

WEEKLY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week of Sunday March 1, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

In **Mark 9:14–29**, Jesus is not shaming people for struggling—He’s exposing what self-reliance can’t fix and inviting us into dependent trust. He’s not asking for perfect faith or the right words; He’s inviting us into a posture that brings our real need to Him. Most of us live in a tension where we believe God can, but we’re anxious He won’t—or we pray, but still try to control the outcome. This passage calls us to stop treating prayer like a last resort and start living with daily dependence on Jesus. Tonight, we’re going to talk honestly about where we’ve been carrying the weight and what it could look like to transfer it to Him.

Main Passage:

Mark 9:14–29

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Help My Unbelief!

READ ALOUD

Mark 9:14–29

DISCUSS

Opening Question: Where do you tend to rely on yourself the most, especially in the areas you're "good at"?

- In the story, what do you notice about the contrast between the mountaintop experience and what happens in the valley? What does the valley reveal in the disciples?
- The father says, "If you can do anything..." (v. 22). What do you think is underneath that question in real life—fear, disappointment, control, past pain, something else?
- Jesus says, "Everything is possible for the one who believes" (v. 23). How does "possible" feel different than "guaranteed," and why does that matter?
- "I do believe; help my unbelief!" (v. 24) is brutally honest. What do you think genuine faith looks like when it includes fear, doubt, or anxiety?
- The disciples ask, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" (v. 28). If you had to summarize Jesus' answer in one sentence, what would it be—and what does that expose about self-reliance?
- Jesus says, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer" (v. 29). Based on the sermon, how would you describe prayer—not as a method—but as a posture?

DISCUSS & APPLY

- Treating prayer like a spare tire: Where have you been doing everything you can first, then finally turning to God?
- Posture of dependence: What would change this week if you started your day with surrender before you started solving?
- Object of faith: Where do you notice yourself putting faith in your effort, your words, or your strategy instead of Jesus?
- Trust and outcomes: What outcome are you trying to control right now that you need to release to God?

RESPOND

- **Transfer the weight:** What burden do you need to hand to Jesus this week? What's one concrete way you'll do that?
- **Depend where you're gifted:** What's one area you're "strong" in where you rarely invite God in? What will you pray before you act?
- **I believe, help my unbelief:** What's one honest sentence you need to say to Jesus today about where you're struggling to trust?

PRAY

Jesus, we come to You without pretending. You see where we believe and where we struggle, and You invite us to bring it all to You. Teach us to stop relying on ourselves and to live with a posture of dependence, especially in the places we feel strong and self-sufficient. We choose to trust You with what we cannot fix, and we surrender the outcomes to Your wisdom and goodness. Help our unbelief, and lead us into a new way of living where Your power flows through surrendered hearts.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILIES

Mark 9:14–29

- What problem did the father bring to Jesus, and why did he feel desperate?
- What did the father say to Jesus that was both faith and honesty at the same time?
- What do you think it means to pray—not just say words—but to depend on God?
- What is one situation in our family where we need to say, “Jesus, help us trust You”?

For younger children: Help your child name one worry out loud, then practice a simple prayer: “Jesus, I trust You,” and listen for what they feel afterward.

For older kids or students: Ask them, where are you trying to control the outcome right now—and what would it look like to choose trust even if you don’t feel it yet?

BIBLE READING PLAN (OPTIONAL)

Scripture to read as you pray this week:

- Day 1: Mark 10:1–12
- Day 2: Mark 10:13–16
- Day 3: Mark 10:17–31
- Day 4: Mark 10:32–45
- Day 5: Mark 10:46–52

COMMENTARY

What's Going On?

This moment happens right after Jesus' transfiguration—an intense mountaintop revelation—followed immediately by a painful valley scene filled with conflict, fear, and helplessness. The disciples are confronted with their limits, the crowd is watching, and the religious leaders are disputing, likely trying to discredit Jesus through the disciples' failure.

Jesus addresses the deeper issue under the surface: unbelief expressed as self-reliance and lack of dependent trust. The story builds to a key discipleship lesson—God's power isn't accessed through confidence, titles, or technique, but through dependence expressed in prayer.

A Bit of Background

In the ancient world, public failure carried real shame—especially for religious teachers and their followers—so the disciples' inability to help the boy wasn't just disappointing; it was humiliating in front of the crowd.

Also, “scribes” were respected religious experts who often challenged teachers publicly, so this dispute wasn't private—it was a public credibility battle. Jesus' emphasis on prayer isn't about magic words; it's a correction to the disciples' assumption that previous success and delegated authority could replace ongoing dependence on God.