



WEEK TWO: THE BELIEVE PRINCIPLE

CONNECT

This week we continue our series called Hope Changes Everything! In this eight-week series, we'll look at the principles Jesus gave us in the beatitudes that help us see the hope and freedom we find in God alone. In this first week, we look at the **Believe Principle** looking at what we believe about God.

- What is something you did as a child that drove your parents crazy?
- Growing up, what mythical character were you most disappointed to learn didn't really exist?

DISCOVER

Read Matthew 5:4

God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Read Mark 9:14-29

¹⁴When they returned to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd surrounding them, and some teachers of religious law were arguing with them. ¹⁵When the crowd saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with awe, and they ran to greet him.

¹⁶"What is all this arguing about?" Jesus asked.

¹⁷One of the men in the crowd spoke up and said, "Teacher, I brought my son so you could heal him. He is possessed by an evil spirit that won't let him talk. ¹⁸And whenever this spirit seizes him, it throws him violently to the ground. Then he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast out the evil spirit, but they couldn't do it."

¹⁹Jesus said to them, "You faithless people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."

²⁰So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth.

²¹"How long has this been happening?" Jesus asked the boy's father.

He replied, "Since he was a little boy. ²²The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can."

²³"What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes."

²⁴The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"

²⁵When Jesus saw that the crowd of onlookers was growing, he rebuked the evil spirit. "Listen, you spirit that makes this boy unable to hear and speak," he said. "I command you to come out of this child and never enter him again!"

²⁶Then the spirit screamed and threw the boy into another violent convulsion and left him. The boy appeared to be dead. A murmur ran through the crowd as people said, "He's dead." ²⁷But Jesus took him by the hand and helped him to his feet, and he stood up.

²⁸Afterward, when Jesus was alone in the house with his disciples, they asked him, "Why couldn't we cast out that evil spirit?"

²⁹Jesus replied, "This kind can be cast out only by prayer."

- Who, or what is being mourned in this story? How does God bring comfort in our loss?
- Who do you relate to in this story, the disciples, the boy, the father, or Jesus?
- What are your thoughts about the father's statement, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"?
- Jesus spoke to the evil spirit and told it to leave the boy. Why then did He tell the disciples it required prayer to cast it out?
- While it is good to have hope, why do we need faith?

GROW

Big Idea: Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me recover

- What doubts cause you to wonder if God is really there, or if you matter to Him?
- In what ways do you struggle with doubt or a lack of faith? Why do you think it is so hard for you to have faith in this area?
- Do you ever feel hopeless in your struggles? What makes you feel that way? How do you overcome that feeling?
- Because you're making changes, what area(s) of your life are you mourning?

NEXT STEPS

- If you struggle with any hurts, habits, or hang-ups, come try out Celebrate Recovery on Monday nights at 6:30, at the Goodyear Campus, 431 N Litchfield Rd, Goodyear, 85338. Or find more information at palmvalley.org/celebraterecovery
- If you're struggling and need Hope, please call the church office (623-536-2106) and speak with one of our Pastors.

