

**Greater Works Christian Church**  
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**Introduction:** YeHovah is a God of Love. Everything He is and everything He does is because of Love.

**God is Love**

**1 John 4:8**

He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

**1 John 4:16**

And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

Love is not a mere characteristic of God, Love is what God is, and because of this God is continually pouring out blessings upon His children.

**Question and Discussion:** Is it difficult at times to believe God is Love? Please think about your answer. Why is it easy to believe God is Love? Why is it difficult to believe God is Love? Please explain your answer.

**All Blessings come through Christ Jesus**

All of God's Blessings come through His Son, Jesus. When we come into the family of God we are in position to receive untold blessings from our Father. Through Jesus we can enjoy and experience the blessings of God.

**Ephesians 1:3**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

We MUST understand, God has "blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ". It is through Christ Jesus we receive the blessings of our Father.

**Question and Discussion:** Jesus is the mediator between God the Father and mankind (you and me). Every blessing comes from the Father through Jesus to us. What do you suppose would happen if we became more and more like Jesus? Please explain.

**We Often Block our Blessings**

Our Father is a good God. Keep in mind, God is love. Because of His love for us He is constantly blessings us, more than we know, however, sometimes we block the blessings God has for us.

### **Mark 9:17-29**

17 Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit.

18 And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."

19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me."

20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

21 So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood.

22 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!"

26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead."

27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

29 So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

### **Matthew 17:19-21**

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"

20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.

21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

**Question and Discussion:** This story is chock full of revelation we can glean from. This is your opportunity to share the revelation you received from this story.

**Imagine being the father of the demon possessed boy in this story.**

- How would you feel watching your son being tormented by a demon? -as a father? -as a member of society? -as a member of a church?
- Can you empathize with the father when he said, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"?
- What could this father have done to build his faith for his son's healing?

- Do you see the same struggles as this father in you?

***Imagine being one of Jesus' disciples and not being able to cast the demon out.***

- How would you feel?
- What would be going through your head and heart?
- What could you have done to build your faith in this area?
- How would you feel and what would you do if Jesus rebuked you for your unbelief (keep in mind this was in front of a large crowd)?

***Imagine being Jesus and coming upon this crowd and event.***

- How would you feel and respond after realizing your own disciples (whom you trained) could not cast out a demon?
- How would you feel and respond after hearing the boy's father say, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"?
- How would you feel and respond to a generation of people that were "faithless"?
- What could Jesus have done to help build the faith of His disciples and people around Him?

**What else did you glean from this story?**

In this story we see a young man unable to receive the blessing of deliverance because he was demonized.

His father could not receive the blessing because of his unbelief (double-mindedness).

The disciples of Christ could not receive the blessing because of their unbelief (being part of a faithless generation).

Jesus was able to receive (and give) the blessing of deliverance because He had unwavering Faith.

**We MUST overcome our unbelief- ALL of our unbelief. As we do this, we will receive the blessings of the Lord as never before. Blessings for ourselves and those around us.**

**Conclusion: Jesus Rebukes their Unbelief**

**Mark 16:14**

Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

This is after the resurrection of Jesus. Some of the disciples had a hard time believing Jesus had risen from the dead. Jesus appears and "rebukes their unbelief and hardness of heart".

I find it interesting that unbelief and hardness of heart are related.

**Question and Discussion:** Here Jesus rebukes His disciples for their unbelief. These disciples did not believe the reports from others that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Why would this make Jesus angry?

How is unbelief and hardness of heart related?

What can we do to overcome a hardened heart and unbelief?

Are unbelief and a hardened heart mental and emotional in nature, or are they spiritual in nature?

If you feel they are mental and emotional only, how can we overcome these negative thoughts, ideas and feelings?

If you feel they are spiritual in nature only, what can we do to overcome them? Are they spirits that need to be cast out?

Please explain.

How can we overcome the negativity around us to be able to receive and share the blessings of God?