

GO DEEPER

use these questions for further study

In your own words summarize the main idea from last week's passage (8:31-9:13)

Read Mark 9:14-50. Share 2-3 observations of what you see in the passage and then answer some or all of the following questions:

The story of the demon-possessed boy reminds us of the reality of demonic forces and spiritual warfare in our world.

- Is this something you find easy or difficult to accept? Why?
- What do we learn from the disciples' failure?
- What do we learn about the importance of discernment (1Cor 12:10)
- What does this story teach us about Jesus?
- As mature Christians what kind of view and attitude should we take toward spiritual warfare? What are the dangers of ignoring it? What are the dangers of over-indulging it?
- Is there a place in your life where you are experiencing potential demonic oppression or spiritual warfare? If so, contact the pastors and church leadership to receive prayers of discernment and healing.

For the second time Jesus clearly predicts his death (9:31)

- Why is Jesus speaking plainly about this to the disciples?
- Why don't they understand? Why are they afraid to ask?

Is Jesus serious about what he says in verses 35-37? Why/why not?

If he does mean what he says, what are the implications for how we live?

Why do the disciples try to stop the ministry of other people in vs 38?

- What is their motivation?
- Why does Jesus rebuke them for this?

In vs 40 Jesus emphasizes looking for unity where the disciples had emphasized looking for difference. How can this attitude and heart posture be both a challenge and a solution for our deeply divided society (esp. in the church)?

Within the Covenant Church there is a longstanding tradition of saying:

"I am a friend to all who fear Thee" (a quote from Ps 119)

- What does this statement mean?
- What does it look like for us to practically live this out?
- What is one concrete step you can take to help strengthen the unity of the body of Christ by your actions?

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