

The Great Sayings in the Gospels
Message 83
This Kind Only Goes Out Through Prayer and Fasting

Mark 9:14-29

- 14 And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.
- 15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.
- 16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?
- 17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;
- 18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.
- 19 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.
- 20 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.
- 21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.
- 22 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.
- 23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.
- 24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.
- 25 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.
- 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.
- 27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.
- 28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?
- 29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.
KJV

V.29 is one of those places where if you have a version other than the KJV, you will have a different reading. Most of the modern translations leave out “*and fasting*” from this text.

Introduction:

As Jesus and the three came down from the mountain where Jesus had been transfigured, they encountered a vigorous discussion going on between the 9 disciples who had remained behind and a “great multitude” that surrounded them.

One man in the group had brought his son to the disciples for them to cast out a demon that tormented the boy. Besides making him deaf and mute, the demon tormented him with convulsions and self-destructive behavior. Sometimes he would wallow on the ground and foam at the mouth. Other times, he would throw himself into a fire or into the water.

The disciples, who had often encountered demons and had commanded them to leave people, could do nothing with this one.

Jesus commanded the demon to leave the boy and, after convulsing him mightily, the demon left the boy seemingly dead. Jesus had raised him up and restored him to his father completely well.

Later, the disciples came to Jesus and asked why they could not cast out this demon and He had told them a couple of things. First of all, Jesus referenced the demon as “this kind,” which points to the fact that there are different orders of demonic spirits, some having much more power than others. Secondly, Jesus pointed to a lack of faith on the part of the disciples, but also another issue as well.

Matt 17:19-21

- 19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?
20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for 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.
21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. KJV

Let me go ahead and clear away some of the mental clutter that may be in your minds concerning this matter.

Do I believe that there are demons today who afflict people? Yes.

Do I believe that they can cause the kinds of problems the boy had? Yes.

Do I believe that everyone who has symptoms like the boy is demon possessed? No.

- Most such people have physical conditions which cause their problems.
- However, there is a small subset of humans who are possessed, oppressed, and afflicted with evil spirits.
- Some of them have very obvious symptoms and some symptoms are almost invisible.
- For example, some show that they are demonized by false doctrine and abusive behavior.

2 Cor 11:13-20

- 13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.
- 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.
- 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.
- 16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.
- 17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.
- 18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.
- 19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.
- 20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. KJV

There is no doubt in my mind that those people being discussed in v.20 are the very same ones spoken of in vs. 13-15. They are active servants of satan, manifesting their demonic natures by their doctrines and their behaviors. But, the Corinthian people were putting up with them, thinking that they were ministers of Christ.

Do I think that we should be hunting down demon possessed people so that we can deliver them? Jesus didn't, Paul didn't - they dealt with those who were brought to them.

However, demons and demonology is not our primary topic this morning.

What I do what to discuss with you are issues of evil that resist ordinary methodologies.

The disciples had already been empowered by the Lord Jesus to cast out demons.

Luke 9:1

- 1 Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. KJV

And, they had already experienced much success.

Mark 6:13

- 13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. KJV

But now God had arranged a circumstance that their initial empowering could not address. Here is a 'kind' of problem that is different from what they had already encountered and they were stymied. They could not do with this boy, with this demon, as they had done with others.

This brings me to the point of my message. There are issues, particularly spiritual issues, in which the normal means of accessing God's help do not work.

When that happens, Christians should learn to ‘step up’ their efforts, and Jesus plainly told us how to do it.

Let me explain.

As believers, we have a ‘normal’ way that we deal with problems of evil in our lives. We lift up a prayer to God for help and He helps.

Sometimes He helps even without a prayer being offered.

For example, some peculiar set of circumstances may occur to delay us and we find out later that just a few minutes earlier on the road would have put us right in the middle of some hideous wreck.

We sometimes have health ‘scares,’ a possible diagnosis that turns out to be nothing at all.

We have what we call “near misses” potentially awful scenarios that are seemingly narrowly averted.

All these, for the child of God, are evidences that God is at work in our lives keeping us from harm.

Other times, we find ourselves in serious situations and we realize that serious prayer is needed.

Our finances may be suddenly threatened or the health “scare” turns out to be something serious.

In such times we may give ourselves to serious prayer and enlist the aid of others to pray with us. Many times we find that God gives a delightful answer or gives us grace to bear with the issue, whatever it is.

But, then, there are issues that can be classified as ‘none of the above’ and the means used ordinarily to obtain help seemingly obtain nothing but silence from God.

It is another ‘kind’ of issue, similar to the demon that possessed this young boy in our scripture text.

I am talking about a matter that is huge and an issue of intense need.

Such matters have two things in common.

1. So far as we can honestly tell, it is a matter according to the revealed will of God, and,
 1. The ‘usual means’ of consistent, earnest pray have not worked.
- I think of issues like our prayers for Awakening and Revival. Sometimes in such circumstances others, we know, are praying with us.

Or, it may be a personal battle with evil that we seemingly cannot win no matter how we pray.

It seems that, in spite of our prayers, the cause of evil rolls on and the power of evil is not at all restrained by our efforts.

What we need is the ability, somehow, to amplify our prayers, to put something more into them, to make them more intense and, if I can say this, more noticeable to God.

Jesus said that there are times when fasting must be added to prayers of faith in order to obtain the outcome that we seek.

Now, before we go any further, let me be absolutely clear about something. Just because we fast, we are not guaranteed to obtain the answer that we desire.

The apostle Paul had an issue that he desperately wanted to have the Lord solve and he earnestly sought the Lord on three occasions for deliverance from it. I am almost positive, given the wording that he used, that fasting was a part of the process. He got an answer, but not the one he was asking to obtain.

2 Cor 12:7-9

- 7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.
- 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.
- 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. KJV

So, please do not take the rest of this message to mean that there is some ‘magic pill’ that makes certain that we will have what we ask for.

Fasting:

There are two great and notable fasts mentioned in scripture in which special help from God was sought and obtained, Moses on Sinai, and Jesus in the wilderness.

Beside those two, fasts were used in times of:

1. Intense urgency for information and/or deliverance
2. Intense desire to draw near to God for some specific reason, such as our text, a confrontation with evil.
3. Or, the desire to know the will of God so as to be able to serve Him properly, Acts. 13:1.

You see, life is a continual series of confrontations with evil.

- Much of the time, evil will yield to a believer’s rebuke and slink back into the darkness from which it came.

- But sometimes more is required. The evil does not shrink back but defies us, laughs at us, and continues to afflict us.

If you have ever gotten really serious about walking with God, being disciplined in prayer, reading your Bible faithfully, putting away sins that have plagued you for years, I can almost guarantee, you have encountered strongholds of evil within your own being that have resisted every effort to cast them out.

I don't know what strongholds of evil you face but I am convinced that every time you undertake to pray seriously something happens to derail your efforts, almost on cue, like clockwork.

Whatever it is, it has the effect of derailing your efforts and setting you back, seemingly sometimes months in your Christian growth.

And.... it refuses to go away even if you have prayed long and diligently for the Lord to remove it, like Paul did.

What Jesus told the disciples about this 'kind' of demon may also be true for you. It may be time to intensify the assault on the evil one, on his stronghold in your life, or on that sin that just will not go away.

It may be time to set days aside for fasting and prayer over the matter.

You may have the same question that I have always had. ***“What difference does it make if I eat or not while I pray?”***

It is not clear from scripture ***why*** but it is clear ***that*** fasting done in the right way together with earnest and prolonged prayer is an effective tool that is available for the saint.

I know, I know, this is almost unheard of in our day. I know that you are 'just too busy' to take chunks of time like that out of your life. I know that it is 'just too hard' to go without food for any length of time.

I also know that what Jesus said is true about many of the spiritual issues we face, ***“this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.”***

When you have convinced yourself that 'nothing works' remember this message and try adding fasting to your prayers and see if it does not make a difference.