

1. In just a moment we are going to be praying and believing and asking God together to do miracles for us.
2. Before we do however, I want us to consider this idea of **praying and asking with faith**. In other words, believing that what we are asking for will actually come to pass.
3. I am so very grateful that the bible doesn't paint people with rose colored glasses. Meaning, casting them in a light where they seem superhuman or bigger than life.
4. The bible allows us to see the humanity, and the faults, and the failures and the shortcomings of the characters.
5. And personally, that is a comfort to me. I can't identify with superhuman and bigger than life.
6. What I identify with is a flawed, misunderstanding, not always full of faith type of lifestyle.
7. I would like to stand here and pretend that my faith is always strong, but the reality is, it is not.
8. Maybe you feel the same way about your faith. But one of the things I love about the Lord is that when our faith is weak, he does not cast us aside, but instead he is willing to help our lack of faith or our unbelief.
9. In Mark chapter 9, beginning in verse 14, we get to see a lot of less-than-ideal humanity on display.
10. Jesus has been on what the bible calls the mount of transfiguration. The place where God's glory has been revealed in Jesus.
11. With him are Peter, James, and John.
12. After being up on the mountain for some time, Jesus and the three disciples come down the mountain, and when they catch up to the rest of the disciples, they encounter what could simply be described as chaos.
13. They find the other disciples with a large crowd gathered around them, and the scene is not good. The crowd is arguing quite loudly with the disciples.
14. When the crowd sees Jesus they run to him, and Jesus begins asking questions.

15. What are you all arguing about. And from the crowd a man speaks up.
16. Teacher, I brought my son to you, but you weren't here, so I asked your disciples to help.
17. My son is possessed by an evil spirit. In other words, he is demon possessed.
18. The affects on his life are devastating. The spirit has robbed him of his speech.
19. At times the evil spirit will throw my son to the ground. He foams at the mouth, he gnashes his teeth, and then he just lays there frozen, unable to move.
20. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, and they could not.
21. What we see from Jesus is an emotion of exasperation, and what I believe is his explanation for what is wrong.
22. **Mark 9:19** "You unbelieving generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."
23. Basically Jesus was fed up. Fed up with the fact that despite the great number of miracles they had witnessed, they still had a problem with unbelief.
24. So they bring the boy to Jesus, and as soon as the evil spirit sees Jesus, it throws the boy into a convulsion. He rolls around on the ground foaming at the mouth.
25. Jesus turns to the father and asks, how long has he been like this, to which the father replies, since he was a child.
26. The father then goes on to mention even more affects of this evil spirit.
27. **Mark 9:22-24** "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." 23 "If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes." 24 Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"
28. This father was in a dilemma. A dilemma I believe we are facing in 2022. He wanted the Lord's help with this insurmountable problem, but he struggled with believing that Jesus could actually do what he was asking him for.
29. If you can do anything, the father says to Jesus. Help us.

30. And Jesus, knowing that faith is essential to receiving anything from the Lord must address his expression of unbelief.
31. If I can? Everything is possible for the one who believes.
32. What I love about this father was that rather than run away when his lack of faith was exposed, he pressed in even further.
33. And that is one of the things I am going to ask us to do today. If your faith is struggling with what you have been asking God for, lean into him and not run away from Him.
34. I do believe Jesus; but help me overcome my unbelief.
35. Jesus. I have a teeny, tiny bit of faith, and a whole lot of unbelief, but please help me with my unbelief.
36. And help the man Jesus did. He healed his son and gave him back to him healthy and whole and in his right mind.
37. This story has so many parallels to 2022. I could go on and on, but for the sake of time, I want to point out only a few. And then we are going to pray.

America has a hope crisis.

1. In verse 19, Jesus makes it clear that the faith problem wasn't just something those in the crowd were dealing with, but that it was a generational problem.
2. As a whole, there was a generation in front of him that had a major problem with unbelief.
3. I believe it is not a stretch to say that we are living in a generation that faces the same issue.
4. We have problems up to our eyeballs. We are stressed out. Maxed out. And almost passed out, and if you take a poll, chances are you are going to encounter a lot of folks who have no faith that things are going to get better anytime soon.
5. In fact, only 8 out of 10 Americans even believe there is a God, but only 4 in 10 Americans attend church on a regular basis.
6. And I hope we all know that just attending church doesn't mean you are in a committed relationship with Jesus.
7. I guess it's no wonder we are living in a generation with a crisis of hope.

8. To make matters worse, as a society we have tried almost everything we can think of to deal with the feelings of hopelessness, and nothing has worked.
9. And a part of the result of our lack of hope is that we live in a world of constant turmoil and upheaval.
10. Jesus comes down the mountain to find the very people who were supposed to be his closest friends engaged in an argument because it seems they have no power to deal with the problems of the day.
11. Actually, we know from the word of God that a lack of hope does cause turmoil.
12. James the brother of Jesus said it this way. James 4:1-2 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.
13. And why don't we ask God? Why do we not receive even when we do ask? Unbelief.
14. So now that we have identified the problem...let's move on to the solution.
15. The solution is not to try harder, hope harder, will things into existence harder, the solution is we need help for our unbelief.
16. And I am so grateful we serve a wonderful savior who is more than willing to help us with our unbelief.
17. I believe the pathway to receiving the miracles that we ask God for travels right through a heart of transparency that confesses. I have a little bit of faith, but Lord Jesus, I need help with my unbelief.
18. This father was so desperate for a solution, that he was willing to expose and admit his own weakness.
19. And the result of his exposing and confessing his own lack of faith was not Jesus' walking away, shaking his head, wondering how anyone could be so pathetic.
20. Instead, Jesus met him right at the place of his unbelief, and he did just what the man asked him. He helped him.
21. And I believe we serve a loving father and savior today who is more than willing to help us with our own unbelief.

Conclusion:

1. Today I am going to pattern my own faith after the faith of this father.
2. Will you join with me and do the same?
3. Like this father I am desperate for a move of God.
4. Like this father I am desperate for a restoration of my faith.
5. Like this father, everyone else can go on in their unbelief if they want, but I am going to Jesus.
6. Will you go with me today?
7. Pray?
8. Before we pray for miracles today, we are going to prepare ourselves first.
9. It will do you no good to come and believe God for a miracle if you are not in right relationship with Him.
10. Are you willing to repent of your sins and turn from your wicked ways?
11. Salvation call.
12. Have people pray to the Lord.
 - Lord Jesus, I am desperate for you. I want you.
 - My need is bigger than I am. But it is not bigger than you.
 - I have some faith, but I also have some unbelief.
 - Help me with my unbelief.
13. Call people forward for prayer.