

When You Diligently Pray and Things Don't Immediately Change for You

I do a lot of writing and teaching on the Bible. Many times I will see things and come to understand things that are beyond my experience.

That doesn't change the fact that I've seen them and understood them; I just haven't fully seen them in my own life.

Sometimes you have to see the next steps before you can take them. Yes, sometimes you walk in the dark; I've done that for years, at times. Other times you see where you need to step.

Peter didn't walk on water in the dark. He wasn't surprised to find himself going over the side of the boat. He knew what he was going to do and then did it. It didn't last long, and we don't know if he ever tried that again, but he saw what he needed to do and did it.

The verse here is one that we all know about, but we don't know exactly what to do with it. So I'm going to tell you—and myself.

The other night, I got angry with God. Really angry.

There are some things I have prayed about for years. I'm sorry for the lack of details here. But praying for things means that the responsibility for these things happening falls on God. The truth is that often the responsibility falls on us.

I know a lot of people don't like to hear that, but I find this conclusion inescapable.

In the story here, Mark 9:14-28, a man had brought his son to

the disciples. In verses 17-18 he says, "Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it" (NASB1995).

Then Jesus got upset, saying, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!" (v. 19).

The disciples brought the boy to Jesus. "When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth. And He asked his father, 'How long has this been happening to him?' And he said, 'From childhood. It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!' And Jesus said to him, '"If You can?" All things are possible to him who believes'" (vv. 20-23).

Jesus' words mean nothing but that this man and the disciples could have and should have dealt with the issue already.

Did the man pray for his son all these years? Yes, of course he did.

The disciples just met the father and son, but they too should have been able to rid the boy of the demon.

All things are possible to him who believes.

What happens here is that people will say, "I tried that, but it didn't work." Like Yoda said, "Do, or do not. There is no try."

Things usually will not change immediately either when we pray or believe they will. We read the stories in the Bible of great acts of faith, from healings to people being raised from

the dead, but we think these events happened in a vacuum.

Maybe you're not at this place yet. Maybe you are. This is where I need to go. {eoa}

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