you felt stagnant spiritually, or even like you are regressing? Do you feel like you once heard God's voice more clearly, or once felt closer to him? Have you experienced an obstacle or challenge in life recently where you felt that you should have been able to overcome it, but felt like you lost and disappointed God? I'd recommend you to spend some more time in your Bible, and in prayer to hear and understand God's current directions for your life.

Category

1. Uncategorized

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