

## ***“Even Now”***

December 31, 2023

### **INTRODUCTION**

Two great questions to constantly be asking yourself when you’re reading the stories in the Gospels are:

- *How does this story reveal Jesus as Savior?*
- *How does this story reveal Jesus as Lord?*

An additional question that may be asked when reading the stories in the Bible, both in the Old Testament and New Testament might be: *What does this story teach me about FAITH?*

Here’s a quick overview of some passages on this incredibly important topic of faith in the book of Mark, in the first eight chapters

- Mark 2:5—When Jesus saw their faith...
- Mark 4:40—Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?
- Mark 5:34—Daughter your faith has healed you....
- Mark 6:6—He was amazed at their lack of faith
- Mark 6:51-52—They were completely amazed, for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.
- Mark 7:29—For such a reply you may go; the demon has left your daughter.
- Mark 8:12—Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given it.
- Mark 8:17—Do you still not see or understand?

### **Faith Begets Faith (Mark 6:53-56; 5:25-34)**

<sup>53</sup> *When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. <sup>54</sup> As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. <sup>55</sup> They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. <sup>56</sup> And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.*

**Mark 6:53-56**

### **Biblically speaking, what is faith?**

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.... <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

**Hebrews 11:1,6**

## **Lord I Believe, Help My Unbelief! (Mark 9:19-24)**

<sup>19</sup> *"You unbelieving generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."*

<sup>20</sup> *So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.*

<sup>21</sup> *Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?"*

*"From childhood," he answered. <sup>22</sup> "It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."*

<sup>23</sup> *"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."*

<sup>24</sup> *Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"*

**Mark 9:19-24**

## **How May We Build Up Our Faith?**

- Ask God to increase your faith (Luke 17:5)
- Saturate yourselves in the truths of the Gospel and God's Word (Romans 10:17)
- Meet with other believers and share testimonies with one another (Hebrews 10:23-25)
- Persevere in bold, specific, and audacious prayers (Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-8)

## **Even Now (John 11:21-23)**

<sup>21</sup> *"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup> But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."*

<sup>23</sup> *Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."*

**John 11:21-23**

## **Questions for Personal Reflection/Group Discussion**

1. Biblically speaking, what is faith? What is the natural expression of faith?
2. Why do we struggle so much at times with faith?
3. What is your "even now" prayer request?

