



Cuyahoga
Valley Church

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Week of 4.26.26

Mark 9: 14-29 // Joe Valenti

Please take the opportunity to revisit the CVC Equip
Portrait of a Healthy LifeGroup on a regular basis

CONNECT (10 MIN)

- ① In the sermon on Sunday, Joe mentioned the experience we sometimes get, for a fleeting moment in this life, of peace - of feeling like all is well with the world. Can you think of an experience that you've had like this? Describe it to your LifeGroup (examples could include a moment in nature or with friends or family).

EXPLORE (30 MIN)

Create Context (5 min):

HERE is the Sermon Recap video playlist on Vimeo.

Study & Discussion (25 min)

Read Mark 9:14-29.

- ① Revisit verses 20-24. In referencing these verses in his sermon, Joe talked about the “pain of desperation.” In these verses, the boy’s father says, “If you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us!” He also states, “I believe; help my unbelief!” Have you ever, in crying out to God, spoken one or both of these sentiments to Him? If so, share a bit about this with your LifeGroup.
- ② In the sermon, Joe quoted D.A. Carson, who once said in a sermon, “It is not the intensity of our faith that saves, but the object of our faith that saves.” Faith in Jesus is the defining factor of importance - not our intensity or confidence in our own faith, or even our emotions as we seek to have faith - it is the “object” of our faith (that is, Jesus Christ) that makes all the difference.
 - Does it encourage or comfort you to remember that the object of our faith is that which saves - not the intensity of it? Why or why not?

- Questions continue on next page



- Read James 2:14-26. Abraham and Rahab were justified by their works - not by their emotions or the “intensity of their faith,” but by their faith put in action. Although we can sometimes think that having faith means bending our emotions into a certain place or shape, we can be reminded by this passage in James (and by our sermon on Sunday) that it is the object of our faith that saves us (Jesus), and the steps we take toward Him that reveal our journey of faithfulness. Works do not save, but they do have a unique capacity to reveal what is in our hearts. We can be deeply sorrowful, in anguish even (like the father in our Mark passage) and still be faithful to the God who never fails us. How does this passage in James, and this paragraph (above) encourage or challenge you today where you are in your walk with the Lord?
- ③ Revisit verses 25-27. Joe stated on Sunday that “the shalom we crave is not going to be restored by a God who stays distant.” Jesus, in this story and in our lives, steps down into the suffering with us.
- How do we see Jesus “step down in the suffering” in this and in other places in the book of Mark that we’ve studied so far in this series?
 - When in your life have you seen Jesus meet you in your suffering in a tangible way?
 - How is the Church called to “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2) in our sufferings in this life? When this happens well, how does it show Jesus’ love in a unique way to the world around us?
 - How might you step into the suffering of someone else right now, coming alongside them to meet needs and/or to remind them of the Jesus who steps into their sufferings and cares for them, too?
- ④ Revisit verses 28-29. When you pray, how do you say to the Lord, “I do believe, but help my unbelief!”? What are some practical steps you can take as you seek to grow in your dependence on the Lord, especially as it relates to your prayer life?



PRAY AND APPLY

1. Admitting Our Self-Reliance

Ask God to show us where we are trying to handle life on our own. We often rely on our own skills, our past successes, or our professional experience while forgetting to actually ask for God's help. Pray that we would stop trying to fix every problem in our own strength and start leaning on Him.

2. Praying Through Doubt

Pray for the people in our church who feel like their faith is small or even failing. If someone is struggling with uncertainty or is afraid they don't have enough belief to get a miracle, ask God to meet them right where they are. Pray that they would feel comfortable being honest with God about their doubts.

3. Support for Those in Long-Term Pain

Pray for the parents, caretakers, and anyone else who is exhausted by a long-term struggle. Whether it is a health crisis, a battle with addiction, or a broken relationship, ask God to give them the strength to keep going. Pray that they would feel God's presence reaching down to help them when they feel like they have hit rock bottom.

4. Turning to Prayer First

Pray that we would see prayer as more than just a religious duty. Ask God to help us see it as a way to admit we need Him. Pray that when we face something difficult this week, our first instinct would be to talk to Jesus rather than just worrying or arguing about the situation.

5. Hope for a Restored World

Pray for everyone who is discouraged by the state of the world. Ask God to remind us that the pain we see right now is not the end of the story. Pray that we would live with the hope that God is going to make everything right and bring His perfect peace to every corner of the earth.



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WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week of 4.26.26

Please take a moment to share these announcements with your group.

CVC YOUTH

Moving On Weekend: May 1

Moving On is our retreat for juniors and seniors—a chance to pause, reflect, and prepare for the season ahead. Through worship, teaching, and community, we'll celebrate where you've been and look toward what's next. Location: Old Stone Acres

COMMUNITY LIFE

Men's Breakfast: May 2

You are invited to join us for a free Men's Breakfast at Cuyahoga Valley Church Broadview Heights Campus on May 2, 2026 from 8-10:00am. This event promises to be a morning of inspiration and fellowship, and we would be honored to have you with us. The breakfast is a wonderful opportunity to connect, grow spiritually, and enjoy a hearty breakfast together. We encourage you to invite a guest to come along with you and share in this meaningful experience. We look forward to seeing you there! Register [HERE](#) or text "Breakfast" to reserve your spot!

CVC KIDS

Child Dedications: May 10

Child Dedication is a time where parents declare their commitment to raise their children in the ways of the Lord. It's a beautiful moment for families to publicly affirm their dedication, and for the church to pledge its support in this important journey of faith and upbringing. Together, let's embrace this sacred calling. Next opportunity: Sunday, May 10 at all services. [Apply here!](#)

YOUNG ADULTS

CVC Young Adult Spring Retreat - May 15-17

Young Adult Spring Retreat Getaway! Join us for a weekend away to Old Stone Acres in Uniontown Oh on May 15-17. It's a chance to step away from the busyness of everyday life, spend time growing in faith, and make great memories together. Whether you're new or have been part of the group for a while, we'd love to have you come along. Register [HERE](#).