

Mark 9:14-29

God of the Mountains and the Valleys

I love Mt top experiences – Don't you!

A)Retreat where God really moves in your heart – you really sense his presence.

B)Time of **refreshing and renewing** – Awesome

B)That special quiet time or away on vacation – God meets you

1)We all enjoy the MT top experiences

C)But I have also learned to not get too excited about the MT top because I have discovered that the MT is always followed by a Valley.

The Problem with the MT top is that at some point you have to come down. -

A)MT tops are not meant to be permanent dwellings

B)So at some point it is back to reality – back to the real world – back to the battle.

C)You always have to come down off the MT. – and it is in the Valley that the Devil is usually waiting – ready to pounce.

1)Ready to attack.

D)He might use your spouse: Come home from the retreat and your spouse is there waiting – Bad mood – **“Hope you had a good time – kids are nuts.”** -

You are a young person – He uses your Parents – Co-worker – Your Boss – a difficult situation. –

A)For some of you your Wedding day and Honeymoon was a MT top experience

B)But the last **10 yrs of your marriage** has been a Valley.

C)The birth of your first child was a MT – at least for you dads

1)Now that child is a teenager – been a Valley.

Valley's are long – they are hot – there is a daily grind to the valley!

A)On the MT top our vision expands – it soars – we can see for miles and miles.

B)On the MT top everything looks small.

C)In the Valley our vision is limited – all we see is what is right in front of us.

1)And in the valley everything looks bigger – more Immense

MT tops and Valleys go together & we all go through both and so did Jesus

A)In our study last time we saw Jesus on the Mt top – His glory was revealed

B)The glory on the inside – seen shinning forth on the outside.

B)But Jesus comes off the MT to encounter an entirely different scene down in the Valley.

C)It is no coincidence that Matthew Mark and Luke in their gospel accounts all place this story, this scene AT THIS PLACE in the life of Jesus

1)It happens after the MT of transfiguration

D)**V.14 And when they came to the disciples** – Luke gospel – And **when they came down from the Mountain.**

1) ALWAYS COME DOWN!

This is what he finds: Crowd and a lot of commotion.

A) The religious leaders are there – they are arguing – disputing about what to do with this kid.

B) **Such and interesting picture** – still see this in the church today religious leaders who want to sit around and argue theology

1) While a whole world sits around going to hell.

C) **That is so not the heart of Jesus** –

1) Hey I love a good theological discussion – but if that is all we do is sit around and discuss theological points – we are missing the mark greatly.

D) Jesus put us in the world to make an impact for His Kingdom!

E) So in this scene – we have several Characters the Disputing religious leaders.

We also have the Dumbfounded disciples – they can't figure out why they can't cast the demon out of this boy!

A) There is the **Desperate DAD** – Desperately comes seeking help – he is at his wits end and the end of his rope.

B) There is the **Demon possessed boy** – who's Life is being destroyed

C) All comes to a head – in the presence of our **Dynamic Savior**

Jesus comes on the scene – sees all the commotion and says:

A) What are **you discussing** ? Dispute about?

B) That is when this desperate Dad step forward. – V.17 I brought my son to you – Mute spirit –

1) v.25 Jesus calls it a deaf and dumb spirit

The boy can't here or talk

C) Luke's gospel tells us this was the mans only Child – His beloved son! Child 6-10 yrs old

1) He is under Demonic Control

D) The Father says in He has a mute spirit

V18 it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid.

22 the demon often seizes him and throws him into the fire or into water to destroy him.

A) I brought him to you but you were not here and your disciples they couldn't do anything!

B) Jesus looks at them and they shrug their shoulders like – **we don't get it** – we have cast out demons before – what was the deal with this one.

C) **Desperate Dad** – Imagine how helpless he must have felt! –

1) Knowing there was nothing he could do to help his Son.

Aaron our son was maybe one – chest pains – X-ray

A) Brace over him – screaming – window – **I am never going to forgive you**

B) Horrible – Denise crying – never forget that face – Horrible

B) This father would no doubt have felt that way all the time – no way to communicate to his son – couldn't hear or speak

C) Every time this would happen – look like a seizure – scary – James
Firemen - Underwear –

D)It was scary – you feel helpless and this dad would have to stand there and wait for it to run its course – hoping this would not be the last time

1)He Knew he was dealing with something bigger than himself.

This dad's life has been about taking care of this boy

A)Bathe – comb his hair –

- Knowing – never throw a football –
- never talk about the facts of life
- never going to see him get married

B)Always having to wonder – is today going to be the day that we are going to lose him?

1))He knows the look that appears on the face when the demon is starting to act up.

D)The boys life is being destroyed and the Dad knows it –

Some of you here today might feel that way with your older kids

A)Not demon possessed – head spinning – green comes out of mouth

B)But you know **the world has a grip on them** – a grip on their hearts and there is nothing you can do but love them and pray for them.

Bb)V.18 Where ever it happens – meaning – it happens without warning –

1)It can happen at any time – any place – **Seizes him – foaming at the mouth – grinding teeth – rigid** –

C)Suddenly w/out warning he is running into the fire

D) **Satan's deal is to kill Rob and destroy** – set on destruction

This is the scene that Jesus comes upon – as he comes down the mt and all of this is put in contrast to the MT top experience – HIS GLORY!

A)The two scenes are placed side by side to illustrate – this is what happens in the Christian life – there are mountain tops and there are valleys

C)On the MT top Peter's response was **Lord lets stay here – let me build three tab.** –

1)Awesome never seen anything like this before

D)But MT tops are not abiding places – We love the Mt top – retreats – those awesome moments - we want to stay there - but that is not God's way.

D)But the truth of the matter is – the Mt top is where the Lord works in us – meets us - invest in us –

1) so that we can come back down into the valley and put into practice what we have learned on the mountain.

E)I don't like that training process – His way

The mountain top is for connection –training –renewing!

A)So when we come back down into the valley – we are ready to put that into practice and apply that MT top experience to our lives

This encounter in the valley – stands in stark contrast– from the Mt top experience – we saw in the previous verses -

A)Because we tend to be surprised when all of a sudden we find ourselves in a valley.

B)We find ourselves in a tough situation and our flesh wants to cry out – where are you God?

C)I thought you were on the MT top? Why is this going on – **why is this happening** – in my life – my child’s life?

D)Where are you Lord? -

Notice v.22 The father says – If you can do anything – (I am not sure you can but if you can that would be great) – have mercy – have compassion.

A)Jesus looks at him and responds – If you can believe – all things are possible – to those who believe

B)Interesting: Jesus puts it back on him.

C)The man responds in v.24 – **Lord I believe but help my unbelief.**

This is so interesting to me – because there are two emotions going on here –

A)On the one side there is hope – there is faith – enough that led the guy to leave his home and come to Jesus – hoping do something.

B)**But on the other hand is doubt** – No one has been able to help my son – he might be too far gone.

C)The interesting thing is that this father gives his heart to Jesus on the side of believing –

1)Lord I believe – but – there is this unbelief

D)This is the beauty of the Lord – When we choose to believe even in the midst of our doubts he responds

Salvation: I didn’t have all the answers to all my questions when I gave my heart to Jesus – Still don’t!

A)Many things – that make no sense to me – Used to bug me

Aa) Now I Embrace that my God is greater than I can figure out with my pea brain}

B)When I came to Christ – sure I had questions – and doubt – But I did believe that there was a hell – I was a sinner – issues – flawed

1)Justice demands – punishment

C)I needed a Savior – Jesus died and rose to give me life

1)Freedom and forgiveness –

D)Here today – don’t have to have it all figured out – but you do need to believe – Jesus who He claimed to be – Way truth

....

1)Died and rose – You have to answer –

E)Maybe you still have questions but you need to fall on the side of faith!

1)God is good and He will meet you there!

So this Despairing Dad comes to Jesus hoping he can help his son.

V.25 Jesus says to the Demon – Come out and enter him no more!

A)This is awesome – because not only has Jesus taken care of the present need – but he has also secured his future – {Enter no more

B)Luke’s gospel tells us that the people were amazed at His great majesty!

C)This is intriguing to me – because we see the glory of Jesus on the mountain top but his majesty is seen in the valley!

That is so important for us to see because sometimes we can think that He is the God of the MT tops – but not the God of the Valleys

A) Interesting that in the book of judges – after Joshua passes off the scene and they divide up the land

B) It says that the Canaanites went to battle against some of the tribes of Israel that resided in the MTs – and the Canaanites were defeated.

1) As they retreated they said: **“Their god must be the god of the Mountains – so next time we will attack them in the Valleys because their god is the god of the mountains and not the Valleys.”**

C) That is a **Canaanite theology** that can sometimes creep into our hearts as well.

1) He is the God of the MT tops but not the Valleys.

When everything is going great – bills are paid – Job is good – kids are great we are: God you are so AWESOME – I am so blessed!

A) But when we are in a painful and dark situation in our lives – the business is looking bleak – bills are not being paid. Stress at home

B) We can find ourselves thinking – God where are you? What am I doing wrong?

1) Why is this happening? Why is my kid ill? What is the deal?

C) In the Valley we doubt, we panic, everything seems bigger and we are tempted to take matters into our own hands –

1) Or worse – cut and run!

But Precious church – Know this: He is the God of the MTs and He is the God of the Valleys – Repeat!

A) He says: If you believe – all things are possible.

B) Hurt – Betrayed - You will recover – You will experience love again.

1) There will be victory

2) Restoration is possible

3) You are going to make it through.

C) There is a light at the end of this dark tunnel and **it is not a train** 😊

D) I love what Pastor Chuck says about difficult situations – **“When you are in a situation that you don’t understand – don’t know what is happening, cling to what you do know.”**
Pastor Chuck Smith

E) What do we know: WE KNOW – God loves us and He is for us! – Cross

WE KNOW!

1) He is the God of the Mountains and the Valleys

2) He is faithful

3) He is all powerful – nothing is too hard for Him

We KNOW

4) Trials are to test our faith and build our character.

Cling to those things!

You know it has been an interesting 6 YRS for this fellowship.

A) About 9 1/2 years ago – after months of prayer and times of fasting – **being directed by the Lord, we took a huge step of faith – down payment on a piece of property.**

B) Prime property- 17 acres on North Melrose — last large parcel in Vista.

C)After spending years to obtain approvals and permits and planning –

1)The start of the **first phase of construction** looked like it was in sight.

Economy collapsed and we found ourselves stuck in a Valley!

A)**Giving dropped** and the margin we needed to begin construction **grew** and we were caught in no man's land. 2 1/2 YRS

B)A **hefty monthly payment hung** over our heads and all we could do was pray and wait.

1)HARDEST SEASON –ever for our church.

C)IN Jan 2011 – Put the Property on the Altar – asked you to pray – Build, Buyer, or grace to wait.

1)7 months nothing – wait – struggle from month to month to survive and still try to affectively minister.

July of 2011 the Lord brought a buyer – made us an amazing offer.

A)Suddenly there was a light at the end of the tunnel.

B)I am happy to report the sale of the Property finally closed on July 15th

Here is what God has done for CV

A)**In the midst of the worst economic times since the great depression.**

B)**We are now completely debt free.**

1)This building is now paid off.

C)He has completely replenished our building fund.

1)And then some.

2)God in his grace has provided for us in a marvelous way.

D)**Also means:** We can finally address some of the problems we faced with this property

1)Replacing 40 year old roof – leaking – replace 40 year old ACs –heaters some that no longer worked.

E)Few other minor updates { **Bathrooms**
Chance to breath

A)Really begin to pray about different ways the Lord would have us to reach out to our community and the world.

B)There were times in the last five years – that **seemed dark** – there was no end in sight.

C)But in the midst of it all **we were learning** – He is the God of the Valleys and not just the Mountain tops.

D)We need to celebrate that today!

1)Celebration service – next month –hear from our leaders – Share

E)Today – Rejoice his faithfulness – Rejoice His provision – His Care

One last thing before we go!

A)When this seen was over and the disciples were alone with Jesus they asked the question.

How Come.....? – Before had power over.

B)Jesus said: This kind fasting.

C)To which they probably would have responded – **but Lord we didn't know that we were going to encounter that Demon.**

1)If we had maybe we would have prayed and fasted.

D)I think that is the unspoken point here: You never know what you are going to face – so Prayer and fasting needs to be a lifestyle.

Spiritual battle – “The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but they are mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds.’ 2 Corinthians 10:4

A)Two key weapons are prayer and fasting –

B)Prayer depicts our dependency upon the Lord and fasting communicates our surrender –

C)Both should be a regular part of our walks with the Lord.

Rest in He is the God of the Mountain tops – Valleys

A)You are in the Valley today – He is there – He is with you – He is working on you.

B)There is a plan – there is a purpose! He is for you.

C)Fall on the side of Faith – Believe – All things are possible.

D)You are thinking – NO WAY –No How – Human perspective –

1)**This is a Spiritual issue**

E)Surrender your heart to him! – Today

1)Quit fighting – it