

Jesus Can Increase Our Faith
International Bible Lesson
Mark 9:14-29
Sunday, March 6, 2016
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“It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” ‘If you can?’ said Jesus. ‘Everything is possible for one who believes’” (Mark 9:22b-23).

A father brought his son to Jesus because an evil spirit possessed his son and often tried to kill him. Jesus’ disciples had the authority to cast out spirits, but they had failed; therefore, the father rushed to Jesus as soon as he saw Him. The father had believed Jesus or His disciples could help him, but after Jesus’ disciples failed, Jesus was his last hope. He said to Jesus, “If you can do anything, help us” and Jesus replied, “Everything is possible for one who believes.” The father needed to believe in Jesus, and if he did his son would be helped. The father and Jesus knew that he had some belief in Jesus or he would never have brought his son to Him. The father and Jesus also knew that he needed to believe more in Jesus. Perhaps his belief was almost the size of a mustard seed, for the father said to Jesus, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief” (Mark 9:24). Jesus answered his prayer of faith and cast the demon out of his son. When Jesus answered his prayer, He helped the father increase his belief in Him. Later, the disciples learned that some demons can only be cast out by prayer (Mark 9:29). If we have a little belief in Jesus and are also aware that we still have a measure of unbelief, we can still pray to Jesus and ask Him to help us overcome our unbelief, for “Everything is possible for one who believes.”— L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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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?
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.
3. Discuss how you would feel if you looked up and saw Jesus walking toward the crowd.
4. What do you think Jesus did that helped the father overcome his unbelief in Jesus?
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?