

## The Monthly Ministry Focus: October 2020

A Moment of Scripture Focus for Every Ministry in First Baptist Church



To Ministry Leader: Please read or have this scripture read at your online monthly meeting /activity/rehearsal.

### SCRIPTURE FOCUS FOR THIS MONTH: PRAY ANYWAY!

Mark 9: 17, 21-24

<sup>17</sup> A man in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech ....<sup>21</sup> Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?” “From childhood,” he answered. <sup>22</sup> “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” <sup>23</sup> “If you can?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.” <sup>24</sup> Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

#### Commentary to Share

My grandmother was a strong, eloquent praying woman. When she would pray, the words seem to roll off her tongue in courage and in a fierce and steadfast faith. She prayed with focus and consistency, and her prayers could move you to tears, conviction, and relief!

But some of us are not like that -- our prayers are weak and fall short of what they should be: words sometimes don’t come easily; our minds wander, and we often lack consistency in our prayer life. We sometimes doubt our effectiveness and ask why would God listen to my feeble attempts?

In fact, we are like the desperate father in Mark 9. His beloved son was epileptic, a deaf mute, and possessed by an evil spirit that was bound and determined to kill him. Yet, even in this father’s most intense desperation, his plea to Jesus was weak when he said to Jesus “IF you can do anything, help us.”

Jesus said “IF?” Jesus admonished the father by saying (so to speak), “Hey, wait a minute my man! Don’t say, *if*. All things are possible if you believe.” With that, the father cried that he DID believe, but he was real with Jesus and admitted his weakness by saying, “Please Lord, help me to overcome my disbelief!”

We know how the story ends. His son was healed. Even though this father’s prayer was feeble, timid, and tinged with disbelief, the Lord responded to his prayer. There is a message in Mark 9 for those of us who doubt our prayers. If you are not the strongest, most eloquent prayer warrior --- know that God hears you *anyway*. If you are in doubt as you look at the pandemic, injustice, and division of 2020, pray and believe *anyway* because God hears you. You see, the power is not in the prayer; **the power is in the One who hears it.**

**Keep on praying, anyway!**