

Midweek Lenten Vespers #2
St. Mark 9:17-29
March 4th, 2026
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald P. Dulas

All Things Are Possible to Him

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

“And Jesus said unto him, ‘If Thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth.’”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, + open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, “all things are possible to him that believeth” is one of verses of the Bible that gets taken out of its context the most. Many people wrongly believe that this verse means that if they have enough faith that they will somehow be endowed with a strength or power which they did not possess before when they were lacking faith. They turn faith into a work that they can do in order to make themselves have some sort of strength or power they did not have before. This is in essence making one’s faith trust in one’s own faith. Faith should never trust in itself. Faith always needs to cling to something, or someone, outside of itself.

“All things are possible to him that believeth” does not mean that we rely on our own strength and power after we have obtained the proper amount of faith. No, my dear friends, “all things are possible to him that believeth” because our belief, our faith, is clinging to the One Who can do all things. We should never trust in our feeble strength or power. We should never trust in our feeble works. We instead place our faith firmly in He Who can do all things. We cling firmly to the Lord + Jesus. We cling in faith to our Triune Lord God. He is the One Who can do all things. He is the One Who can move mountains, and raise valleys. He is the One Who can cast out dumb and deaf spirits when we cling to Him in faith, and beseech Him diligently in prayer.

This is the mistake that many people make when they hear this passage “all things are possible to him that believeth.” They think that if they just bolster their faith enough, they will be able to do something about their situation. But this is not what our Lord + Jesus is saying. He is telling the father of this boy with the dumb and deaf spirit to believe on Him. He will cast out the demon. He can cast out the demon. He is the only One Who can cast out the demon. Remember that the disciples of our Lord could not cast out the demon. This all took place while our Lord + Jesus was on the mount of transfiguration with Sts. Peter, James, and John. When they come down from the mountain, the Lord is met with this scene where the disciples are failing to cast out a demon, and the father has sunk into hopelessness that his son will ever be free from the dumb and deaf spirit.

The man’s faith is shattering at this point. It is shattering because he has been placing his faith

in the wrong things, and wrong people. This is why our Lord + Jesus cries out, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him unto Me." For this generation rarely truly turns in faith to Him. They seek other means; they rely on their own strength and power. They think that faith means believing that our Lord is going to make them strong and powerful enough to do the thing they require. Our Lord does not want us trusting in ourselves. A people that trusts in themselves are, as our Lord says, a "faithless generation." For their faith is misplaced, if it even exists at all.

This is why the man's prayer to our Lord is a good one: "I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." For, it is difficult for us to give all things to our Lord God. Our Old Adam wants to maintain some shred of ability in ourselves, so that we can point to our own righteousness, and claim that we did something to affect our situation. When this father cries out to the Lord, "I believe; help Thou mine unbelief" he is beginning to let the Lord be the One to do all things. The man had shown his wavering faith when he says, "If thou canst do anything." He does not truly believe anyone can help him at this point.

Our Lord needs to lead him into faith in Him. "All things are possible to him that believeth." That is, not only can our Lord do something, but He desires to do something for those who fully place their trust in Him, and let Him do that which we desire, without our holding something back from Him; some claim to our own power and will.

That is why this man is more like us than perhaps we care to admit. For we struggle often with fully trusting in our Lord God to provide for us all that we need in this body and life, both physical and spiritual. On Sunday, we had the opposite. We met the Canaanitish woman, whose faith was so great she could not be deterred from begging the Lord + Jesus to act on her behalf, regardless of her genealogy and history. She had complete and utter faith in the Lord + Jesus to heal her grievously vexed with a demon daughter. She had no doubts that the Lord + Jesus could do what she desired. The father of this son vexed by demon in today's reading could learn much from her.

For he, like us, struggles with putting his full faith in the Lord + Jesus. Our Lord teaches this father that in Him all things are possible. He canst do all things! In Him all things canst be done. For Him all things are possible. It is not possible for us. We are not going to bolster our faith enough to turn ourselves into some sort of person with superpowers. Our Lord does not want us trusting in ourselves, but in Him alone, just like the Syro-Phoenician woman.

But we are a faithless generation. We look to our own strength and power instead of trusting completely in the Lord + Jesus, Who is able to do all things. He is able to make all things possible. Indeed, He proves it! Not just in casting out the dumb and deaf spirit which plagued this father's son. But more importantly, He is the only One Who could make satisfaction for our sins. He is the only One Who could atone for our sins, and the sins of the whole world. Only through Him is redemption possible. Only through His suffering and death upon the tree of the holy cross can we be granted forgiveness of our sins. Only through His atonement can we in faith cling to the hope that in Him we have eternal life and salvation from all of our spiritual enemies.

For only He is both God and man. Only He can perfectly fulfill the Law of God, and not only offer up His life as a ransom for ours, but also bring Himself to life again out of death. For He is the Lord of life. He can open and shut the door of life and death. For those of us who cling in faith to Him, He has opened unto us the gates of heaven. He has unstopped our deaf ears, He has loosed our dumb tongues, so that we may hear His holy Word, and sing His praises that He has freed us from the tyranny of sin, death, and Satan.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us cling in faith completely to the One in Whom all things are possible. For in Him we have life and salvation. We have the forgiveness of our sins. And let us also

continue to pray with the father of this demon-possessed boy, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." For our Old Adam daily fights against us to retain some power or strength within us that we might call our own. Help our unbelief, Lord, that we may fully trust in Thee, and rely solely upon Thy strength and power. So that by Thy grace and mercy, we may be kept steadfast in Thy Word and work, and by Thy grace obtain the crown of eternal life. Grant this, Lord, unto us all. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord + Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ + Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!