

Study Guide

Small Group Questions *February 1 & 2, 2020*

Mark 9:14-50 records several interactions between Jesus and the Twelve, including a second prediction of his impending death and resurrection (verse 31). He mostly steers clear of the crowds, so he can focus on preparing the disciples for his departure. Their lack of faith and understanding become increasingly apparent.

1. When Jesus hears the disciples were not able to cast out a demon (Mark 9:18), how does he respond (verse 19)? Why is he frustrated with them at this stage in their training (compare Mark 6:13 and Matthew 17:20)? How would you assess your own faith?

2. *Read Mark 9:20-24.* What is the interplay between faith and miracles? How could faith (or the lack of it) affect how God intervenes in our lives?

3. *Read Mark 9:31-32.* Why do the disciples have such a hard time understanding the need for Jesus to die and rise again (compare Luke 9:45)? What aspects of Christian teaching, if any, do you find hard to understand and/or accept?

4. *Read Mark 9:33-37.* How does Jesus' ethic differ from the world's? How should this inform our fellowship with—and ministry to—those of lower social status? What does this mean for VCB as a church?

Study Guide, continued

5. *Read Mark 9:42-48.* What does Jesus teach here about final judgment? How does he underscore the importance of repentance? Spend some time as a group contemplating the nature of hell.

6. Is there any practice in your life holding you back from being fully dedicated to the Lord? If so, what are you going to do about it?

That last question might best be discussed in gender-specific groups. Have the men and women break out into different rooms for mutual confession, counsel, prayer, and accountability.