Avon Grove Church OF THE NAZARENE

"Living out the mission of Jesus – together."

Sermon Discussion Guide
9/27/2026

Sermon: Clear the Way *"Jesus, I Believe; Help My Unbelief"*
Text: *Mark 9:14-32*

🌿 **Introduction:** This week we move from the **stone of foolishness** to the **stone of faithlessness**. The first week asked, **"What am I carrying?"** The second asked, **"What am I controlling?"**
This week asks: **"What have I stopped believing God can do?"**

Think about the difference between being on a mountaintop and being in a valley. **What are some of the circumstances that can make faith feel easier? What are some of the circumstances that can make faith harder?**

1. **When Disappointment Changes What We Expect -** Faithlessness can sometimes look like **low expectations** rather than outright rejection of God. We may still pray, attend church, still believe God is real, but we may quietly stop expecting God to do very much.

   Why do you think disappointment can affect our expectations of God?

   Have you ever found yourself thinking, "I believe God can do it, but I'm not sure He will"?

   Why can lowering our expectations feel safer than continuing to hope?

   What is the danger of allowing past disappointment to determine what we expect God to do in the future?

   "Sometimes we don't reject God; we just stop expecting Him to do very much."

   What does that look like in everyday Christian life?

2. **Honest Faith -** The father doesn't pretend that his faith is stronger than it is. He says: *"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"* Faith does not mean pretending we never have questions or struggles. Instead, it means **bringing our questions to Jesus**.

   What is the difference between honest doubt and walking away from God?

   Why do you think people sometimes feel guilty for admitting that their faith is struggling?

   What do you learn about Jesus from the fact that He meets this father in his uncertainty rather than rejecting him?

The sermon made this observation: “He brings his imperfect faith to a perfect Savior.” **How does that change the way you think about your own struggles with faith?**

3. **Faith Makes Room** - **“Faith makes room for God to do what we cannot do.”**

   What are some things in life that we simply cannot fix, control, or make happen?

   Why can our inability to control something either lead us toward faith or away from it?

   How is trusting God different from trying to use faith to control the outcome?

   What does it mean to say, “God, I trust who You are even when I don't understand what You are doing”?

4. **What Have We Already Decided Is Impossible? -** Consider these questions personally:

   Is there someone you have stopped praying for because you believe they will never come back to God?

   Is there something in your family that you have decided is simply going to remain the way it is?

   Is there a situation you have decided is beyond redemption?

   Why do you think we sometimes decide what is possible before we ever ask God to move?

5. **Faith as a Decision to Trust**

   What does it look like to choose trust when you don't feel especially full of faith?

   Why is “I don't know what God is going to do, but I refuse to decide ahead of time that He cannot do something” a meaningful posture of faith?

   How might that change the way you pray?

6. **Our Church and Revival -** As we prepare for revival:

   Where do you think we as a church need to resist low expectations?

   What would it look like for us to genuinely make room for God to do what we cannot do?

   How can we pray for revival with expectation without trying to control what God must do?

🗣️ **Close in prayer: Clear the way in us, Lord, and prepare us for what You want to do. Amen.**