

# SEEN IN SUFFERING, SEEN IN SERVICE

**MARK 9:14-29**

**CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE - MARCH 22, 2026**

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## SCRIPTURE READING

*Mark 9:14-29 (ESV)*

## ICE BREAKER QUESTION

Who is the first person who comes to mind (whether you or someone else) when you think of someone who has walked with someone else through suffering?

## SERMON RECAP

As part of the “Reach One” series, this sermon walked through a story in which Jesus sees a father and son who are both hurting—and responded with divine authority and compassion. Here are the key themes:

- The Bad News: There is a demonic adversary who wants to destroy you and people around you—spiritually, mentally, physically, and relationally. The boy in this story is a tragic picture of Satan’s destructive aim for every person (cf. John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8).
- The Good News: Jesus has come with divine authority to deliver and restore all who trust in Him. This is not dualism (two equal forces); this is domination—Jesus commands the unclean spirit, and it obeys.
- Jesus kneels, takes the boy by the hand, and lifts him up—and the word for “arose” is the same word used for Jesus’ own resurrection (Mark 9:31). Jesus has authority over demons and over death.
- Faith is not believing God will do everything we ask; it is believing God can do anything we ask—and trusting his power to do what he wills and his love to do what is best.
- Jesus sees you in your suffering and in your care for others who are suffering. The father’s plea—“have compassion on us and help us”—shows that Jesus is help for both the one suffering and the one caring for a sufferer.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*Observation: What does this passage say?*

1. Walk through the details of the boy’s condition as described by his father (vv. 17-18, 21-22). What specific effects does this unclean spirit have on the boy? Why do you think Mark gives us such a vivid description?
2. What happens immediately before this story in Mark’s Gospel (the Transfiguration, Mark 9:2-13)? How does that context shape the way we read about Jesus coming down the mountain to this scene of suffering and chaos?
3. Look at the exchange between Jesus and the father in verses 22-24. What does the father ask for, and how does Jesus respond? What stands out to you about the father’s reply, “I believe; help my unbelief!”?

*Interpretation: What does the passage mean?*

1. Pastor David emphasized a significant distinction: “This is not dualism; this is domination.” What does that mean, and why is it important for how Christians understand spiritual warfare? How does Jesus’ authority over the unclean spirit demonstrate this?
2. Jesus says, “All things are possible for one who believes” (v. 23). How did the sermon distinguish between believing that God will do everything we ask versus believing that God can do anything we ask? Why does this distinction matter for how we pray and trust God in suffering?
3. In verse 29, Jesus tells his disciples, “This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.” What does this reveal about the nature of the spiritual battle believers face? What does it teach us about the role of prayer in the Christian life?

*Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?*

1. Pastor David emphasized that Jesus sees you in all your suffering—spiritual, mental, physical, and relational. Which of those areas feels most pressing in your life right now? What would it look like to “look to Jesus as your help” in that specific area this week?

2. The father in this story was exhausted from years of caring for his suffering son. Are you carrying the weight of caring for someone who is struggling—a child, a spouse, a parent, a friend? How does this passage encourage you to bring that burden to Jesus, not just on their behalf, but on yours?
3. The father's prayer—"I believe; help my unbelief!"—is one of the most honest prayers in Scripture. Is there an area of your life where you are struggling to trust God? How might you use this father's prayer as a model for your own honest prayers this week?

