

POWERLESS CHURCH FACES A PERISHING WORLD

TEXT:

Mark 9:28: And when He was come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

INTRODUCTION:

Today, the church is facing a perishing world, as thousands of people are confused and distressed, and tell us so pitifully: *'I just don't know what to do; where to go, and I don't want to live any longer. The world is getting so bad, that it's not safe anywhere. It seems that the devil is really on the loose.'* And you are right about that.



In my text, we see nine embarrassed, heart-sick, defeated and disappointed disciples of Jesus. In **Mark 9**, A child had been brought to them, full of evil spirits, and the disciples could not set the child free and cast out the spirit of the devil. This child was a victim of satan's power, and this enemy was seeking to destroy the poor helpless child.

Yes, satan will work against your children, against you, and against anyone who is not protected by the presence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible shows clearly that demons take mastery over unsaved mankind and seeks to blind, bind, and then destroy the souls of men in hell. The devil enjoys torturing people, and you will see this clearly in the scripture. The devil cast this poor helpless boy into that water trying to drown him, and at other times into the fire, seeking to scorch, burn, and torture him.

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The father of this boy was so worried and troubled about his son that he brought him to the disciples of Jesus, hoping that they could do something about setting the child free from satan. They really tried with all their might to drive the demons out, but they couldn't. Too many spirits were in the body of this boy, and the disciples just did not have enough of the power of God to overpower them. Jesus had given them this power in the beginning of their preaching ministry, but somewhere along the line, they lost part of it.

Mark 3:15: And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

We read there that Jesus ordained twelve that they should be with Him, and that He sent them forth to preach, to have power to heal sickness, and to cast out devils. We know that they had this power because they came hurrying up to Jesus as happy as a bee in a ten acre clover field.

Luke 10:17: And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name.

It was right then that Jesus told them not to rejoice over the power they had over the devils, but rather to rejoice because their names were written in Heaven, which is far more important. Rejoicing over the other might get them into trouble and cause them to get top-heavy with pride and self-importance. Then they would become an open target for the devil to pull his wiles on them. Spiritual pride is an open door for satan to zero in on a defenseless person.

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Paul speaks of the wiles of the devil in **Ephesians** which tells us how we are to take the whole armor of God to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:11: Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Here is how Paul tells it, lest satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. Paul was very troubled over the Christians at Corinth who were very unstable and easily influenced by the world, demons, and false teachers, and this is how he talked to them:

2 Corinthians 11:3: But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

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2 Peter 2:18: For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

Today, the devil is really working hard to deceive and destroy you. Jesus said: The thief is come to steal, to kill, and to destroy.

Just look at what the devil did to this little boy, a precious mother's child, a dear father's son, as recorded in **Mark 9:17-27**:



17 ...which hath a dumb spirit;

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to Thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

And Jesus asked his father:

21 How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

22 And oft times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.

25 Jesus rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26 And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.



In **Mark 5**, we are told about another man who lived in the grave-yards:

Mark 5:5: And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

Jesus delivered him.

In **Luke 13**, a poor woman suffered:

Luke 13:11: And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

Nobody knew but Jesus that the devil had done this to her. One day she came to the synagogue:

Luke 13:12-13, 16:

¹² And when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

¹³ And He laid His hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

¹⁶ And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?

There are many of you who are bound by sins of drunkenness, adultery, lying, stealing, hatred, murder, demons of drugs, gambling, alcohol, fear, jealousy, witchcraft — Jesus can make you free. There is nobody else who can. The devil comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but Christ has come to give you life, and that more abundantly.

John 10:10: The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Do you know that there are some people who are listening to me who are blind, some deaf, and others who cannot talk or say one word, and it may be that the devil is behind this entire awful handicap. No, I am not saying you are devil possessed, but like this daughter of Abraham, this child of God who was bent over and could not straighten herself up, satan could be torturing you with this problem.

I read in the Bible about this little boy whom satan tried to destroy in the water and in the fire. This may surprise you to know that he was both deaf and dumb. He could not speak a word not hear a sound, for this power of demons had impaired his organs of speech and also his hearing. It is recorded right here in the scripture:

Mark 9:25: When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

Matthew 12:22: Then was brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

We are told about the man who was both blind and unable to speak, for he was dumb, and a demon caused all of this.

There are some of you who have grieved over the loss of some loved one, and have turned bitter against the Lord because you thought that God had taken away from you this child, mother, father, wife, or dear friend. All you remember is what a preacher said: *'Forasmuch as it hath pleased the Lord to take away this beloved one from us to Heaven...'* This curdled your blood and caused some of you to turn from the Lord. I feel very sorry for you about all of this. As we say down in Arkansas, *"I think you've got the wrong pig by the ear."* You, in other words, are blaming the wrong person, the wrong party.



Hebrews 2:14: Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

The Bible tells us that the very purpose of Jesus' coming into the world is — first and foremost — to save us from our sins, and to seek and to save that which was lost. He also came for three other reasons: One, to destroy him that has the power over death, that is the devil. Yes, the devil is a killer. That is why Jesus said in **John 10:10:**

John 10:10: The thief [meaning the devil] is cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy.

See, there it is plain and simple. Satan tried to kill Job, but God had placed a hedge about him, and even told the devil:

Job 2:6: And the LORD said unto satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

One day Paul found a man in the church at Corinth who was living a very immoral life with his stepmother. The man refused to straighten out his crooked life and turn from his sins, so Paul had to just turn him over to the devil. That is right, but for what reason? For the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 5:5: To deliver such an one unto satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

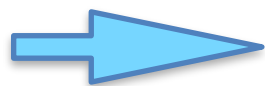
So you see, Paul did not turn him over to God but to the devil to take over his life, for satan is a murderer from the beginning as Jesus said:

John 8:44: Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Today you are hearing plenty about the devil scaring people, and I have gotten many letters from people asking about help to be freed from evil spirits. You have told me about them haunting you, making windows rattle, floors squeak, banging sounds in the attic or basement, voices, funny weird noises, and awful nightmares, dreams, and images in your rooms too horrible to describe. You are scared to death to go to bed at night; many are on sleeping pills in an effort to get away from all this.

I want you to know that you can have deliverance from the devil. God can set you free. When Jesus comes into your life and you give Him first place in your heart, He will give you power over all the power of satan, and nothing by any means can hurt you. This is what Jesus, Who is in you, Who is greater than satan, and Who is in the world does.

1 John 4:4: Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.



What you need to do is make sure that Jesus is really in your heart. This is what it means to be saved. For it is Christ in you, the Hope of Glory.

Colossians 1:27: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the Hope of Glory:

I want to look again at my text: ***Why could we not cast him out?*** This question the disciples asked Jesus very privately in the house after the deliverance service was ended that day, and Jesus had set this precious father's son free completely from the devil's power. These disciples were bothered, puzzled, and hurt that they had failed Jesus, had failed this father, and had let this helpless boy down. They were also embarrassed; this whole crowd saw them trying to bind the demons and drive them out of the child, but they couldn't make the demons bulge an inch.

These disciples had problems to which they could not find answers, and at least they had sense enough to bring them to Jesus for solutions. They did not run to every Tom, Dick, and Harry for his ideas, as that would have only added to their confusion. Jesus told them why they had failed.

Mark 9:29: And Jesus said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

There you have it, simple and straight, for these two mighty weapons against the devil are:

- **first staying real close to Jesus in prayer, and then**
- **self-denial, putting your stomach on a vacation, and giving yourself to the Lord in a special effort to have power to set the captives free.**

The very things which these disciples neglected doing, finally caught up to them when they least expected it.

One thing I will say in their favor right here, they just did not go on their merry way saying, "*Oh well, we can't win them all. There are some too far gone to help, maybe it's the fault of the parents or the boy that he is like this.*" They were concerned, burdened, and broken-hearted that they were not doing what Jesus had commissioned them to do.

Jesus wants you free from sin, from satan, and from self. He wants you to enjoy life and be happy. Sin is a joy killer, and sin is connected with satan, and he leads people into it to destroy their souls. He is not content to destroy and torment your bodies, but he is after your soul, too.

These disciples in the early church knew that the only way to have a real good revival is to get the devil out of people through the power of the Gospel. This is what salvation is all about; it is getting satan *out*, and Christ *into* your heart. Jesus told these disciples in:

Matthew 10:8: Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Don't make a charge for your prayers. But these disciples were powerless to face a perishing child. They were just like so many of us in the churches of today, who lack the power to help the distressed and perishing. I might look at this: A crippled church facing a crooked world — and what can we do about it? Jesus told the disciples to get their lost power restored; they would have to get back to real praying and fasting. This saying of prayers is not enough. It tells us in **James 5:16b**:

James 5:16b: The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

— with God and lost souls. Although these disciples lost their power with God and their enemy-shaking power, thank the Lord they got it back.



What is so good about a real revival? — The church rejoices when sinners are saved and delivered from the powers of the enemy. The power is in the anointing of the Spirit. Jesus said:

Acts 1:8: But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

That is where we are going with this wonderful Gospel of Christ.

Romans 1:16: For, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;

Acts 10:38: How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him.

Jesus has NEVER LOST THE ANOINTING, and He is still healing all those oppressed of the devil. That is why I am inviting you to come to Jesus now.

You may have had many hindrances in your coming to Christ. The devil has thrown you down into deep sin and terrible habits. Maybe the devil has thrown you down with lies that you are too sinful to be saved, or that you have not repented enough, or that God will not have you. The devil tells other things — you have committed the unpardonable sin, for you have written to me asking for help and for information as to what this sin is that has no remedy. Satan may be trying to throw you down to Hell with some counterfeit religion and false hope. He is operating many false religions in our land and in the world today.

It has always been satan's master trick to put evil thoughts in people's minds, and then claim that they were your own thoughts to begin with. He will point an accusing finger at you telling you that can't ever be free from this way of living, so you might as well commit suicide and end it all.

Satan has also opened many hiding places for sinners to duck and dodge into to keep them away from the church. He will give you a thousand excuses for not getting saved at this time or coming to Christ for salvation. He will tell you there are too many hypocrites in the church, and you are just as good as those who go to church. If he can keep you away from listening to me, he will do it with all kinds of interruption in your home.

He is out to destroy your soul. But I am here to expose his devices and to help you dig out of his kingdom with the preaching fearlessly of the Word of the Living God. Satan has given you many a refuge of lies to hide behind in order to drive you downward to your eternal destruction, but God has sent me to preach deliverances to the captives. Not only preach deliverances, but to open the prisons of those who are bound by sickness, diseases, and demons of oppression and possession.

Great things are expected of us who are the servants of the Lord, and I am trying to do my part to get you to Jesus. **The father in my text who brought his son to the Lord was not disappointed; Jesus met his need and set his son free. Since Jesus is no respecter of persons, He will do the same for you.**

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