

Miracles of Jesus 12-09-23b

Let's pick up our study now in this miracle of the casting the demon out of the loony boy, the lunatic boy, the moonstruck boy, and we have set the stage at some level of detail, at some pain and expense here, we've gone through the context, because context is everything. If we want to understand these miracles, they're not just random, they're not happenstances, it's not, well, let me just kind of pull together a bunch of disparate elements and throw it into a gospel. This thing is put together as it is under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for a reason.

It is the Word of God. Nothing is random, nothing is happenstance. I made this argument years ago and I delight in the vindication of my claims in the past in arguing with atheists and secular humanists, dogmatic, cheese-eating, French-influenced non-believers, that there's junk DNA, oh, there can't be a God, look at all the junk DNA.

And I said, listen, and they said, oh, your belief is unscientific because you can't make any predictions from it. For something to be scientific, you have to predict, and I said, look, I can make all kinds of predictions based on my belief in design and creation and that there's intelligence behind it and that there is a God who put this together. And I'll tell you one of my predictions, everything that science is calling junk DNA won't be junk.

It's just the ignorance of science that thinks that this is just clutter and detritus left over from the evolutionary process. It's supposed to be there, there's a reason for it. Well, as you know, in more recent years, they are discovering that more and more of this code is not junk at all.

And I haven't seen this yet, but I'm waiting. You can see if I'm right. One of the things I mentioned way back in years gone by on junk DNA is I said, you know, there's stuff that they don't know where it comes from and it's got to be in there someplace.

Where is the programming for sneezing? Show me the genes for sneezing or yawning or scratching an itch or your reflexive responses. You know, you tap your knee with a rubber hammer and your foot flies out. There's encoding for this stuff that puts those functions in place.

Why do you have, there's a name for that reflex, I forget what it is, why do we have that? It's in the genetic code. It's in the design. It's mapped out.

Why do you blink? Why do babies stop crying when you blow in their face? All of these things are pieces of software. It's software. All they're looking at, these ding dong scientists can only look at hardware.

Well, here's a gene for ear lobes and here's a gene for, you know, the color of your hair and here's a gene for handedness or whatever. And it's all hardware. They're thinking,

where's the software? Where's the software that goes into place that gives you a language center in your brain, that gives you the ability to interpret auditory information, that gives you behaviors? Why do we sleep? Why do we do a lot of, where does laughing come from? You know, there's something, there's pieces of software for people to laugh, for people to cry.

There's no evolutionary advantage to crying. You don't evolve crying because it helps you survive and have more babies, does it? It's, there's software for that. Well, all of this stuff they're calling junk, that's where it is.

That's part of where, what goes on in the junk is the software that runs on this hardware. Well, anyway, I digress. There is a God in the universe and he has a purpose and he has a plan and it is manifest in creation.

And we have to remember this when we are facing the details of life. We are so enmeshed in the audio-visual world. And yet it is no more substantial than what you see on your screen, your computer screen, your PDA screen, your iPad screen, your iPhone screen, whatever kind of a screen you're looking at.

What is that? We say, oh, well, that's not real. That's just a, that's a representation. Listen, everything around us is a representation.

You think about it. So we've got to not be offensive to the Lord who bought us with his precious blood on the cross. We have got to train ourselves.

We've got to dedicate ourselves to getting our minds on the things of God, keeping our minds on the things of God. That's why you're here. Ask yourself the question, why am I here? What is my purpose? Vast swarms and seas of people all down through history.

You've got people after the flood and Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth. I just went through all those genealogies last night. You know, here's where the nations came from.

Here's where all of those that do this came from. Here's where all of the surrounding nations came from. Here's where the people of the earth came from, generation after generation, millions, billions, billions, billions of people all down through history.

You're just one of them. You're a grain of sand on a great big beach. So what? Why are you here? You are here because in that vast beach and of all of those grains of sand, you are one of the few, very few, that has asked the question, why must the Lord suffer and die? You are one of the few that has been privileged to be taken up the mountain and to see the transfigured glory of the Lord Jesus Christ revealed.

You are one of them. Why? Because you chose to do so. You have chosen to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior.

You chose to pursue an understanding of the plan and purpose of God. You have chosen to be in Bible class. You have chosen to think about and meditate and pray over the things that you learn.

Do you know what a tiny minority you are? Go walk the mall. Go visit the Balloon Festival this afternoon and ask yourself how many of the pieces of sand on this beach ever look up and ask and seek and knock. How many? Now, there are some.

It's not just us. We're not, you know, I alone, oh Lord. There are 7,000 out there.

But it's still a tiny, tiny minority. So don't waste it. Don't blow it.

Don't fall back into the massive bucket of useless sand. Pay attention. Listen to what God tells us.

We haven't come this distance to fall back under perdition. Remember what the author says? We are not of those who fall back into apolia, into loss, into waste, into uselessness, but those who by faith and patience inherit the promises. We've got to stick.

We've got to be strong. We've got to be faithful. You have need of patience.

You have need of endurance so that after you have suffered a while, you receive the inheritance. This is who we are. This is why we're here.

We're not here to have a good time. We're not here to be the two-year-old who gets every toy they ask for, who gets fed any time they holler, who gets to watch TV and stay up whenever they want. We are not the spoiled brat toddler.

Anybody can do that. That's not our calling. I listened while I was walking the dog.

I was just all in the Scriptures yesterday. I was listening to 1 and 2 Peter. Listen to it four times through just on a loop.

Just listen to the whole letters, both of those Peter letters through that we've studied, remembering the things that we learned in each of those different phrases. And it was stunning to go back and see Peter's emphasis on, you have been born again. And he talks about the new birth over and over and over.

And he says, because you've been born, you have tasted that the Lord is good. You're like a baby who has tasted that milk, and it creates a hunger and a connection with the mother. And you say, I need more of this.

This is good. This is what I need. And he says, you need to stick with that.

You need to grow. Then he shifts over. If you go back and read 1 Peter, just watch for the

new birth.

He says, you've been born not of corruptible seed but incorruptible. And then he follows that birth idea through and talks about being young and needing nurture and having tasted that it's good and sticking with it and growing up. And because you are in this new family, you've been born into this new family, you should love one another sincerely and from the heart because they are also partaking of this same seed.

You are family in that spiritual sense. So you've got to put aside all of this backbiting and recrimination and pettiness because this is on a different level. You've left the level of corruption.

You're born of incorruptible seed, and others are born of that seed, and so your fellowship is on this new plane. And so he says, grow in it and nurture it and cherish it and put aside all of this old stuff that drags it down because this God is building you. And then he shifts to this building metaphor.

He talks about Christ. He says, Christ is the cornerstone, and He's a living stone, and you, like living stones, are being built into a temple. And living stones, you're this new birth from this incorruptible seed, and you've become a new creation in Christ.

And then he says you're being built into a temple where God's glory can dwell. And it's up, it's elevated. And he says, look, you've been rescued, you've been delivered, you've been saved out of the corrupt, out of the darkness.

And so just get yourself, you can get free audio Bibles on the web. Get a Go Bible, get an audio thing, just listen to it. Let somebody read the thing all the way through while you're walking, while you're driving.

Just listen to it all the way through. This is the way the original recipients heard it. And the way the ideas strike you, we tend to love to, you know, I love to extubate, posthole, you know, take my time getting through a passage, but there is something to be said for just letting the thing flow across.

Get the ideas at the rapidity and at the rate and in the order that the author, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, gave them. You can get a lot that way as well. And here's the point.

When you realize who we are and why we're here, we've got to keep our minds on that. It's the things of God, not the things of man. You know, if your boat slows down, you're not going to keep skiing.

You're going to sink. So all of this is background and context now. They've come down from the mountain.

They've seen the transfigured glory of the Lord. And what do they find in Matthew 17, 14? When they had come to the multitude. You've been up in glory looking at the revealed glory of Jesus Christ.

The span of the ages here are the historical prophets, Moses and Elijah. And what are they talking about? Moses and Elijah appeared talking with him. Peter says, well, let's just live up here.

No, this is reinforcement to go back and fight the battle, to go back and wrestle against the principalities and powers, to not get sifted when he tries to sift you like wheat. The devil roars like a lion and you don't frighten and you don't scare and you don't run away. This is fortification and strength for the battle.

You're not ready to live in the land of milk and honey yet. This is just a foretaste of glory divine, air of salvation. That's the idea.

So they come back down. When they come to the multitude, they're right back in the mix. They're right back in the fray.

A man came to him, kneeling down to him and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic. Look at your note there. If you've got your New King James, mine is note two, literally, moonstruck, loony, lunatic, moonstruck.

Insanity has been linked to the moon since way back. All of your werewolf stories, you know, full moon, Claire de Lune, one of the most beautiful piano pieces ever written, Claire the nut. That's what it is in English.

Claire the loony bin. That's what it is, Claire de Lune. She's Claire the moonstruck.

Well, that's what this child is. He is moonstruck and suffers severely, for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. This is fascinating to me.

Do you remember the book of 1 Peter? This was totally accidental on my part, but I was thinking about our miracle. I was thinking about 1 Peter just on a lark. It's the only thing loaded in my phone.

I thought I want to hear some Scripture while I'm walking the dog. I had 1 Peter in there, so I just cranked it up. Do you remember what Peter talks about in there? These people who say everything goes on as the beginning, they forget that the earth was formed out of water, and God brought it forth out of water, and then he destroyed it with water back in the days of the flood, and now it is reserved for fire.

And there's coming a day when the elements are going to melt with the fervent heat, and the whole thing. What manner of people are you to be, knowing that everything is going to burn up with fire? Started in water, ends in fire. Water and fire, water and fire.

What about this kid? He's either getting thrown into the fire or he's getting thrown into the water. It's the end of all things. It's destruction.

Destruction by water, destruction by fire. It's the elemental forces in nature. It doesn't say, and behold, assassins tried to get him, or insect bites, or poison fruit.

This is fire and water. It's elemental. Nature is against him.

He's being thrown into impossible situations by this demon. And demon is implied in this case, because it just says he's moonstruck, he's insane. So I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.

You know what's interesting about this? Do you remember back in Luke, I think it's chapter 11, verse 19. Remember in Luke 11, they're accusing Jesus of casting out demons by Beelzebub. You cast out demons by the prince of demons.

He talks about that whole house divided against itself, cannot stand, and so on. But remember the question Jesus asks? If I am casting out demons by Satan, by whom do your sons cast them out? Remember that? And people have thought, oh, well, there were exorcists, there were Jewish exorcists. There weren't.

And Jesus is saying, well, I at least get them cast out. Who do you guys cast them out by? They've never cast out a demon, they've never seen it happen. And one of the confirmations of that is, look right here.

This man didn't say, I've been to the scribes and Pharisees, I've been to the Jewish exorcists, and they could not cast it out. What does he say? I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him. He doesn't say, I've tried everybody.

He says, your disciples are the first ones I've heard of that had any kind of power over this, but they couldn't do anything for him. So Jesus answered and said, now, all three accounts, there are variations in the telling of this story in the three gospels. This part is mirror image in each one of them.

Oh, faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to me. Now, what's he talking about when he says, oh, faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Why does he ask these rhetorical questions? Is it because the disciples could not cast it out? Is it because they keep asking him to heal people? Why does he ask this question? Keep that thought in mind as we go through. Then verse 18, Jesus rebuked the demon.

Jesus knows exactly what the cause of this is. It's not the moon. It's not just insanity of a general sort.

It's a demon. Jesus rebuked the demon and it came out of him, and the child was cured

from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, why could we not cast it out? So Jesus said to them, because of your faithlessness, because of your lack of faith, for assuredly I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.

Which mountain is he talking about? He doesn't say, you will say to a mountain, be moved, does he? This mountain. Which mountain? Mount of Transfiguration, right? If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you can say to the mount that they have just descended. The mountain is right behind them.

This all takes place at the foot of the mountain. Move from here to there, and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you. Verse 21, scratch it out.

It's imported from the other Gospels, and even the import has an importation. It's like a double importation. It's just not there.

The Western text has it. The better text does not. We'll get the content of this in another Gospel.

All right. Flip over to Mark 9, verse 14. It's great.

You've got Matthew 17, 14. You've got Mark 9, 14. Both of them start in verse 14.

Mark 9, starting in verse 14. Notice what is at the beginning of Mark 9? Same context. What is in Mark 8, 31 through 33? Same context.

Jesus predicts His death and resurrection. Peter takes Him aside and rebukes Him. Get thee behind me, Satan.

There's a reason for this. It's not random. Transfiguration has a reason.

This miracle that follows it has a reason. Mark 9, 14. When He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them.

Back down from the mountain. Rejoins the other nine disciples. Great multitude.

And scribes disputing with them. Here's a new detail. Scribes arguing with the disciples.

Now why would this be? The man comes with the son. Disciples try to cure him. Doesn't work.

What do the scribes say? You told you all were full of it. You're fake. You can't.

Look at this. Jesus is the only one that's got any kind of stuff without Him. You all are.

And the scribes are mocking them and disputing with them and arguing with them and

putting them down in front of the crowd. It's a big bad PR moment for the disciples. Huge multitude.

And the scribes are just giving them a drubbing. So immediately when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed and running to Him, greeted Him. Ah, let's see this thing escalate.

Scribes are putting the disciples to shame. Now they're going to get with it with Jesus. So they're amazed that He would come into the middle of this imbroglio.

So they run to Him, they greet Him, and He asked the scribes, What are you discussing with them? Then one of the crowd answered and said, Teacher, I brought you my son who has a mute spirit. Ah, a new piece of information. It's a mute spirit.

Not only does he get thrown into the water and fire, he can't talk when the spirit is upon him. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him down. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid.

Some of your translations over in Matthew translated, I think even here in the New King James, as epileptic. This sounds like the symptoms of epilepsy. Well, don't confuse the two.

It's not epilepsy. Epilepsy has a physical cause. This has a demonic cause.

It is not epilepsy. I meant to mention in Matthew, scratch out epileptic and put moonstruck, because it's not epilepsy. And epileptics have been broad-brushed as having demons by some of your wilder-eyed ignorant people.

The two are not related. Epilepsy is not demon possession. Demon possession is not epilepsy.

Don't let your translators mess it up. It says moonstruck. And here, he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, becomes rigid.

So I spoke to your disciples that they should cast it out, but they could not. He answered and said, identical words, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? How long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to me. So they brought him to him.

When he saw him, and it's interesting, the choice of capitalization there. When he saw him, which he is capitalized? Which one do you put the capital H on? Is it when the boy saw the Lord, or is it when the Lord saw the boy? They make a choice here that when the boy saw the Lord, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So almost on cue, the boy was standing, sort of clothed in his right mind, and when Jesus comes into view, all of the symptoms take place.

The demon puts on a display of his power and his control over this little boy. So, notice, what's going on with this boy? He's convulsing. He's wallowing on the ground.

He's foaming at the mouth. He's twitching. He's flipping and flapping around on the ground.

And Jesus doesn't get horrified and say, Stop, come out of him. Jesus turns to the Father and says, Well, how long has this been going on? Keep calm. Don't panic.

You know, I think the Father's expecting now. See, we ought to get immediate results now. Look at this.

And Jesus just turns to the Father and says, So how long has this been happening to him? And the Father says, Ever since he was a child. From childhood. Now, this little boy represents something.

His affliction represents something. And the fact that he has had this affliction since childhood represents something. So be grinding on that as we go through.

Often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. Again, the fire and the water. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.

Notice he doesn't say have compassion on him and help him. He says have compassion on us and help us. Now, this is like the inductive process.

Think about this for a minute. What is the situation? Who's got the demon? What kind of a person? It's a boy. Not just any old boy.

And it's not his mother or his uncle or his grandpa or a centurion that brings him. Who brings the boy? The Father. The Father says he's had this trouble since he was little.

If you can do anything, help us. Help the son for the sake of the Father. For the sake of the Father.

For the sake of the Father. Got afflicted child, do something for the child for the sake of the Father. Does this make any kind of connection? Is there somebody who is beloved for the sake of the Father? So, Jesus said to him, if you can.

See the word believe there? Scratch it out. It's been added. It doesn't belong.

It's a question. If you can? What did he say in the previous verse? If you can do anything, have compassion. He doesn't say I know you can heal.

I've heard that you can heal. He says, if you can do anything. This guy is kind of doubtful because he's already seen the disciples fail.

This kid has had this since he was little and nothing has ever cured it. He's weary of it.

He doesn't have much hope.

Long-standing problems. Things that take a long time. We kind of run out of patience.

We run out of hope. Well, if you can do anything. But this is almost like the second-class condition.

If it's not true. If you can do anything, but I don't think you can. It's not quite grammatically in that form.

But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us. He doesn't even say cure him or cast it out. He says, if you've got any kind of help.

Is there a herb we can take that will mitigate it? Is there a drink you can give him that will calm him? If you've got any kind of help at all, if you can, we would appreciate it. Very minimal level of confidence. And so Jesus quotes him.

Quotes him back to himself. If you can do anything. Jesus says, if you can, that ought to be a capital Y on the U. You're coming to me and saying, if you can.

Is this your level of confidence? This is how we pray sometimes, isn't it? Lord, if you can, help. If you can. And why is it? Because we're looking at things from a human point of view.

We are not mindful of the things of God. We're mindful of the things of men. And we think the best of all possible outcomes is for this problem to go away.

So Lord, if you can make this problem go away, help us. Minds on the things of men. You think, well, what could possibly be wrong with helping this poor little kid who's getting thrown in the fire and thrown in the water and so on? But Jesus says, if you can, question mark, new statement, all things are possible to him who believes.

Not him who questions. Not him who inquires. Not him who says, well, if, maybe.

Him who believes. We've talked about this before. The nature of quality prayer to God is not, oh, Lord, if you see fit.

Oh, Lord, if it be thy will. We think, you know, Jesus in the garden. That's a very special if.

We pray confidently. We say, Lord, I know it is your will that people come to Christ. Lord, I know it is your will that we lay hold of righteousness by faith.

Lord, I know it is your will that we get stronger, that we endure, that we be patient, that we reflect your glory, that we shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Lord, I know it is your will that those who love you have the opportunity to

learn your word and to grow in grace and knowledge and to be a light and to exercise their gifts and to bless one another. Lord, I know, I know, I know.

This is how you pray. Not, gee, Lord, if you can do anything, it sure be nice if you help us. Jesus says, if you can, go right back to what he said to Peter.

Your mind is on the things of men. If you are faithful, everything is possible. You've got to put it in the context of faith.

What do you know? Faith is not what you think might be true. Paul doesn't say, well, I'm pretty sure in whom I have believed, and I think he might keep that which I've committed on him against what I think might be a coming day. Does he? I know whom I have believed.

I'm persuaded that he's able to keep what I've committed. If you can believe, this is a rebuke. What are you coming to me and saying if? There's no if.

There is no try. There is only do, right? All things possible. Notice how R is in italics.

All things doable. All things to him. He didn't even say, if you believe.

Jesus didn't even put an if in the sentence. All things possible to him who trusts. Why? Because we're not trusting him for short-term human outcomes.

We're not trusting him for toddler foot-stamping immediate gratification. We're trusting him to accomplish his will and his purpose, which we know works together for good. We know it's better than our idea.

We think we want to do a thing. We look back a few years later and say, oh, God, thank you for delivering me from that thing. Thank you for delivering me from marrying that person or buying that property or investing in that tragically catastrophic enterprise that went broke and everybody went to jail.

Oh, Lord, thank you. It seemed like such a good idea to me at the time. Oh, Lord, thank you.

He knows better than we do. Whatever he's going to do is going to be great, stupendously wonderful. So, Lord, I can't see what the way is here, but I'm trusting you.

Help me to stand still. Help me to be faithful. Show me what I need to do.

Just point me in the direction and turn me loose. I am trusting you. Confident.

I know whom I have believed. There is no if you can. Oh, please help.

I know. Son of David, have mercy on me. Those guys knew.

Those blind guys knew. He's the Son of David. He's the Messiah.

The Son of David can open blind eyes. We've heard of what he's been doing. I believe it.

I know it. They followed him. Blind guys tapping their way down.

I know. We've just got to get to him. We've got to keep with it.

He'll do it. They weren't if you can, maybe. They were confident.

We have to be confident. We've got to get off of this myopic little tiny world. We've got to get off the planet and look at the universe.

We've got to get off the material and look at the spiritual. All things possible to him who believes. It ought to be a refrigerator magnet or something.

Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I trust. Help my lack of trust. He's got the mustard seed.

He's got just that tiny little modicum. And he says, Lord, I know my faith is small. I've got faith, but help every place I haven't got it.

First he says, help us. Now he's saying, help me. And that's the right attitude.

Notice the father doesn't say, Lord, I believe. Help my son. He says, Lord, I believe.

Help my unbelief. This father gets the message that Jesus is teaching him. It's not about the son.

It's about the father. It's the father that's got the problem. Lord, I see what you're saying.

I need more faith than what I've got. But I've got enough faith to ask you to give me more. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, Deaf and dumb spirit.

New information. Deaf and dumb spirit. I command you, come out of him and enter him no more.

Then he cried out. There is no the spirit. He cried out, convulsed him greatly.

Notice these are rebellious, disobedient demon spirits. Jesus says, come out immediately. Well, they've got to do one last thing.

It's like a little rebellious three-year-old. You say, go to the corner. Well, they want to make a big wide circle.

Eat your peas. Well, they want to twirl their fork first. These are not obedient spirits.

They have to obey, but they do it grudgingly. They get as close to the line as they can without being radically dealt with by the Lord Jesus. I command you, come out of him.

So the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out. And he became as one dead. Not an accident.

Not a happenstance. Not an incidental. This is critical.

This is a crucial detail. Remember earlier, there is a father. There is a son.

This is the deliverance of the son for the sake of the father. It's about the father. It's about the father's faith.

He's got just enough faith. And he prays for help in the area of his faith. Jesus is looking in the eyes of that father, and he sees the people running together.

People come running together. You remember how the book of Daniel closes? Remember the last little bit of Daniel? Keep your finger here and turn back to the end of Daniel. We have just enough time.

Ezekiel, Daniel. Daniel chapter 12. Go your way, Daniel, verse 9. For the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Many shall be purified, made white and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, there's going to be a set number of days. Blessed is he who waits.

You go your way till the end, for you shall rest and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days. These people will say there's no resurrection taught in the Old Testament. I don't know what Old Testament they're carrying around, but it's right here.

Daniel is one of the fathers. He's one of the Old Testament saints waiting. At the time of the end, people shall be delivered.

Everyone is found written in the book. You go back to verse 1 and 2. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament.

Those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. Back to Mark. He became as one dead so that many said he is dead.

But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up and he arose. When he had come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could we not cast it out? He said to them, This kind can come out by nothing but prayer. Period.

No fasting. Cross it out. We've been through this when we did the Gospel of Mark.

This kind comes out by nothing but prayer. What did he say earlier on? You're lacking faith. Right? If you had faith, you could say this mountain be moved.

You nine didn't have enough faith to get this one demon to come out. Here we have another detail of the conversation. This kind comes out by prayer.

Faith and prayer. Prayer and faith. The prayer of faith will save the sick, James says, right? Prayer is an expression of faith.

Faith is expressed in prayer. If we're trusting, if we're confident, if we're not saying if, if we're not saying maybe, if we're not saying I hope you can help, then our prayer is a prayer of faith. Well, what is our conclusion from this? There is a wonderful sort of a chiasm here, I can point out real quickly.

You've got the disciples at the beginning. You've got disciples on the mountain, disciples at the base. Then you've got Jesus interacting with the father and the child and the multitudes.

What do you have at the end? You're back to the disciples. Why? Because it's all about the disciples. Who do men say that I am? Who do you say that I am? You're the Christ.

Well, guess what? The Christ is going to suffer and die, be delivered into the hands of men. Oh, no, Lord, that can't happen. You've got the understanding, but now you don't know what to do with it.

You can't put it into context. It sticks out and you're not fitting it in. You're not looking at all of its conditions and successions and relations.

And it's interweaving in the plan and purpose of God. What does the Messiah have to do? You're the Messiah. You're the Christ.

Well, what do you know about the Messiah? Well, you just flush that information. Suffering servant? Haven't thought of it. Passover lamb? Haven't thought of it.

Scapegoat? Haven't thought of it. Sin offering? Haven't thought of it. Redemption? Reconciliation? Propitiation? Haven't thought of it.

You're the Christ. Here comes the kingdom. Hey, didn't you forget something in the middle? There's a time of down before there's a time of up.

There's a time of humiliation before there's a time of glorification. Submit yourself under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time. Oh, we kind of forgot about that middle part.

We tend to forget this as well. We want the exaltation. We want the blessing.

We don't have the patience for the stuff that comes in between. This is what Jesus is teaching the disciples. Now, this young son, ever since he was a child, has had this affliction, and it's been nearly destroying him.

There is a set of conclusions that we draw from these observations, and we've got all of our observations and all of our context set up, and I have run myself out of time. So, for now, and we'll finish this next time, but for now, what do we realize? What is the essential element? What would have saved Peter the embarrassment of being rebuked by the Lord and being found offensive by the Lord? To have enough faith to accept that there is going to be a seeming prevailing of evil, right? The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They're going to abuse Him.

They're going to crucify Him. But He will rise again the third day. Here you've got a son of a father who loves Him, and the father is trying to get this son cured.

He went to the disciples. It didn't work. He's doubtful, but he says, Lord, if you can do anything, we would sure appreciate it.

Jesus says, If, where's your faith? What is the question Jesus asks in all three Gospels? How long must I be with this what? Crooked, perverse generation. What makes a generation crooked and perverse? Well, ask the opposite question. What would make it straight and faithful? It is the lack of faith that makes a generation in Israel.

This is not a generation of Canaanites. It's not a generation of Romans. It's a generation of God's people.

He says, Yes, I'm the Christ. Yes, I have come. I have come to offer the kingdom, to bring in the kingdom, to fulfill all the Old Testament promises.

And the people who are supposed to be getting on board with this, recognizing it, appreciating it, moving forward with it, are crooked and perverse. They've got their minds on the things of men. And that generation is this son.

The son represents that generation. The son is beloved for the sake of the fathers. Jesus went ahead and effected salvation for Israel in going to the cross.

Not for that generation. It's for the Abrahams and the Isaacs and the Jacobs and the Davids and the Daniels. They are beloved.

This is what Paul talks about in Romans 9, 10 and 11. Beloved for the sake of the fathers. God will push through and accomplish His plan in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom the wise shine like lights.

See how all of these things fit together. This son is going to be delivered. The son didn't

come to Jesus.

He's not the legion falling at the feet of Jesus. It's the father. It's the father who is spoken to.

And by extension, it is the disciples who are being spoken to. Why could we not cast it out? You don't have the faith. You're part of this crooked and perverse generation.

Except for Peter, James and John, who with help, by putting on a spectacular light and sound show, have started to solve the puzzle. And Jesus says, Father, what are you giving me to work with here? Out of my 12 disciples, I got three that I can maybe drag along. The rest of them are hopeless.

And this generation is hopeless. They're like this son. But he rebukes the demon, drives the demon out.

And what's left? Without the demon, the guy's just dead. He's got nothing of himself. He wouldn't be animated at all if it wasn't for the demon.

And Jesus has to grab him by the hand and raise him. He doesn't sit up and give him something to eat. This is the most passive of any of Jesus' healed victims.

He's healed and he's laying there as one dead. The crowd thinks he is dead, that he has died. Demon left, but you killed him.

You know, the operation was a success. The patient died. Well, we'll finish drawing these things together next time.

But here's the thing. Is it not clear that we must be people of faith? We've got to keep our minds full of the things of God. Step back.

Take a breath. Look at how big God is. Look at how big the things of God are.

It's much bigger than what we're looking at. And God is not here to be the genie of the lamp. He's not here to make sure that the toddler is never upset.

He is here to teach the toddler self-control, to teach the toddler to look beyond himself and recognize that he's part of something much bigger than himself and he needs to get with the program, needs to mature, needs to grow, needs to progress from milk to solid food and needs to learn the lessons of discipline and learn the lessons of patience and learn the lessons of looking beyond himself. Quit the foot stamping, quit the fits, quit the give me what I want right now. Think big, think divine, think eternal.

How can we live in an eternal future with God if we can't think those thoughts and we can't see that perspective? We will be the blind. Do you want to go into God's eternal kingdom in the future and be a blind, deaf and dumb man? God is not going to let us in

in that condition. We've got to learn to see, we've got to learn to hear, we've got to learn to speak in our prayers in faith.

Why are there blind, deaf and dumb people? They're a picture. Israel is not ready for the kingdom because they are blind, they are deaf. You and I cannot go into the New Jerusalem, we can't go into the kingdom of the Father if we are still blind and still deaf and still dumb.

We are here to learn to see, to learn to hear, to learn to speak specifically in our prayers by faith. That's what will give us capacity to appreciate and to serve and to function in the kingdom. If we're apathetic and indifferent, we are the blind, the deaf.

Can't function effectively. I know the deaf community is going to be all offended when I say they're not qualified. Sorry, it's a biblical principle.

God doesn't want us blind and deaf and dumb. It's not okay, it's not alternately abled, it's disabled. And spiritually speaking, the Lord Jesus has come to enable, to give us life and give it abundantly.

But we've got to think with a mind full of the things of God. This whole section of these three gospels is dedicated to that thought. Well, we'll finish parsing the details of this little boy and every word that is in these accounts.

We haven't even gotten to Luke yet next time, but we'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for your patience and your grace and your mercy on us, waiting on us and coaching us and teaching us and instructing us and correcting us through the ministry of your spirit and the power of your word.

We thank you that we have these wonderful gifts and this great opportunity through the Lord Jesus himself who has delivered us out of darkness, transferred us to the kingdom of light. We pray that we will have eyes to see and ears to hear and a tongue that can speak through assimilating these truths, meditating on them, pondering them in our hearts, filling our minds with the things that pertain to your character, your purpose, your calling, the potential that you have made available to us through the Lord Jesus and his tremendous work on our behalf. We know that he, even now, is seated at your right hand, praying for us, interceding for us.

We pray for each other. We ask that you will enable us as a fellowship to be a blessing and to minister to each other so that we can all grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We pray these things in his name.

Amen.