

"You can't solve Supernatural Problems with Natural Solutions"

Mark 9: 14-29

Sermon By: Stephen Herrod, Pastor



MESSAGE:

YOU CAN'T SOLVE SUPERNATURAL PROBLEMS WITH NATURAL SOLUTIONS

PASSAGE: MARK 9:14-29 NKJV

14 And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. 15 Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. 16 And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?" 17 Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. 18 And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." 19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." 20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. 21 So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?"

And he said, "From childhood. 22 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." 23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." 24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" 25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" 26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. 28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" 29 So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

"You can't solve Supernatural Problems with Natural Solutions"

Mark 9: 14-29

Sermon By: Stephen Herrod, Pastor



MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this sermon is to teach that some challenges are spiritual in nature and cannot be overcome with natural solutions; they require a strong, ongoing connection with God through prayer primarily, and periods of fasting. This sermon emphasizes that, just as Jesus taught His original disciples, maintaining a life of faith and spiritual discipline is essential for accessing the divine power needed to address supernatural problems.

SERMON NOTES

Some challenges we encounter are supernatural in nature and cannot be addressed or overcome through ordinary means. Furthermore, some challenges we encounter are supernatural in nature and cannot be addressed or overcome apart from God.

This is what Jesus is teaching His disciples here in Mark 9.

A father's son, although unnamed, had been possessed by a demon since he was a child. It had influenced his actions for most of his

life, and his abnormal outward expressions were due to an internal demonic influence. The child's father brought his son to one of Jesus' disciples, and they tried to cast out the evil spirit but couldn't, and for that, Jesus rebuked them for their lack of faith.

Now, these are the same disciples who witnessed Jesus cast out demons (Mark 5:1-20).

These are the same disciples to whom Jesus gave authority over unclean spirits (Mark 6:7).

These are the same disciples who drove out many unclean spirits in Galilee (Mark 6:13).

But when this father in Mark 9 brought his son, who was possessed by an unclean spirit, to Jesus' disciples, they were unable to cast it out. According to Jesus, they were unable to do so because of their lack of faith. And now I point out the obvious: a faithless disciple is a powerless disciple.

Furthermore, the power from on high is not something once we possess will always be available; it must be maintained and renewed. In other words, yesterday's power is not today's power. Yesterday's power just won't cut it for today. You can't stop praying now. You may have been prayed up

"You can't solve Supernatural Problems with Natural Solutions"

Mark 9: 14-29

Sermon By: Stephen Herrod, Pastor



yesterday and were led by the Spirit yesterday. You may have prayed and been empowered to handle yesterday's challenges, but let's be real—today brings its own challenges, and we can't rely on what happened in the past. What we need is a continued connection with God!

Jesus literally said, "Apart from Me, you are nothing." We cannot afford to take a day off; we can't afford to take a moment off. If you're not connected to the power source, no amount of effort, no amount of intellect, no amount of education, no amount of money will produce the power to overcome.

But the power to overcome, the power to solve supernatural problems, the power to change you from the inside out, the power to obey the teachings of Jesus Christ, the power to protect your peace, the power to say no to temptation, the power to get off drugs, the power to break the cycle, the power to cast out demons, comes only from staying rooted in and reliant on God.

When Jesus arrived on the scene, He rebuked His disciples, engaged with the father, and cast the demon out of his son.

What a mighty Savior He is. What a powerful Savior He is. What a wonderful Savior He is.

Later that day, in a house, the disciples asked Jesus, "Why couldn't we cast it out?" Jesus responded, "This kind"—the Greek word there is γένος, which refers to a class of demons or a high degree of evil and spiritual challenge that is especially resistant and powerful.

You see, some problems can be resolved with simple, surface-level solutions. For instance, creating a budget and sticking to your budget can often prevent financial issues.

A minor misunderstanding might be cleared up with a straightforward apology or explanation.

But then there are other problems that are far from simple—those that require a deeply rooted spiritual life to confront and overcome.

Take, for example, deeply rooted issues in marriage. You can't approach deep hurt and pain in marriage the same way you would handle a request to put the toilet seat

"You can't solve Supernatural Problems with Natural Solutions"

Mark 9: 14-29

Sermon By: Stephen Herrod, Pastor



down—those are entirely different classes of problems!

Similarly, if you're facing ongoing challenges with your child's behavior or grappling with your own mental health, those require a different approach.

Or consider if you're caught in a cycle of addiction or destructive habits. If something has a grip on you and you can't shake it off, or whatever the supernatural problem is, get this: you can't solve supernatural problems with natural solutions!

According to Jesus, there are demons dispatched that cannot be cast out with intellect, education, or money, but those kinds can come out by nothing but prayer!

Now, hold up, wait a minute: When it comes to overcoming spiritual challenges and supernatural problems, like casting out demons, or dealing with heavy situations, let me be clear: the power is not found in the act of prayer and fasting themselves. The real source of that power is God. Prayer and fasting are our tools; prayer and fasting are our connections to God, but they aren't the power sources. They help us realize just how limited and powerless we really are and

point us back to the strength and power that only God can provide! You see, our own strength is insufficient when we're facing supernatural issues.

Let me break it down for you: prayer is all about emptying ourselves. It's about letting go of our anxieties, pride, and the tendency to lean on ourselves or someone else or something else. When we pray, we're humbling ourselves before God, and saying, "Lord, I can't handle this on my own."

Prayer shifts our focus away from our problems, ourselves, and our will, and back onto God, reminding us that we need God's power to navigate life's challenges.

And then there's fasting. Fasting is when we voluntarily step back from our physical cravings—be it food, social media, or even TV—to make room for God in our lives. It's about weakening that fleshly desire for comfort and control, so we can clearly see just how much we depend on God's presence and God's power, so we can clearly see just how much we truly need God's presence and God's power. When we fast, we remember that our true sustenance comes from God alone, not from what's around us, and it is in the emptiness that we create

"You can't solve Supernatural Problems with Natural Solutions"

Mark 9: 14-29

Sermon By: Stephen Herrod, Pastor



during fasting that makes space for God to fill us up and allow His power to flow through us!

Here it is: The solution to supernatural problems isn't found in our human strength, skills, or talents. No, the real solution lies in being fully surrendered to God and filled with His Spirit. When we humble ourselves through prayer and fasting, God steps in and fills us with His power and Spirit, empowering us to handle our problems!

Studies show that when we are confronted with supernatural problems, we go to the refrigerator, we go to the snack cabinet, We roll up or pour up, we fill up our cart on Amazon, we start binge watching a show, we start looking up flights and planning a vacation, we start scrolling on social media, we cling to anything for a way out. But studies also show that none of these have the power to solve your supernatural problem!

So instead of stress eating, instead of retail therapy, instead of deflecting or avoiding, or any other habits that we have picked up to

cope with our stress and problems, how about we seek God's face more regularly and intentionally? How about we seek God's face through prayer and fasting? For it is then, and then only, that we will have the power to solve our supernatural problems, break free from addiction, and cast out demons!

Now, there's a textual issue we need to address regarding verse 29. Many modern Bible translations, such as the NIV, ESV, NASB, and RSV, exclude the phrase "and fasting," meaning they read, "This kind can only come out by prayer." In contrast, the KJV and NKJV include "and fasting." This discrepancy is significant because the majority of early Greek manuscripts do not contain "and fasting," suggesting it may have been added later, likely by the early church.

In Mark 2, when Jesus was questioned about fasting, He responded, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them." This statement points to the reality that, during His earthly ministry, the disciples had the physical presence of God with them, making fasting unnecessary at

"You can't solve Supernatural Problems with Natural Solutions"

Mark 9: 14-29

Sermon By: Stephen Herrod, Pastor



that time. Jesus uses the imagery of a wedding, referring to Himself as the bridegroom, indicating that when God dwells with His people, it is a time for joy, not mourning, because they already had everything they prayed and fasted for in the physical presence of Christ.

However, for us as disciples today, the bridegroom is no longer physically present. The time has come when we must face supernatural problems without Jesus beside us. Therefore, prayer and fasting should be integral to our spiritual practices. For the early church, fasting became a means to seek closeness with God when they could no longer rely on His physical presence. Through prayer and fasting, they relied on the Holy Spirit for power, clarity, and courage to confront challenges beyond their abilities. Incorporating fasting into their practices was a way for them to build on Jesus' teachings about self-denial and devotion. For the early church, prayer and fasting were not mere rituals but formative practices that emptied them of self-reliance, enabling them to be filled with the Spirit and access the deeper faith and reliance on God's power that Jesus emphasized.

The good news for you and I is even though we don't have the bridegroom with us, we can still access the same power to cast out demons and solve supernatural problems, but this kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting! You can't solve supernatural problems with natural solutions, but you can with supernatural power, and the supernatural power to cast out demons comes from God when you pray and fast!

I'm finished now, and I leave you with this: A prayerless disciple is a powerless disciple. But a praying disciple—a praying mother, a praying grandmother, a praying brother, a praying husband, a praying wife, a praying pastor, a praying deacon, a praying trustee, a praying usher, a praying nurse, a praying worship leader, a praying musician, a praying man, a praying woman, a praying boy, a praying girl, a praying college student, a praying person, a praying child—is powerful!

Beloved, without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.