

## LENT DEVOTIONAL APRIL 5, 2014

### SCRIPTURE

Mark 9:14-29

14 When they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. 15 When the whole crowd saw him, they were immediately overcome with awe, and they ran forward to greet him. 16 He asked them, "What are you arguing about with them?" 17 Someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; 18 and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they could not do so." 19 He answered them, "You faithless generation, how much longer must I be among you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him to me." 20 And they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. 21 Jesus asked the father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. 22 It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us." 23 Jesus said to him, "If you are able! - All things can be done for the one who believes." 24 Immediately the father of the child cried out, "I believe; help my unbelief!" 25 When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You spirit that keeps this boy from speaking and hearing, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!" 26 After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand. 28 When he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" 29 He said to them, "This kind can come out only through prayer."

### DEVOTIONAL

They were arguing. A child was sick and they fought about it. It was easier to fight than to heal him.

We do this all the time. As people, as churches, as organizations, we all have these fights. They're different from situation to situation, but you know what they are in your own context. These are the fights that have no clear winner, and continue far longer than they should. They steal our focus from the people in our midst that need our help. The topics change from day to day or decade to decade or generation to generation, but it's rare for us to be without one.

Notice that Jesus asks what they're fighting about, and they don't answer. This fight that was so important just moments ago disappears from their lips when Jesus asks about it. Throughout the rest of the book, we never find out what they were fighting about.

*Message provided by the Miller Summer Youth Institute.*

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