

## **A Snapshot of the Glory (p.3)**

### **(Mark 9:14–29)**

**Two weeks ago** — The title “*A Snapchat of the Glory*” is an allusion to the Glorious Transfiguration of the Lord Jesus on the mountain. That supernatural experience ended with the beautiful voice of the Father: “*This is my Son; I love Him; listen to Him.*” Three disciples saw the glory of God and heard His voice, and yet they were not consumed by His holiness.

**Last week** — As they were descending the mountain, the disciples had a practical question for Jesus: Who is Elijah? Why must he come? What does his ministry look like? Jesus clarified that Elijah had already come “in spirit,” because John the Baptist had a prophetic calling to reform Israel, operating in the same spirit Elijah had operated in the past.

**Today’s sermon** — Now Jesus encounters four kinds of people at the foot of the mountain: (i) The disciples who were left waiting; (ii) the (annoying) Scribes; (iii) the multitude; (iv) and a family desperate for help.

The scene is loaded with information, misinformation, and miscommunication. The disciples are powerless, lonely, and confused. Jesus must solve several issues, and He tackles them one by one.

### **1. First issue — The Scribes (vv. 14–16)**

The Scribes are interrogating the disciples — notice carefully that the disciples are not the cause of the conflict. But unfortunately, they engaged in debate with the Scribes, and the moment they engaged, they had already lost.

What’s the situation? The disciples cannot heal the boy; they cannot expel the demon possessing the child. The Scribes accuse them of deliverance failure. You can picture the scene:

- Scribes: “*You lack discernment. This isn’t a demon — it’s just sickness.*”
- Disciples: “*At least we’re trying. What about you?*”

- Scribes: *“Where is your Master from Galilee? Hasn’t He taught you His ‘tricks’ yet?”*

And the dispute goes on and on...

It’s a legitimate scenario filled with frustration, powerlessness, accusations, and loneliness. These are real emotions they are wrestling with as the Scribes mock them.

Jesus arrives and solves the first issue with a simple question: **“What are you arguing with my disciples about?”**

*“As the Shepherd protects the flock, so Jesus protects His disciples.”*

*“What do the Scribes look like? Players who warm the bench but never enter the game.”*

## **2. Second issue — The plea of a sorrowing father (vv. 17–22a)**

The father’s words pierce the soul: *“My child is ill, possessed by a demon, and I thought your disciples could heal him — but they couldn’t.”* The demon throws his son to the ground; the boy foams and gnashes his teeth. The symptoms may resemble epilepsy or mental illness — but clearly this is not the case, since a demon is involved.

To make matters worse, this is not a new incident. Since the boy was a baby, the devil has been attempting to destroy his life. How do we know this has been long-term? Only because Jesus asks about the child’s history. Some mistakenly think Jesus is not omniscient because He asked a question. But that is not the point. His question means compassion. In simple terms, He says: **“I care. I am listening. Share your heart with Me.”**

The Scribes used the boy’s suffering as ammunition. The disciples tried to heal with their hands, but not with their ears. Jesus begins healing with compassion. **“Bring the boy to Me,”** Jesus says.

As the boy was brought to him, he pronounced a strong statement against the multitude: **“O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to bear with you?”** Like Moses descending the mountain to find Israel worshiping the golden calf, Jesus descends to find a generation lacking faith. Everyone in this story struggles with weak faith — the disciples, the Scribes, the crowd, and the father.

### **3. Third issue — The whole generation (vv. 22b–29)**

- **First, Jesus straightens the father’s faith.**

The father asks the wrong question, *“If You can do anything, please help us.”* He puts the ball in Jesus’ court — but Jesus puts it back in his: **“Everything is possible for the one who believes.”**

The issue is not Jesus’ power — that is never in question. The issue is the father’s faith. The parent understands and confesses: **“I believe; help my unbelief.”**

In other words: *“If everything depends on faith, then I’m in trouble — I need Your help.”*

Perhaps his unbelief is partly due to the disciples’ failure and the Scribes’ mockery. Yet he teaches us a valuable lesson: **“Perfect faith is self-aware faith.”**

Jesus heals the boy and **“gives him back to his father.”** What a beautiful detail — God did not create our children to belong to the devil.

- **Second, Jesus straightens the faithless multitude.**

The crowd is “running to the scene” — curious, but not compassionate. If they had smartphones, they would be recording and posting. Faithless, heartless, twisted generation.

Jesus heals the boy before the crowd gathers. The spiritual battle is intense — no wonder the disciples failed. The demon is stubborn. After the healing, the boy looks dead. The crowd spreads misinformation:

- “He’s dead!”
- “Jesus killed him!”
- “Jesus couldn’t heal him!”

But Jesus takes the boy by the hand and lifts him up. Everyone  **marvels**  — the same word used for  **glory** . Jesus shows his glory on the mountain; Jesus shows his glory on the ground.

- **Third, Jesus straightens His disciples.**

Later, in private, the disciples ask why they failed. Their attitude teaches us that **“failure is only failure if you learn nothing from it.”** They don’t blame the Scribes, the multitude, or the demon — they examine themselves.

Jesus’ answer surprises them. They ask about ministry; He answers devotionally: **“This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.”** Little prayer, little power. Much prayer, much power. Ministry power is the by-product of devotional life.

Matthew adds the seed and mountain imagery: Faith works as you sow it. Invisible faith produces visible results. There’s a correlation between faith and prayer: If you believe in God, you pray. If you believe demons fight against your life and your loved ones, you pray.

Finally, by healing the boy, Jesus automatically straightens the Scribes as well — those who turned the disciples into a spectacle, the boy’s suffering into a show, and the father’s heart into a battlefield of unbelief. They shamed the disciples, but now they are ashamed.

## **Conclusion**

You can rest assured of:

- **The Lord’s protection** — as a Shepherd protects His flock.

- **The Lord's correction** — as a Father discipline His son, so does Jesus discipline his disciples.
- **The Lord's glory** — Glory on the mountain, glory in the valleys.