

## Home Group Notes

### Testing Times 1 - Spiritual Confusion

#### Mark 9:14-32

*Life is often not very straight forward. What sort of things may shake, confuse or undermine our faith in Jesus?*

#### Read Mark 9:14-29

1. Why might it be very easy just to discount parts of this passage or avoid it all together? Why should we resist this attitude to the Word of God? See 2 Tim 3:16.
2. Is this section wholly about demon possession?

#### Read Mark 9:14-29 again

3. What **two** attitudes present **firstly**: with the Scribes (teachers of the Law) (vs 14) and **secondly**: with the crowd/disciples (vs 18b,19a)?
4. What is Jesus' response to these attitudes vs 19? What situations occur in life where we might encounter or exhibit attitudes of opposition and unbelief?
5. When Jesus is absent (vs 14) the disciples were overcome with unbelief and laxity, unable to heal. Walking closely with Jesus is important for us too. How can we ensure that we do?
6. What seems surprising about Jesus' comments in vs 19? Jesus never gives up teaching His disciples Mk 9:30-31,14:38, 16:7. How might this encourage us?
7. On who alone does the boy's healing depend (vs 19 & 23)? Where does faith/belief come in?
8. What has changed in the man's faith (vs 22b) since he first, optimistically, brought his son to nine disciples (vs 17)?
9. Do we sometimes doubt Jesus is with us or able to help in the tough stuff of life?

*Those who finish life strong in the faith are impressive people!!!*

10. Jesus fixes on the father's "if" response (vs 22b) in vs 23. What is the question really about?

11. Is your belief honest like the father of the boy? Sometimes far from perfect. Belief mixed with unbelief. Do we continually seek Jesus' help?

12. The disciples had been given authority (Mk 6:7) and had been successful in the past (Mk 6:13). In private they ask Jesus why they had failed this time (vs 28). The answer (vs 29)?

13. Does the Christian life get easier or harder as we progress? How truly dependent are we on God?

14. How seriously do we take Jesus' call to pray? When, how and where do you pray?

*We are constantly encouraged to "believe in ourselves" and if we "dream" we can do anything. This is in direct contrast to what Jesus tells us. To believe in Him and depend prayerfully upon Him.*

#### Read Mark 9:30-32

*Victory over the enemy is costly - dependence on God along with prayer commitment. Consequently Jesus has His death and resurrection in focus and teaches the disciples. They didn't understand this either!!*

15. The meaning of vs 31 is that, the Son of Man is "delivered up" (by God) to men. Who takes the initiative for salvation? Vs 32 - Are we also afraid to truly seek Jesus? Perhaps fearful of His response? Or what He may ask us to do or where He may lead?

#### Prayer Points

- Make a commitment to set aside some time to pray.
- Pray for a deep reliance and dependence on Jesus.
- Pray for those who face a real crisis of faith. That their faith may be rooted in Jesus and His sufficiency.
- Pray for those who face opposition at work, home or from authorities.