

Can Jesus Help Us?

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Faith; Doubt; Help / Mark 9:14–29

That the hearers may mind comfort that Jesus does provide help in time of need!

- › Grace, mercy, and peace be yours from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Introduction

Can Jesus Help Us? What a cry that is! It's a cry that we put up in our time of need!

Text

It's a cry of a father who loves his son. His son was in trouble. His son was not well. There was nothing his father could do to help him. It's any father's worst nightmare, having a child who is not well and unable to help him. His son was in physical, emotional, and spiritual trouble. No physician could help him. No amount of medicine could help him. You see his son was possessed by demons since a very young age. The father though had his doubts! Had his doubts if anyone could help him. The disciples couldn't so He basically asks? Can you help us? His exact words were, "If you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us?" Help us Jesus - IF you can! is the cry!

Can Jesus Help us? He is a boy, whose been possessed by demons. He's a nameless young lad. The description is quite graphic from Mark!

English Standard Version Chapter 9

18 And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid.

English Standard Version Chapter 9

20 And they brought the boy to him. And when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth.

English Standard Version Chapter 9

22 And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him.

And the Father spoke for him, since he was mute? If you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us?

The father points out to Jesus that his disciples couldn't help them. The disciples of Jesus disappoint him. Earlier in the book of Mark they were sent out and one of their tasks was to cast out demons. The disciples can't! And it appears at first that Jesus can't either. His initial response:

English Standard Version Chapter 9

“O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me.”

After the father brings the boy and Jesus speaks to the father...the father basically says, “Jesus, if you are able? Can you help us.”

It still seems that Jesus can't...he says, “If you can! All things are possible for one who believes!” and the Father prays... “I believe, help my unbelief.”

Jesus Can!

And Jesus can! Jesus can help. The Father confirms his weakness, but yet it is a cry of faith! A cry of prayer to God! This father's apparently weak faith or even if there was a lack of faith by the Father...would be no obstacle for Jesus. Jesus can help and he does help!

English Standard Version Chapter 9

25 And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.” 26 And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, “He is dead.”

Jesus helps this man and his son...he cast's out the demon...the unclean spirit and it never enters the boy again...the demon left him for dead! Yet Jesus take him by the hand and lifts him up and he arose. Jesus in essence raised this boy from the dead. He took from darkness to light.

Jesus throughout the New Testament is the man that can! He can help! He is the so called “go to guy” for help and doing the impossible. He opens up ears...and casts out demons...and heals lepers with his words. And even death leaves when He willed it. Lazarus after being dead 4 days was brought back to life. Jairus' daughter and the son of the widow of Nain were brought back from the dead. And the greatest willing of life back from death is the fact that Jesus walked out of the tomb. In the New Testament Jesus Can! He is able to help. He is able to save!

Can Jesus Help Me?

We are 2000 years removed from the New Testament. We look around and Jesus isn't walking and talking with us like he did 2000 years ago. He isn't here physically in the flesh...eating with us. So when trouble comes our way we wonder and oftentimes cry out: Can Jesus Help Me? "If you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

Can Jesus Help Us? After some headaches, some nausea, some slurred speech, an ambulance ride, a trip to the ER, a CT scan of the head....the results provide troubling news...a tumor...and further tests...show that it is aggressive...and it's growing...surgery is needed! Your teenager who once was full of life, full of energy...is now lacking energy, sitting in a hospital gown...and the doctors...the doctors aren't giving you news that you want to hear. The diagnosis is dreadful. It's debilitating. It's deadly...and the words you cry out, "Can Jesus help us?"

Can Jesus help us? The phone rings. You recognize the number so you answer it. The news comes, there's been an accident and he didn't survive. It could be a car accident, a hunting accident, a boating accident, a farm accident. It doesn't truly matter. The one you love is gone.

A parent, a child, a friend, a spouse, taken tragically from your life. Now you wonder and ask, "Can Jesus help us?"

Can Jesus help us? Imagine being without family nearby and without many friends. The pain is real. Holidays spent at home by yourselves. You feel so isolated. You feel so alone. You begin to doubt whether God is really there, since it seems as if no physical person even knows your around. It's not just the isolation and the aloneness that you struggle with, it's the anxiety, it's the depression. Yes, these are very real issues. The cry is real...Jesus can you help us? Jesus Can you help me? It's a struggle and to even ask, can be a bigger struggle.

There are many more reasons why we all cry out to God, "Jesus if you are able, please help me!"

You and I are no different than this father. We have our struggles. And Jesus comes also to you and says, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes." You respond, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief." You have faith, you also have doubts. And Jesus comes to you as he came to the Father of the demon-possessed boy and says, "yes, yes, I can."

Jesus Helps!

Yes, Jesus helps! Maybe no doctor can help, maybe no amount of medicine can help. Maybe the words from others don't help at that point of crying out to God. Yet, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Jesus helps.

Did you notice how he helped the little boy...it was more than just commanding the demon to come out of him. Hear these words again:

English Standard Version Chapter 9

26 And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

The boy appears dead, but Jesus takes him by the hand and lifted him up.

Jesus lifts up the boy and gives him his life back. That's what he does to you and me. He gives you life! Jesus helps, by giving life. The struggles you have are real. The struggles I have are real. Yet Jesus comes to you. It's also what I get to do as your pastor. I have a wonderful privilege as I stand before you to speak to you words of comfort and life. I'm here as the representative of the Resurrected Lord of Glory. I'm here to speak to you his words.

His Word helps! His Word has authority. You saw it and heard it as he commanded the mute and deaf spirit to come out of the boy. It doesn't just have authority to help...His Word has the authority to save.

It has the power to save and dear people of God, no matter the struggles...they cannot separate you from God's gracious love! Sin cannot separate you from God's love anymore because Christ healed that relationship. He forgives your sins...he redeems you. He gives you life.

And as St. Paul writes in his letter to the Romans:

English Standard Version Chapter 8

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nothing can separate you from God's great love...no earthly authority, or disease or trial or suffering or weakness or trouble or even death itself.

Can Jesus help Us? The Answer is a resounding yes! He helps...he helps and saves by the Power and activity of the Cross, his grave, and His New Life. He helps you by giving you promise, that one day you too will live.

He helps with the touch...He will one day come also to you, and reach down and take you by the hand and lift you up. He gives you life. And as you wait for that final resurrection day, He gives you life today...he gives you life in the forgiveness of sins. He gave you life in your baptism...and he continues to give you life every time you come to the table of the Lord.

Can Jesus Help Us?

Yes...yes he can. In Jesus Name. Amen.

- › Now may the peace of God which passes all human understanding, guard your hearts and minds and keep them focused in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior. Amen.