

Why couldn't I do that?

Description

14At the foot of the mountain, a large crowd was waiting for them. A man came
17Jesus said, "You faithless and corrupt people! How long must I be with you?
19Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, "Why couldn't we cast out the
20" You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you
But this kind of demon won't leave except by prayer and fasting.
Compare Mark 9:29."

Matthew 17:14-21 NLT

Have you ever had the experience of unsuccessfully completing a task that you had previously completed with ease? Maybe you had an off game, or misspelled a word on a vocabulary test that you had studied all week, or made a wrong turn on a journey that you made regularly. Whatever it may have been for you, this is what the 9 disciples who didn't go up the mountain of transfiguration with Jesus were experiencing at the bottom of the mountain in Jesus' absence. Now it is important to note that in Matthew chapter 10, Jesus had sent out these same disciples with the power and instruction to deliver people from demonic possession amongst other instructions. They experienced great success during those travels, but fast-forward 7 chapters to our current situation, and here they are unable to exorcise this young boy. As their attempts continue to fail, a crowd develops that has taken notice of their inability to drive out the demon. I can only imagine how they were looking, what they were thinking, and most likely their desire for Jesus to hurry up and return from the mountain to help them. Finally Jesus returns and saves the day for them, but he does so while also scolding them for not having enough faith. Not enough faith? That is a very interesting thing to say considering the sacrifices the disciples had made to follow Jesus, the things they did to follow his instructions, and the fact that he had previously given them the power and directions to do this very thing. Not enough faith? What I like most about this is not the mature way they handled Jesus' response, but the fact that they were humble enough to even ask Jesus why they were unable to do it. Do you find it difficult to ask for help on a task that you already think you know how to do? They had already healed people without Jesus' help, or presence, why was this situation any different? I would go as far to say that we learn more from mistakes or failure than we do from success, but much of the learning is dependent upon our willingness to seek help, advice, and actually evaluate what went wrong. When the disciples asked Jesus why they couldn't drive out the demon, they created an opportunity for Jesus to unlock another secret into the kingdom of heaven, that to defeat some demons, or overcome certain obstacles, we must pray AND fast. This passage teaches us that sometimes when things don't work out it isn't because we are doing something wrong, it's that sometimes we may not be doing everything that we can or should be doing. If the disciples had not asked Jesus for the reason for their failure, they may never have received the answer that would enable them to operate at their full potential spiritually.

Reflection Time

What have you fallen short on that you feel that you should have been able to complete successfully? Now that you look back on it, what was missing, or what wasn't you doing? Take the time to read and

study scripture related or similar to the situation, and see what Jesus reveals to you that will take your spiritual journey to the next level.

Category

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Date Created

March 29, 2021

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