

Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further ***International Bible Lessons***

Mark 9:14-29

Sunday, March 6, 2016

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be *the answers* to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class. The *Class Preparation Guide* includes the questions below, and it can be given to students at the end of the previous class so they can pray, read, and think ahead to prepare for the next week’s Bible class.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Discuss what you might be thinking if you were in the crowd listening to the disciples and the teachers of the law arguing. Whose side would sound most convincing to you?

I might be thinking the scribes were right because they were lawyers and professional debaters and the disciples were Galilean fishermen and unlearned followers of a person the scribes said was a blasphemer. The scribes

would sound most convincing, especially after the disciples failed to cast out the demon after many of them tried.

2. Discuss the effect it would have on your faith if you had been the father and the disciples had failed to help you and your son.

My faith would have almost been shattered, because with each effort they made my hopes would have gone up, and with each time they failed my hope would have been cast down. I would have felt hopeless, with a little hope that if Jesus were here then He might be able to help where His disciples could not.

3. Discuss how you would feel if you looked up and saw Jesus walking toward the crowd.

I would be excited and wonder what Jesus would say and do. Would Jesus be able to help? What would Jesus say to the scribes and His disciples if He joined the argument?

4. What do you think Jesus did that helped the father overcome his unbelief in Jesus?

Unbelief in God and Jesus is worthy of reproof after all they have done for us and after all we have heard about Jesus and the compassion and power of God the Father. I think Jesus also spoke to the father with a tone of authority and confidence, as well as a tone of compassion and encouragement because the father did have faith the size of a mustard seed and the father wanted and asked Jesus to help him with his unbelief (see Matthew 17:20). Finally, Jesus helped him overcome his unbelief in Him when He cast the demon out of his son and healed him.

5. Do you think Jesus criticized His disciples for failing to cast out the demon? What did Jesus say to them in private after they failed?

No. Jesus took them aside privately and told them they needed prayer to cast out that type of impure spirit. He used their failure as a teaching opportunity and not as an opportunity to condemn them.

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