

July 1, 2012 by Steve Brandon



Help My Unbelief

Mark 9:14-29

1. That Ministry would Flourish (verses 14-19)
2. That Hurts would Heal (verses 20-27)
3. That I would Pray (verses 28-29)

As we continue in our exposition of this wonderful book, we arrive at Mark chapter 9, verse 14. I want to remind you of what we looked at last week -- the first 13 verses of chapter 9. We looked at the transfiguration. We saw Jesus changed. He pulled back the veil of his humanity and we were permitted to see His real self--His divinity in all of His glory and majesty. Jesus began to glow (verse 3). He became radiantly white (verse 3). Moses and Elijah were with Him, speaking with Him about His coming death in Jerusalem (verse 4). The voice of God, the Father, thundered from heaven, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!" (verse 7).

It was a remarkable scene. But, one thing that might easily be missed when we focus upon the top of the mountain: what was happening on the bottom of the mountain. While things at the top of the mountain were going well, things at the bottom of the mountain weren't going too well.

This contrast is depicted very nicely in Rafael's last painting entitled, "The Transfiguration." [\[1\]](#) That painting is clearly separated into two parts. In the upper portion, you can see Jesus transfigured. You can see Moses and Elijah and the overwhelmed disciples: Peter, James, and John. Behind them all, you can see a bright cloud that shines upon all of them. All is wonderful and majestic! The lower portion of the painting is far different. It is dark and crowded. There is a sick child in their midst. The crowds are arguing with each other, pointing fingers at each other. All is chaos and confusion.

this is a good depiction of what was taking place during the transfiguration. While Peter and James and John were experiencing ecstasy with Jesus, the other nine disciples were experiencing agony without Him. Let's read what took place at the bottom of the mountain.

Mark 9:14-29

When they came back to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. Immediately, when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed and began running up to greet Him. And He asked them, "What are you discussing with them?" And one of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it." And He answered them and said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!" They brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth. And He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" And Jesus said to him, "If You can?" All things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief." When Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again." After crying out and throwing him into terrible convulsions, it came out; and the boy became so much like a corpse that most of them said, "He is dead!" But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him; and he got up. When He came into the house, His disciples began questioning Him privately, "Why could we not drive it out?" And He said to them, "This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer."

The key phrase in this section of Scripture comes in verse 24, when the boy's father cried out to Jesus saying, "I do believe; help my unbelief." This was a man who was tormented by a sick son. He came to Jesus for help, believing that Jesus could help him. His faith, although genuine, was not so great. He came to Jesus not only for help for his son, He also came to Jesus for help for his own faith.

Indeed, this is where we have seen the disciples of Jesus all along. They are believing in Him. And yet, their faith is weak. They see the feeding of the 5,000. And yet, a little bit later, they don't believe that Jesus can feed the 4,000. Later in the boat, the disciples didn't believe that Jesus can feed the 12! At one moment, Peter tells Jesus, "You are the Christ!" (Mark 8:29). The very next moment, Jesus calls him "Satan" (Mark 8:33). They are like the blind man, who saw men walking around like trees (Mark 8:24). He could see, but not clearly (Mark 8:25). So also the disciples, they had eyes to see, but they didn't see (Mark 8:18).

This is a common thread of Mark's gospel. He wants for us to see the slowness of the disciples to believe. In this way, the man's statement, "I do believe; help my unbelief" is a sort of theme to Mark's gospel. And so, it's no wonder that Mark elaborates on this story.

Mark is the shortest of all of the four gospel writers. Both Matthew and Luke are close to twice as long as Mark's gospel. When Mark includes a story that Matthew or Luke tell, he is usually shorter. But not this account. Mark takes 16 verses to tell the story of what took place at the

base of the mountain. Matthew takes 8 verses. Luke gives only 7 verses to this account. Mark's account is longer than Matthew and Luke's account combined! Why? Because I think that this story is significant. It puts forth the reality of the disciples. They were believing in Jesus. They were following Jesus. And yet, their faith was weak. They have need to learn from this helpless father, "I do believe; help my unbelief" (verse 24).

In great measure, I believe, that this is where many of us live. We believe, and yet we feel that our faith is weak. Our hearts resonate with the hymn writer, ...

Prone to wander, Lord I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love.

How can this be? How can we so easily turn away from the one we love? And yet, this is the very thing we do. This is where our sinful hearts can pull us -- away from the one we love! That's why this father's request to Jesus is so good for us. "Help my unbelief." The prayer of faith is a prayer for faith. It's a prayer to the one who can increase the faith. It is from this phrase that I have entitled my message this morning, "Help My Unbelief." Let's pick up the story in verse 14. By verse 19, you should see the first point of my message.

Help My Unbelief ...

1. That Ministry would Flourish (verses 14-19)

Mark 9:14

When they came back to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them.

Here's the scene when Jesus and Peter and James and John came down from the mountain. They came down to commotion. They came down to a large crowd that was arguing back and forth. Particularly, they saw the scribes arguing with the nine disciples who remained at the bottom of the mountain. Rafael depicted it well. Fingers pointing; arguing about something. This is what the scribes did best! They argued. They took the contrary position. We aren't told exactly what they are arguing about. But, we can guess, that just as the scribes opposed the ministry of Jesus, so they would also oppose the ministry of His disciples.

Mark 9:15

Immediately, when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed and began running up to greet Him.

When Jesus came down, the entire crowd changed their focus. No longer was their focus upon the disciples; it was upon Jesus! Jesus asked them the simple question in verse 16, ...

Mark 9:16

... "What are you discussing with them?"

The answer comes quickly, ...

Mark 9:17-18

And one of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it."

So, picture the scene. This man has a son who is in a terrible situation. He is demon possessed. This demon is preventing him from speaking. Furthermore, this demon will seize him from time to time. When it does so, the child foams at the mouth; he grinds his teeth; he stiffens out. In verse 20 we see that convulsions are also involved. We also see that the spirit will cause him to roll around on the ground. In verse 22 we find out that this has caused the son to roll into the fire or into the water, and it has almost destroyed the little boy.

And the boy wasn't the only one who suffered. The parents also suffered. Nothing afflicts a parent like torment upon a child. My wife and I were given a movie to watch about a farmer turned evangelist in Zambia. At one point in the movie, a little boy (about 7 or 8 years old) was run over by a tractor wheel and died. When this took place in the movie, my wife couldn't bear to watch what happened. It was only after 10 or 15 minutes that she felt she could watch again. It was simply too painful to think about a mother (and father) losing a little boy. See, it's one thing to suffer yourself. It's another thing to see your child suffer. And it's difficult to discern which suffering is the worst!

And so, this man comes to the disciples for help. This was reasonable. The disciples had this ability. When Jesus chose the twelve disciples, He appointed them, "so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach, and to have authority to cast out demons" (Mark 3:14-15). Back in chapter 6, we read of how Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs, giving them authority over the unclean spirits (6:7).

Mark 6:12-13

They went out and preached that men should repent. And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.

Apparently, word got around to this father that the disciples were able to help him. And so, he asked them for help. But, "they could not do it" (verse 18). This must have been a let down to the father. He had heard of the healing power of the disciples of Jesus. Perhaps he had seen

the fruit of their ministry in others who were healed of their demons. But his son was unable to be cured.

I've read several testimonies of paraplegics (or quadriplegics) who have come to a faith-healer, really believing that he (or she) could heal them. No longer would they need a wheel chair. But, when they came and were turned away and not healed, they were greatly disappointed.

This must have been disappointing for the father. This must have been surprising to the disciples. They had done this many times before. In Luke's gospel, when they came back from a preaching tour, they returned with joy, telling Jesus, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name" (Luke 10:17). But, here, for some reason, it wasn't working.

And the scribes were right there, demeaning them for their lack of ability. "Oh, you profess to have the power to heal! But, look at this boy. You can't heal him. You have no power. Your master has no power. Why do you think that your teaching is so important!"

Why couldn't they heal? The reason was simple: lack of faith. You can see it there in verse 19, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you?" The disciples didn't believe. And thus, they were impotent to perform the supernatural.

As Hebrews 11:6 says, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." And without the pleasure of God, you are powerless to accomplish things for God. It didn't matter that the disciples had performed these sorts of miracles in the past. They didn't have faith in the present. And without faith in the present, ministry will be impotent. God isn't looking for people who have accomplished great things by faith. God is looking for people who are trusting God today to accomplish great things today.

And right here you can see my first point. "Help My Unbelief ... (1) That Ministry would Flourish (verses 14-19)."

Faith is crucial to any ministry. Early in my ministry at Rock Valley Bible Church, I read a book with a pastor from another church in town. The book was entitled, "An Earnest Ministry: The Want of the Times", by John Angell James. Although the book was written in the mid-eighteen-hundreds, it still carries much wisdom for today. He quoted a sentence from the British Quarterly Review: "No ministry will be really effective, whatever may be its intelligence, which is not a ministry of strong faith, true spirituality, and deep earnestness." James then wrote, ...

I wish this golden sentence could be inscribed in characters of light over every professor's chair, over every student's desk, and over every preacher's pulpit. Condensed into that one short paragraph is everything that needs be said on this subject. I feel that every syllable I have to write would be superfluous, if all our pastors, students, and tutors, would let that one sentence take full occupation of their hearts, possess their whole souls, and regulate their conduct. [\[2\]](#)

I followed his advice. I printed out his sentence. I taped it in front of my desk. It has remained there for a decade to remind me of what it takes to have a truly effective ministry. May the Lord grant strength to follow his counsel. A great example of those who followed this example are those of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, where Charles Spurgeon was a pastor. Spurgeon experienced a flourishing ministry; thousands came to hear him preach each Sunday. In the 1800's his sermons were transcribed and wired to the United States where they were read by thousands more. He wrote 25 million words in his lifetime, more than any other Christian author has ever written. He established The Pastor's College, which trained more than 900 men for ministry and resulted in 200 churches being planted. He was certainly a gifted orator with an amazing memory and a voracious appetite to learn.

And yet, when Spurgeon was asked the reason for his success, he replied, "my people pray for me." Charles Spurgeon wrote in his autobiography:

I always give all the glory to God, but I do not forget that He gave me the privilege of ministering from the first to a praying people. We had prayer-meetings in New Park Street [their old church building] that moved our very souls. Every man seemed like a crusader besieging the New Jerusalem, each one appeared determined to storm the Celestial City by the might of intercession, and soon the blessing came upon us in such abundance that we had not room to receive it. [\[3\]](#)

Here's how Lewis Drummond says it,

The primary foundation stone [of Spurgeon's success] ... rested on the sacrificial, fervent prayers of the New Park Street people. They were a faithful group of interceding Christians. Young Spurgeon inherited that blessed legacy. Moreover, that Spirit of prayer continued through the years of the Metropolitan Tabernacle ministry. The anecdote of Charles Haddon Spurgeon taking visitors through the Metropolitan Tabernacle and showing them the prayer room in the basement remarking, 'Here is our power house,' has often been repeated. But it is apocryphal; the real story is that the prayer meetings were held upstairs on Monday night, with some 3,000 people attending. [\[4\]](#)

Think about it -- a prayer meeting every Monday night with 3,000 people. Why did the people pray? Because they knew their dependence upon the Lord. They believed that God would be gracious to them to bless them if they prayed. Their large attendance at the prayer meeting was an indicator of their faith. They stepped out in faith and saw the Lord do great things.

Now, certainly, the Metropolitan Tabernacle had many things going for them. The giftedness of Spurgeon was second to none in history. The momentum of the ministry encouraged more and more to come. And yet they made conscious attempts to place themselves at the mercy of God, seeking His blessing for His glory. And might it be that our ministry doesn't flourish because we don't believe, because we don't pray, because we are relying upon our past successes? Are we trusting in our own strength?

Might it be that matters in your own family are struggling because of your lack of faith? We read in Paul Miller's book, "A Praying Life," this past year in our small groups. One of the quotes that most stands out in my mind is this one: "Jill and I do our best parenting by prayer" [\[5\]](#). Might it be that your outreach to neighbors lacks because of your lack of faith? Might it be that you see little fruit in your lives, because you have little faith? Might it be that your best plan this morning is to pray this little prayer, "Lord, I believe; Help My Unbelief."?

Before moving on, I want for you to notice the anguish of Jesus in verse 19, ...

Mark 9:19

And He answered them and said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you?"

We find such language often in the Psalms. Psalm 13:1 asks, "How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?" Psalm 79:5 again asks, "How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever?" And we read in Psalm 94:3, "How long shall the wicked, O LORD, how long shall the wicked exult?"

God, in His long suffering and forbearance tolerates the wicked and delays his judgment. But, the Psalmist has run out of patience and cries out to the LORD. He is frustrated at the lack of justice. He is in agony and the delay of the LORD.

But, here in verse 19, the role is reversed. It is the patience of God that has run out with man. Jesus is frustrated at the lack of faith among His disciples. And so, He cries out, "how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you?" If there is any reason why we ought to believe and trust in the Lord it is here. Let us not try the patience of God with our unbelief. Rather, let us cry to the Lord, "Lord, I believe! Help my unbelief!"

Let's move on to the actual healing of this boy. In this portion of the narrative, we will see my second point, ... Help My Unbelief ...

2. That Hurts would Heal (verses 20-27)

In verse 19, Jesus makes a request, "Bring him to Me!" Verse 20 says, ...

Mark 9:20

They brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth.

It's no wonder that in the presence of Jesus, the demonic spirit reared its ugly head, once again, taking control of this poor boy. The demon knew full well what was happening. The demon knew full well whose presence he was in. And so, this demon threw the boy into a convulsion. Rather than being alarmed at this display of power over the boy, Jesus calmly speaks to the father in verse 21, ...

Mark 9:21

... "How long has this been happening to him?"

And the father replied, "From childhood." He proceeds to tell more of the symptoms of this boy's malady.

Mark 9:22

It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him."

And then, this poor father cries for Jesus to help Him.

Mark 9:22

"... But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!"

This request was fine in and of itself. The father recognized that he had no leverage in demanding Jesus to heal this boy. The father asked for pity. He requested mercy. Furthermore, the father didn't tell Jesus how to help them. Rather, he simply said, "Help us."

But, what this father said before the request was alarming to Jesus. "If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" Verse 23, ...

Mark 9:23

And Jesus said to him, "If You can?"

Of course Jesus can! Do you remember what took place on top of the mountain? Jesus is the shining one! Jesus is the radiant one! Jesus is the glorious and majestic one! Of course Jesus can do this. Now, the father didn't know all of those things about Jesus. He wasn't up on top of the mountain. He was at the base of the mountain, pleading with the disciples. And yet, Jesus felt like this man knew enough not to question the power of Jesus in this way.

We can relate. Don't we often doubt? Don't we often doubt the power of God in our lives? And yet, Jesus affirms to this father in verse 23, ...

Mark 9:23

... All things are possible to him who believes."

This is one of those amazing statements that Jesus makes regarding the power of faith. John's gospel is flooded with them. "If you ask me anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:13). "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:7). "Whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you" (John 15:16).

Later in Mark's gospel, we will see a similar statement. [Jesus said,] "Have faith in God. Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that it will be granted him. Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you" (Mark 11:22-24).

Here you see the connection of faith and prayer. Prayer is the outward manifestation of faith. Prayers are the expression of faith. And when you offer a prayer in faith, you can have assurance that you will receive your answer if you ask in the name of Jesus; if you are abiding in God; if it's God's will,

When Jesus said this, the father in this story seized upon His statement. Verse 24, ...

Mark 9:24

Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief."

And such is the cry that I hope that we all do today. "I do believe; help my unbelief."

And then, the healing comes, ...

Mark 9:25-27

When Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again." After crying out and throwing him into terrible convulsions, it came out; and the boy became so much like a corpse that most of them said, "He is dead!" But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him; and he got up.

Jesus merely spoke the word and the boy was healed. His time had come to glorify the Lord.

And now comes my second point by way of application. "Help My Unbelief ... (2) That Hurts would Heal (verses 20-27)."

Here we see a young boy and a father and a family who were facing very difficult circumstances. The hurt of this evil spirit were enormous. The boy couldn't speak (verse 25). The boy couldn't hear (verse 25). The boy was constantly experiencing pain in being thrown in the fire (verse 22). The boy was in danger of death by drowning (verse 22). Certainly, this was taking a toll on the family. Father (and perhaps mother and siblings) had to keep constant watch upon the little boy, lest he hurt himself. And with a word, Jesus healed their hurts. Jesus may well be standing ready to heal your hurts as well.

I can't help but think that there may be hurts in your own household that are being caused right now by a lack of faith. Husbands and wives, you lack the faith to read the Bible together. Husbands and wives, you lack the faith to pray together. Wives, you lack the faith to let the Lord change your husband. Parents, you lack the faith to entrust your children entirely to the Lord, trying to control them and manipulate them instead. Parents, you lack the faith to trust the Lord with your finances, choosing to be anxious instead.

There may be hurts for all of us that may be healed. We fret about relationships, rather than praying for those with whom we have conflict. We dwell in the past reflecting upon what happened (or didn't happen) to us, rather than trusting God for the future. We deal with a physical illness and have trusted in the doctors, rather than trusting in the Lord. There may be other hurts in your life as well that few know anything about. So, trust the Lord.

Know that Jesus is able to restore marriages. Jesus is able to bring back rebellious children. Jesus is able to provide. Jesus is able to mend relationships. Jesus is able to clean our slate. Jesus is able to heal. Perhaps you need to pray, "Lord, I believe; Help my unbelief."

Now, it may be that now isn't the time. Do you remember Paul's affliction? He had a "thorn in his flesh." He believed, requesting of the Lord three times that the thorn would be removed. And yet, the Lord refused. Rather, God said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9).

So, don't think that every hurt is a matter of your lack of faith. There are times when God brings hurts to help us. He prunes the tree that we might bear more fruit (John 15:2). With Paul, the hurt came to humble him, that he might be weak. Because, "power is perfected in weakness." It just may be that God has brought a hurt in your life to weaken you, so that you would be forced to rely upon His power.

But, I would encourage you to believe that Jesus is able to heal all of your hurts. Trust in Him. Believe in Him. Faith in Jesus may be able to heal your hurts. But, God may choose not to heal them. Let God's sovereign choice not to heal be the determining factor in what you face. Don't let God ever say, "I would have healed you, if you but had the faith."

Do you remember what took place in Nazareth -- the hometown of Jesus? Jesus and His disciples traveled there. Rather than receiving

Jesus and trusting in Jesus, the people of Nazareth scoffed at Him saying, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" (Mark 6:3). And we are told that, "they took offense at Him" (Mark 6:3). To this, Jesus responded, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household."

What was the result? Jesus "could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them" (Mark 6:5). And we are told that Jesus "Wondered at their unbelief" (Mark 6:6). Let's not allow God to wonder at our unbelief!

Let's move on to Jesus and the disciples. Here we see our last point of application. Help My Unbelief, ...

3. That I would Pray (verses 28-29)

Mark 9:28

When He came into the house, His disciples began questioning Him privately, "Why could we not drive it out?"

This was the pressing question in the minds of the disciples. They had healed before. But, they couldn't heal this boy this time. Then, Jesus comes along and says the word, and the boy is healed. And they were thinking, "What's up with that?" So, the first chance that they had away from the crowds, they asked Jesus about this. They did this in private, as they didn't want to ask it publicly. Jesus answers the question in verse 29, ...

Mark 9:29

And He said to them, "This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer."

Here is the key. Jesus said that disciples were prayerless. In other words, rather than praying and trusting in the Lord's power to work through them, these disciples had figured it all out. They were trusting in their own strength. They had done this before. They would do it again. When it comes to power in ministry, it works like magic. They do the same things every time. And, it all works out. Only, this time it didn't.

They were like Samson with his hair cut off. When the Philistines came upon him, he went out confident that he was able to free himself as at other times (Judges 16:20). But, without his strength, Samson was captured by the Philistines. They gouged out his eyes. They bound him and placed him in prison (Judges 16:21). Such were the disciples. They were prayerless and weak. And they didn't even know it.

But, the good news is this -- Samson's hair grew back. And Samson regained his strength. And when he braced himself against the middle pillars of the house and took the whole house down, "he killed at his death ... more than those whom he killed in his life" (Judges 16:30). And the disciples could pray again. And they could renew their strength. And come another day, they could be able to cast demons out once again.

They did. The book of Acts is filled with stories of some of the amazing things the Lord accomplished at the hands of the disciples. At times, their miracles compared equally to the miracles of Jesus. They healed a crippled man (Acts 3:1-11). Peter raised Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9:36-42). "God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out" (Acts 19:11-12).

The disciples never lost the fact of where their power came from. They knew that it was from the Lord. The book of Acts records how the disciples prayed after Jesus ascended to heaven. They gathered together and went to the upper room and "with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer" (Acts 1:14). For ten days they sought the Lord. Soon afterwards came Pentecost, with the Spirit descending upon the church. You can read about it in Acts 2.

But, they didn't forget where their power came from. They knew that the power was from the Lord. So, they continued to pray.

The testimony of the early church is that "they were continually devoting themselves to the apostle's teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42). The apostle knew the importance of prayer. They said, "We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4). Prayer meetings were often in the early church. They prayed together when Peter and John were freed (Acts 4:23-31). They prayed together after James was killed when Peter was next in line (Acts 12:5, 12). They prayed together when they sought vision from the Lord regarding ministry (Acts 13:1-3). After establishing churches, they prayed (Acts 14:23). When elders got together, they prayed (Acts 20:36).

We see personal praying in the early church as well. Shortly after Saul was struck blind on the road to Damascus, the testimony about him was this, "he is praying" (Acts 9:11). Peter, like his master, "went up on the housetop [i.e. away from everybody] ... to pray" (Acts 10:9). It's no wonder that the early church experienced so much power. They were a praying people.

This is my third point. "Help My Unbelief ... (3) That I would Pray (verses 28-29)."

Prayer is a manifestation of our faith. When we pray, we aren't doing anything else. Prayer is stopping. Prayer is saying, "God, I believe that it is better that I stop my labors. It is better that I cease to think and worry and plan and scheme. It is better that I place my trust in you than trying to accomplish these things on my own. God, I am waiting for you to act. God, I need for you to act."

"Help my unbelief, that I would pray." When you believe and trust in God, you will pray. Do you want to pray more? Then, pray this simple prayer: "Help My Unbelief."

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on July 1, 2012 by Steve Brandon.

For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transfiguration_\(Raphael\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transfiguration_(Raphael)) for a picture of the painting.

[2] John Angell James, *An Earnest Ministry: The Want of the Times*, [Carlisle, Pennsylvania: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1993], 28.

[3] Charles Spurgeon, *The Early Years*, p. 263. Online here: <http://books.google.com/books?id=6JMEAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA361&lpg=PA361>.

[4] Lewis Drummond, *Spurgeon: Prince of Preachers*, p. 272. Online here:
<http://books.google.com/books?id=u2l6TWXFEQC&pg=PA272&lpg=PA272>.

[5] Paul Miller, *A Praying Life*, p. 170.