

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**

**Chapter 9- Luke 9:37-42**

180- The Nature of Biblical Faith Part 2

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September 30, 2012

## **Luke 9:37-42**

**37**On the next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him.

**38**And a man from the crowd shouted, saying, "Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only *boy*,

**39**and a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming *at the mouth*; and only with difficulty does it leave him, mauling him *as it leaves*.

**40**"I begged Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not."

**41**And Jesus answered and said, "**You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here.**"

**42**While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him *to the ground* and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father.

Now as we began to examine this Passage last week- we found out that we must have a right and a correct theology to understand the true Lord. We must understand the Word of God if we ever hope to know and understand and love and serve and follow and obey and please Jesus. We must believe in Jesus and we must believe that Jesus is God and we must believe that God the Father raised God the Son from the dead or nobody will be saved.

So faith is crucial to Salvation and faith is crucial to Sanctification. And so we must understand that like most things that are taught today in the modern Church- much of the most popular teaching about Faith is simply not true and it is not Biblical and yet

faith is a huge part of the Christian Faith and so we must learn about Faith- Biblically.

So we must understand that faith is not some mystical or esoteric aspect; nor is faith a commodity like a muscle that needs to be exercised. And neither is faith some kind of tool where you can twist God's Arm to get something out of God if your tool is big enough or strong enough. That is a false and unbiblical understanding of faith. Faith is a precious and gracious gift from God and faith is defined as:

### **Believing and trusting and having confidence in what God said**

Let me make it very simple without dealing with all of the possibilities and say this, faith, true faith, legitimate faith, what is biblically defined as faith is simply this, believing what God said simply because He said it. That's faith. Not because it's necessarily been proven to you. Not because you've necessarily experienced something. But simply because God said it you believe it and you believe to the point that you base your life on it. It is in that sense that we are people of faith. It is in that sense that we believe. It isn't that we just believe in believing. It isn't that we think we can somehow activate some reality by believing hard enough. We cannot create matter or create life or alter reality by believing. That Power is reserved solely to God and for anyone to teach that human beings can do that is blasphemy pure and simple.

It isn't that we believe we can make things happen we would like to happen by our faith. It is that we believe that what God said is what is true. That is what our faith is. It is faith in the revealed Word of God.

For example- many people teach today that somebody who has an illness can say, *"I have faith to believe I am going to be well."* But that is not an appropriate kind of faith because you do not know what God's Will is concerning that particular situation and because you do not know what God's purpose is and because God has not revealed to you the future- you cannot believe in what God has said because He hasn't said anything about that.

So Faith is not some Power or spiritual muscle by which you can make things happen as long as your muscle is big enough or strong enough. Faith is simply putting your confidence in what God has

revealed as being true- it is trust in things we cannot see. Please turn with me to **Hebrews 11**.

**1 Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.**

**2 For by it the men of old gained approval.**

**3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.**

So Jesus wants to teach us about true genuine and Biblical faith here in this passage in **Luke 9**. So just what is faith? What kind of faith are we talking about? When we talk about faith in a biblical context, this is what we mean.

**Faith is believing what the Lord has said- simply because He said it.**

When Christians say they have faith in God- it doesn't mean some generic "god" of their own making who doesn't exist anywhere but in their own imagination and in their own heads. What it means is we believe that what the Bible says about God is true. You cannot separate our faith in God from the Divine Revelation of God in Scripture.

So faith is not built on things that I have experienced. Faith is not in some kind of generic "god" that I wish to exist. Faith is not in a "god" that I have manufactured either out of my own intuition or out of my own personal experiences. True Faith is always in and is only based in and rests upon the one single God of Scripture.

We who are saved are saved- not because of some feeling we got or some mystical experience we had or some dream or some angelic visitation- but we who are truly saved are saved only because we believe and we trust and we have confidence in what the Scripture says about God and about Jesus Christ and about His finished Work and about Us and about our Sins and about Forgiveness and about Salvation.

We who are being sanctified are being sanctified because we believe the Truth of God's Word. And so we live by faith. And what that means is that we believe what God has said for no other reason other than He said it. We don't believe so that we can get something out of

God- we believe because by believing and trusting in what God said- we honor and glorify God and that makes us to be faithful.

And that is why the view you have of Scripture is so critical. All our access to God's Power in our lives and to understand and obey God is by means of faith. For example- you can't have the Power of Salvation unless it is by faith. You can't have the Power of Sanctification unless it is by faith. Believing God will save you. Believing God will sanctify you. So what we need to know is what God has said and then we need to learn to trust in that.

Now let's get into the text of what Dr. Luke wrote. The prior passage from verses 28-36 was about the Transfiguration. Jesus went up into the mountain with Peter, James and John to pray. And He was transfigured there. And those three men saw Christ's Glory. They were literally taken into the eternal Kingdom. They saw Moses and Elijah there too- talking with Jesus about His departure and about His Death and His Resurrection and His Ascension back into Heaven. And we saw how this was an incredibly wonderful experience. This was a glimpse of the eternal Kingdom; a glimpse of Christ in His Glory; and a glimpse of the glorified saints, Moses and Elijah and hearing the audible voice of God there as well. That was an experience of sight, we could say.

But now Dr. Luke tells us that they all came back down from the mountain and returned back into the world of faith- back into the realm where you don't see- but you believe anyway. And where what God has said and trusting in that is so important. how important it is as long as we are living in this world to learn to walk by faith and not by sight.

So down here in the normal earthly and fallen world- we have to believe the Word of God. For example- I'm going to Heaven and I believe that. But have I been to Heave? Have I seen heaven with my eyes? No, but Scripture gives me insight into what heaven is and how to get there and I'm banking my entire time and my eternity on the fact that what the Bible says about Heaven is true. I believe the Gospel and I believe the Holy Scriptures and so I have laid my entire eternal destiny on what the Gospel says. I am fixed in believing that Gospel because I believe that it will provide for me eternal life. How do I know that? Because that's what the Bible says and I believe the Word of God.

So my faith is not in my own ability to do great things or to be healed or to be blessed with financial or material possessions- but my

faith is firm in what God has said simply because it is God Who has said it.

And over the years- my ability and my success in trusting in what The Bible says about Heaven has grown and has become stronger and my ability to trust what God has said in Scripture has become easier and has become more deep and more full precisely because of the accumulated time I have spent in God's Word and of what I have learned about the trustworthiness and the reliability of the God Who initially saved my soul.

In other words, now that I have come to Salvation by faith- I now go through Sanctification by that same faith. Well, what does that mean? Well, it means that my progressive separation from sin; my progressive conformity to the likeness of Jesus Christ; my ongoing spiritual progress towards holiness is directly related to my obedience to God's revealed Word.

So Sanctification is a process of obeying the Word of God- living a life that is defined for us as pleasing to God and laid out in specifics in the Scriptures. So faith is at the very heart of spiritual life- but it is not a nebulous faith- it is not some kind of self-controlled energy that makes things happen. Faith is simply trusting that what the Lord has said is true simply because He said it. It speaks of things I hope for that haven't yet been realized. It speaks of things that I cannot see but I believe them. I have basically banked my entire time and eternity on what the Bible says. That's why it's so important to protect the Word of God.

So as soon as they come back down from this glorious experience- they run right into a case of demon possession. Let's read **Luke 9:38** again together:

**38** And a man from the crowd shouted, saying, "Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only *boy*,

**39** and a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming *at the mouth*; and only with difficulty does it leave him, mauling him *as it leaves*.

**40** "I begged Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not."

**41** And Jesus answered and said, "**You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here.**"

**42** While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him *to the ground* and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father.

So what do they run into immediately after this glorious heavenly experience- but a disaster of all disasters- a manifestation of evil and sin and fallenness and wickedness that is a perfect example of what life is like down here in this fallen world.

Now there are a number of things that could be said here. We could talk about the relationship in the family that must have existed with such a boy being part of a household, and the tenderness and compassion of Jesus giving him back to his father healed. We could talk about the whole issue of demonic possession and we could talk about how it is that demons function and how they are to be dealt with and so forth.

But that would be to miss the entire point of what Dr. Luke wrote here. Jesus Himself tells us what the main point is. And if you have a red letter edition of Scripture- you will find only one section in this entire passage in red- and that's verse 41- where Jesus speaks to the main issue that this story is intended to point to,

**You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here."**

So this is all about unbelief. And it's about the twisted and distorted view of the Word of God that produces that unbelief. That's what this Passage is about. And out of that- Jesus is going to teach a great and profound lesson of faith. We're going to learn from this story about the importance of believing what God has said. And the Power that flows from the Promises that God has given.

Now to do that- we need to remember that Luke's Gospel Account is one of three Accounts that are called "The Synoptic Gospels". Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels in that they are all working together to form the full picture for the reader. John's Gospel is called, "The Spiritual Gospel" in that it deals primarily with the Deity of Jesus Christ- rather than working in harmony with the others.

So we need to know that **Matthew 17** and **Mark 9** will interact with **Luke 9** in giving us the full range of information that will help us to understand just what happened here and what was said.

So we have in the three Synoptic Gospels an amazing contrast. We go from the glory on the Mount of Transfiguration down to the valley of demon possession. One event happened on a mountain and the other in the valley- which is symbolic of being in the high place with God and in a low place with satan. On the mountain there was glory; in the valley there is tragedy. On the mountain Jesus Christ dominates in His bright shining Majesty; in the valley satan dominates in his ugly cruel violence.

Two sons appear in these two texts, one is God-possessed- Jesus- the other is demon-possessed. Two sons- One in Whom His Father is well pleased; the other in whom his father is tortured with displeasure. Two sons appear, One Son fulfilling a glorious plan from ages past affirmed by Old Testament and New Testament saints; the other son disassociated, disconnected, demented and chaotic without purpose or value to anybody. Two sons- one destroyed by demons; the Other the Destroyer of demons. Two sons- both given back to their fathers. The demon-possessed son delivered and given back to his father, the Son of God killed and raised and ascended back to His Father.

So this passage begins with demon possession. Now we don't have the time again to deal with all the elements of demon possession- but we've covered it already in fairly good depth. But just as I said about faith- the same things is true about demons and their activity on the earth. Almost everything that is written today and taught today about demons is just hyped up to create an industry of demon caster outers as isn't true and isn't Biblical.

The main ways that demons operate in the earth today is not by turning little girls head around and making them vomit green vomit. That is Hollywood and is not true. Please do not base what you believe on movies. Put your trust in Scripture not special effects. Demons operate mainly in the earth through deceiving people into believing things that are not true. That is the main way that demons operate in the earth.

Demon do not invade homes to live in sheet rock; You don't have to have demons cast out of your house; you don't need special water or special chants to cast demons out. Demons operate by creating and

propagating false teachings and false religions and false philosophies that damn people to hell.

Every single false religion on earth- which is every religion but Biblical Christianity and includes Islam; Buddhism; Hinduism; Judaisim; and Shintoism – all are the result of demon activity. What these religions teach is all doctrines of demons and all of it was fashioned through demon possessed people who were motivated and led and driven by devils to formulate false teachings to deceive as many people as possible. There is absolutely no nobility and no redeemable qualities of anything that any of these religions teach. They are all bad- all the time.

Every heretic was an emissary of satan; and every single heresy from Legalism to Modalism to Gnosticism to Antinomianism to Arianism to Pelagianism to Socinianism was designed by the father of lies and is used by the devil and by demons to kill steal and destroy the souls of men. And there is absolutely no nobility and no redeemable qualities of anything that any of these heresies teach. They are all bad- all the time.

And since it is creating and propagating false beliefs and false religions that is the most common and the most damaging work of demons in the earth- therefore it is the teaching and preaching of Divine Truth that is the most important and the most effective way to fight demon activity.

The greatest time of demon activity is when Jesus walked the earth and that corresponds to the greatest display of miracles and healings and supernatural signs and wonders.

So demons are always around. They're around today. They're around all the time. They are doing their work in the lives of some of you sitting here this morning. Those who do not belong to the Kingdom of God by the miracle of the New Birth already belong to the kingdom of darkness by virtue of your original first birth. If you're not a child of God- then by default- then you're already a child of Satan. You don't have to be a mass murderer to go to hell and belong to satan- all you have to do is to do nothing and stay like you are- and you will miss Heaven for sure.

But if you want to spend eternity in heaven- then Jesus *requires* that you confess your spiritual poverty and confess your sins and turn from your sins and denounce all your sins and walk away from your



wickedness and learn to hate your sin and trust in the finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ and then live your lives with abandon to the Glory of God in humble and joyful obedience to Holy Scripture.

It is very uncommon for demons to show themselves publicly. They much prefer to stay in the background to make sin look attractive and to encourage people to believe a lie and be damned.

That is largely the way Satan chooses to function and demons choose to function in a sophisticated society. They don't want to be manifest; they don't want to be seen- they didn't want to be manifest or uncovered or revealed when Jesus was on earth either- but they couldn't help themselves. Jesus unmasked them and exposed them in many cases by frightening them. And then He always cast them out with just His Words and they immediately obeyed Him- because even fallen angels always instantly obey God.

Satan and all the hordes of hell cannot do anything without the express permission of God. They do not roam the earth free of God's Control and they cannot touch a single child of God unless God allows them to. And if God allows Satan to touch your flesh- the Promise of Scripture is that God is busy working that "bad" together with all the other things that God has either Sovereignly caused or Sovereignly allowed to come into your life and God is working all of those things together for the greater "Good" of the Glory of God and ultimately the fulfillment of your Joy.

So in all of human history- there never was before or since such an open manifestation of demonic activity as during the Ministry of Jesus Christ on the earth because He just literally blew them out of their cover as He delivered people from them. What the rest of the people could not see- Jesus could see. And, of course, the demons put on a massive effort against Jesus during the time of His ministry, as well-coming from every area of the earth to concentrate their efforts in the land of Palestine in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century trying to thwart the Work of the Savior.

And even though you cannot see demons- God is always good to give us tale tail hints of where demon activity may be. We are children of light and demons always operate in darkness. We always do what we do in the light- in public-. There are no secret ceremonies in Christianity; no secret codes; no secret chants; no secret messages.

Everything about Christianity is done in public in the light- in full view of God and Man.

Salvation is done openly and publicly; baptism; communion; preaching; teaching; Bible Study; Prayer- everything about God is always open and in the light and available for whosoever will. Nobody is ever held back to pray or to study the Bible- the only reason you don't come to Bible Study or prayer meeting is because you don't want to- or because you don't see any value in it- not because you aren't allowed to.

But all cults have secrets. All false religions have secret ceremonies and secrets chants and secret oaths and secret baptisms and secret hidden things that are kept out of sight and only reserved for the few.

So anybody who is doing something that they do not want to come into the light is being led by demons. Everybody who hides what they are doing; everybody who goes to great lengths to keep their sins secret and to not be exposed and not brought into the light are being led by demons. That is why bar rooms are dark and why night clubs and honkey tonks are dark and why people come alive at night so they can engage in their wickedness in the night rather than do what they do in the daylight for everybody to see what they are doing and so God will be honored.

If what you are doing is good- then why wouldn't you do it out in the open – in the daylight- so others can see it? If what you are doing is honoring to God- why would you hide it? Please turn with me to **1Thessalonians 5:2-11:**

**2For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.**

**3While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.**

**4But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief;**

**5for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;**

**6so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.**

**7For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.**

**8**But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

**9**For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

**10**who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.

**11**Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

So the battle of the demons is a major one in the Ministry of Jesus but as God Almighty in human flesh- Jesus had absolute Power over all disease; He had absolute Power over death; He had absolute Power over nature; and He had absolute Power and Authority over demons. And this Passage here is an example of the most severe kind of demon possession that is possible. This is both extreme and severe.

So in verse 37- we see that a great multitude met them when they came down from that glorious mountain top experience. And they get down somewhere near Capernaum in the north part of Galilee, just at the tip of the Sea of Galilee, kind of the headquarter city. A great multitude met them as always the case was. The crowd was there. If Jesus was there, they were there. If Jesus wasn't there, they're waiting for Him to come. Drawn by His miracles, drawn by His ability to create food, and some drawn by His teaching, they were there. And from **Mark 9:14** we learn that the scribes were there too. The scribes were the Jewish legal experts. They were the theological lawyers. They were the people who had the responsibility to uphold the law, the Judaistic traditional ceremonial law.

And they were always around, along with the Pharisees, in the crowds that were following Jesus for the very purpose of discrediting Jesus, discrediting the Apostles- trying to find some reason to indict Jesus with a view to getting Him killed and removing Him.

So according to **Mark 9:14**- these religious hypocrites were arguing with the disciples- probably the nine remaining Apostles who were down below. So there was an argument going on and the arguments were always the same. They were always about how Jesus and His followers violated the Jewish law. They were always built around some effort to indict them. Jesus and His followers were violating the conventional demands of Judaism. And so this debate was going on.

And interestingly enough- it actually may well have been at the time of that debate- the day *before* Jesus and the three Apostles came down from the mountain- that the father had brought his demon-possessed son to these Apostles who were not able to cast that demon out.

So not only were they in a debate with the scribes, but they may well have been embarrassed by their claims to be the agents of the true Messiah and then being unable to deliver this boy.

So that's the setting. Jesus comes down and the crowd is there- the mixed multitude- everybody at all levels of interest in Jesus- including His enemies- who were seeking ways to discredit Him and surely a group of embarrassed Apostles. And that is what is going on when verse 38 comes in that says:

**And a man from the crowd shouted, saying, "Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only *boy*,**

Isn't it amazing that all through the gospel records there's always a crowd and yet Jesus somehow focuses in on one individual as though no one else is there. Levi wrote that the man came up- working his way through the crowd- bringing the boy with him. So this father moves through this huge crowd to get to the front to secure Jesus' attention so that Jesus can do something about this horrific situation.

**Mark 9:15** says that as soon as the crowd that had been waiting for Jesus saw Him coming- John Mark writes that they were amazed and began running up to greet Him. So Jesus is coming down the mountain and there's this huge crowd running towards Him. And somewhere in the middle of this huge running crowd is a running father with a running boy.

And they're trying to run a little faster so they can work their way through the crowd to get to the front. And Levi says that when the father finally got to the place where he thought Jesus could hear him- Levi says he was falling on his knees before Jesus- which showed the man's reverence and humility.

So this distressed father runs up to Jesus and literally collapses on his knees before Him and then begins to shout out. Now why did he shout if he was near Jesus? He shouted because he had to shout over the noise of the crowd. Can you just imagine a huge crowd- perhaps

hundreds and hundreds of people – all running as fast as they could towards Jesus- all shouting out their need and crying for Jesus to do something for them? This is an amazing scene.

Now Dr. Luke records that the man shouted out, “**Teacher,**” but Levi has something in his Gospel Account that adds to what the man said. Levi says the father said, “**Lord,**” first. Now whether or not he believed in the Deity of Jesus Christ we don't know at this point- but it is likely that he did. And we'll see that later on.

But this terribly agonized father says “Lord” probably in the highest sense of that word. No doubt he said, *“I recognize that You alone have the Power of God- that You are the Power of God over demons.”* Because Jesus had healed many people; cast out many demons; raised many dead people- and all this was common knowledge.

So here was a man who shows his genuine humility and his reverence by saying “Lord” and affirms the highest possible title to Jesus because that is the Name which is above every other name- the Lord.

So in **Matthew 17:15**- Levi says this desperate father cried out to Jesus and said:

**Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.**

So here comes this father- running toward Jesus- and then bowing before Him- crying out for Mercy. This man believes Jesus has the Power to deliver his son. He believes Jesus is Lord. He falls down in reverent posture and humility. **Mark 9:21** says that he explained to Jesus that the boy had been afflicted this way since childhood, so he might have been a teenager by now and this had been going on in his life since he was a little child- causing many years of unbelievable, unbearable, indescribable horror for this family.

Now open fires were very common in that part of the world at that time. And if you think it doesn't get cold in Israel and you wouldn't need a fire- guess again. It gets very cold. And in and all around Jerusalem- you're at very high elevation and there are very cold days and nights there, particularly through the winter season and even occasionally snow and so fires were used all the time.

But not just fires for warmth- but also fires for cooking. And what the demon did in his effort to destroy this boy was to slam the boy into those open fires. So whenever there was an open fire around and the demon determined to do so- he would literally overpower the boy's body and slam the boy into an open fire.

Another thing that was present everywhere was a well, or a pool. Obviously they needed water and that's why there were wells and pools all over the area. Whenever there was such a pool or well present, the boy needed to be protected because it would be the desire of the demon to throw the boy into the water, drown him there.

Furthermore **Mark 9:17** says that he was possessed with a spirit that made him mute. And Jesus in **Mark 9:25** called it a deaf and dumb spirit.

So this is just horrific. Here is a boy that is so dominated by a demon or a group of demons that he can't hear and he can't speak, and the demon is doing everything he can to slam him into a fire or drown him in a pool. And the father has to try to protect his son year after year after year from this horrific demonic power.

So the father said what Jesus already knew. The father says in **Luke 9:39**:

**and a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming *at the mouth*; and only with difficulty does it leave him, mauling him *as it leaves*.**

So even though this father may have well been illiterate and was probably not a medical doctor- he knew that this wasn't psychological. He knew it wasn't physiological. This man knew it was demonic. He knew his child was possessed with a spirit that made him mute and Jesus called him a deaf and dumb spirit.

So from what the Holy Bible says here- we know that this was not a medical disorder. This was not some genuine medical problem that later on would be diagnosed and treated today with medication. The Bible says that this was demon possession- of which there is no medicine. So this was not any legitimate disease- this was absolutely genuine demon activity here.

Now many people want to know, *“How did this little boy get himself in this situation? How does a child become demon possessed?”*

First of all- we must understand that every human on earth is born lost. Every child of every mother is born with Original Sin; they are lost at the very moment of conception; they are not innocent as far as guilt is concerned; the Bible teaches that they are all guilty of Adam's sin by virtue of being in Adam's loins when Adam sinned and they are all born in sin and are fallen and depraved at birth.

So this boy- apart from the knowledge of God- had no protection from demons. And after serving God and reading and studying the Bible for over 4 decades- I honestly and truly think that you can explain a lot of what is going on today in terms of childhood behavior and adolescent behavior and even adult behavior by the possession of demons- especially with people and even children who live and remain deeply into the kingdom of darkness.

Why would any parent- especially parents who say they are saved and who love Jesus- but why would *any* parent- push their own children into things that are patently evil and are patently demonic and patently dark and sinister and which do not pertain to the Light of God and Divine Truth? The more they are subjected to evil- the more susceptible they become to the wretchedness of the demonic world.

But there's no way for us to know why this happened to this little boy- and I will say that it's really not important for us to know- because if it was- it would be in Scripture. So we simply take this as an illustration of the fact that everybody who is outside the Kingdom of God is outside the protection of God and is susceptible to whatever God allows satan to do. And we can also take it as an example of God allowing something terrible so that Jesus can do something absolutely wonderful.

Just like the blind man who was born blind in **John 9**. They asked Jesus,

**John 9:2**

**Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"**

*"Why was this man born blind? Did he do something terrible? Did his parents do something wrong? Why?"* And the answer of Jesus was,

**John 9:3**

***"It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the***



**works of God might be displayed in him.**

The Bible says that Lord allowed that to happen in that case to that man for the Glory of God and so the Lord allowed this to happen in this case to this boy for the Glory of God- so that the demonstration of Divine Power could be manifest so that people could believe that Jesus was God and be saved- from something far worse than demons and falling on the ground an foaming at the mouth- so that they could be delivered from eternal damnation.

Now Dr. Luke says the father called Jesus, "**Teacher**," which indicates to me that this distraught father responded to what Jesus said. So Jesus is not only this man's Lord- but also his Teacher. And this further leads me to believe that the man believed what Jesus said.

In fact, in **Mark 9:24**- we see that this is the man who said to Jesus,

**... I do believe; help my unbelief.**

So that tells me that this man was saved and that he trusted in Jesus because every single person in the Bible who doubted were people who were saved. So it isn't that you never doubt- it is what you do with your doubt. This father cried to Jesus to help him with his struggle to believe and trust because that is what saved people do.

So by saying this- we see that this man had faith in both the Person of Jesus and in the Teaching of Jesus because he called Jesus, "Teacher,". He understood that the primary Ministry of Jesus was as a Teacher.

Now the Greek word here for Teacher is *didaskolae*- which means: *the one who gives the truth of God*. And then he said,

**I beg You to look at my son**

Now that is the Greek word, *epiblepo* and it doesn't mean to look as to just glance at something- but it means: *to look upon something with great concern*. This same word I found in **James 2:3** that says:

**James 2:3**

**and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand**



**over there, or sit down by my footstool,"**

So that's what this father is saying,

*"Jesus; Lord; Teacher- could You please pay special attention to my son?"*

And then we see the parental concern which makes it all the more desperate when the father then says:

**... for he is my only *boy*,**

So this father brought his only begotten son before God's only begotten Son. And this was a major issue of 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jewish society. To have a son was critical so you could pass on the family name and pass on the heritage and pass on the rights of primo-genitor. This was critical and for a married woman not to have a son was a terrible stigma.

So this family had been blessed by God with a son but now look what a horrific situation had come to pass in their only son's life. And this was their only hope for the progeny of the family, the only hope for the perpetuity of the family, the only hope for the future. And look what kind of son he was.

Now by the way- Dr. Luke is the only Gospel writer who notes that the man said, "He's my only son." So Luke seems to have a certain tenderness about him because it was he who referred to Jairus' daughter as his only daughter, and he who referred to the dead son of the widow of Nain as her only son. So Luke is the one who puts "only" in there on three occasions.

So in his compassion- this Gentile doctor whom God chose to pen down **The Gospel of Luke** and **The Book of the Acts** expresses what the father expressed that it was not only a horrible thing to have to deal with a child like this who was possessed with a demon- but to also realize that this was this family's only hope for the future.

Now I want you to pay close attention as to how this father describes the demon possession of his son in great detail. Let's begin with **Luke 9:39** where the father says:

**and a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming *at the mouth*; and only with difficulty does it leave him, mauling him *as it leaves*.**

So this father understood that it was a demon spirit- a fallen angel- that suddenly comes and causes his boy to scream- exhibiting the demon's control of his vocal chords as well as his body. And it throws him into a convulsion.

The Greek verb *sparasso* literally means: *a seizure*- probably violently slamming the boy to the ground with such force as to cause a concussion and injury to the brain which results in the foaming at the mouth. Now keep in mind that every person who has seizures is not demon possessed- but this boy was.

Now it is very common at this point for people who do not believe in the inspiration of Scripture to conclude that these people were simply backward and uneducated and superstitious and that in their ignorance- they called every disease or every neurological disorder “demon possession”. But that is just flat out wrong and it is a bad understanding of this passage.

It is true that we are far more educated than these people were. We are more technologically advanced than these people were- but we are not one iota closer to God than these people were. In fact- in many ways- our modern and advanced culture has become more pagan and more barbaric and more godless and more humanistic and less Biblical and less spiritual and less holy than these people were and fewer people believe the Bible and fewer people live their lives in accord with Scripture and there is generally speaking less respect and less awe and less fear and less admiration and less obedience to Holy Scripture today than there was even 200 years ago.

And some of that is due in part to our advancements in technology and our advancements in medicine and science and Government and finances- which have brought about a trust and adherence in those things more than a trust in God and what He said.

So even though most people who suffer from seizures are certainly not demon possessed and do have a brain disorder than can be helped through surgery or even medication- demon possession is real and it is alive and well today and this poor young boy was in fact possessed by real genuine fallen angels and his suffering was not physical or mental-

but was spiritual. And this would be supported by **Mark 9:18**- where the father says this,

**and whenever it seizes him, it slams him *to the ground* and he foams *at the mouth*, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out.**

... and those are all characteristics of seizures and of severe brain trauma. And then Luke wrote that the father said,

**... only with difficulty does it leave him, mauling him *as it leaves*.**

... and that is a good translation of the Greek word, *suntribo*. *Suntribo* means: *to crush, to shatter, to break into pieces or maul*- so this is a very destructive verb.

So this demon comes and smashes this boy to the ground, affecting his brain- throwing him into seizures in which he stiffens out, grinds his teeth and foams at the mouth. Particularly the demon would endeavor to do that to him near a fire or a pool of water which could result in the death of the boy. And then at the end he says,

**... only with difficulty does it leave him...**

...and the Greek adverb means: *with difficulty*.

Now this demon has deadly intent, and so he keeps it up- this attack is relentless- it's non-stop- it's prolonged. So this is the most powerful and destructive demonic assault recorded in the New Testament and may still be the most powerful demonic attack in all of history- and even though most people would never associate strange and destructive behavior of young people and adults with demons in our day- we probably should. And if God is willing- we will continue this next time.

Let's pray

