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Luke 9:38 And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child.

Luke 9:39 And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out. It convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and shatters him, and will hardly leave him.

Luke 9:40 And I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.”

Luke 9:41 Jesus answered, “O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.”

Luke 9:42 While he was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

Luke 9:43 And all were astonished at the majesty of God. But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples,

Luke 9:44 “Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men.”

Luke 9:45 But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

Luke 9:46 An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest.

Luke 9:47 But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side

Luke 9:48 and said to them, “Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the one who is great.”

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Matthew 17:19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”

Matthew 17:20 He said to them, “Because of **your little faith.**

Every time God gives us a revelation, He will test us. Do we live out that revelation? On the Mount of Transfiguration, God the Father had spoken to the three disciples to hear only the Son. After the mountain experience, it was time to descend the mountain to face the crowd of people in need. Sometimes, we would like to stay on the mountaintop, to be alone with Jesus. We may enjoy the gatherings or the sweet church life where our needs are met. However, the Lord wants to bring us down the mountain, to contact people or the crowd. Jesus did not trust the crowd (John 2:24), but He cared for them and met their needs.

In this case, the disciples were not able to cast out the unclean spirit from the child. Jesus rebukes them for being faithless and twisted (off the mark), not because they could not cast out the demon, but because they did not bring the boy to Jesus. This means that any time we try to do something for the Lord without the Lord’s speaking, we have missed the mark, even if we do it. Even if the disciples had succeeded in casting out the demon, if they had done so without the Lord’s speaking and presence, they would have missed the mark. Many times, we may be faithless, not because we fail at something, but because we do not come to the Lord Himself.

God, in His mercy, allows us to fail many times so we can repent and come to Him. Jesus told the father to bring his boy to Him. Do we bring the needs of the saints and the needs of new ones to the Lord, or do we try to meet them without coming to the Lord, or without coming to our service team members?

Luke 9:38 And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child.

Luke 9:39 And behold, **a spirit seizes him**, and he suddenly cries out. It convulses (shakes) him so that he foams at the mouth, and shatters (crushes) him, and will hardly leave him.

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Evil spirits (or demons) are not fallen angels. These living creatures existed in the pre-Adamic generations, were judged by God for participating in Satan's betrayal, and became free spirits (occurring between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2). Fallen angels work with Satan in the air (Eph 2:2, Eph 6:11-12), and these unclean spirits are called demons sometimes and ghosts in Chinese, and act with Satan on the earth. These evil spirits and fallen angels acted evilly on people for the kingdom of Satan. Demon possession is a sign that Satan takes over the people created by God for his purpose.

**In Acts 16:16,17** the words spoken by the evil spirit who entered into a woman seemingly helped to spread the gospel, but in fact they interfered with the gospel and caused people to confuse the Lord Jesus and the evil spirit. Evil spirits (demons) can also recognize Christ (**Luke 8:28**), but the Lord Jesus refused to accept the evil spirits testimony of Him (**Luke 4:34,35**), because the source of this testimony was not from God. No matter how powerful the evil spirit's testimony is, it cannot bring glory to God. Not only can it not lead people to God, but it will confuse people concerning what the Lord is and does, and blur the line between God and evil spirits.

**The worst harm wrought by the demons is that many of them hide behind all the idols (1 Cor 10:19,20 and damage billions of people in the world everyday. We need to preach the gospel diligently and faithfully to cast them out of the Gentiles.**

Gen 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Gen 1:2 **The earth was without form and void**, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Act 16:16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met **by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination** and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling.

Act 16:17 **She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation."**

1Cor 10:19,20 What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice **they offer to demons and not to God**. I do not want you to be participants with demons.

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It was sweet for the disciples to see the glorious Christ on the mountain, but don't forget that there were people oppressed by demons down the mountain, waiting to be released and rescued from them. However, like those disciples, we must first go up the mountain to see the glorious Christ (a fresh revelation and vision) before we can go down the mountain and drive out the evil spirits in the faithless and crooked world.

**The disciples had the authority to heal this son. Their failure showed that although they had the authority given by the Lord Jesus, they lacked the faith to exercise such an authority. Luke 9:41 also shows us that this generation is faithless and twisted toward the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**We really need to maintain a living among the saints and people so that we can know their difficulties and hardships, so that our faith in the Lord may have a chance to grow by taking care of and serving them. It was so sweet that the healed boy, an only son, could be brought back to his father healthy.**

Luke 9:43 But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples,

Luke 9:44 “Let **these words sink** into your ears: The **Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men.**”

Luke 9: 45 But **they did not understand** this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And **they were afraid to ask him about this saying.**

The revelation on the mountain needs crucifixion in order for it be realized in our experience. Jesus asked the words that He was going to speak to His disciples concerning His crucifixion to sink down deeply into their ears. However, they did not understand this saying, nor did they ask Jesus what He meant.

We are no different from the disciples. Do we understand that we need to die to ourselves? Many times, we like to have revelation and carry it out in our own way. We may be afraid to ask questions for different reasons. Do we pursue the words of Jesus? Or do we just listen to the words? It is good to listen, but even better to respond. Even a short response, a short testimony, or a question, may open our ears and our heart to understand and experience more the words of Jesus. If we do not ask questions, our heart may be closed and the Lord’s speaking to us may be concealed. The Lord does not deliberately conceal things from us, but it is we who may close our heart.

Jesus said that the Son of Man was about to be delivered into the hands of men. He said this at the time when the crowd was marvelling at His majesty. However, Jesus laid aside His majesty and reputation to be prepared to be delivered into the hands of men. Are we prepared to lay aside whatever we have done or achieved in our Christian life? Do we lay aside the recognition of a good testimony, or the fact that we attend all the meetings, or that we pursue the word? Indeed, we need to exercise to be faithful to the Lord’s speaking to us, but even our so-called faithfulness needs to be denied. Only then may the revelation of Jesus Christ be realized in our experience.

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This is the 2nd time that the Lord Jesus foretold His death on the cross (**Luke 9:22, Luke 9:44, Luke 18:31-33**). He himself knew that He would bear the cross, and thus reminded and taught the disciples about the cross. He, the glorious One shown in the vision on the mountain, had to be "handed over into the hands of men." Only those who have experienced the cross can experience the glory of Christ. If we suffer with Him, we will also be glorified with Him (**Rom 8:17**). However, the disciples did not understand what Jesus was talking about. How about us in the current church life?

**“It was concealed from them” indicates that we need to diligently pursue the Lord and the Lord’s words with a pure heart and consecrated life to Him and His church, and fellowship (including asking questions) with the saints, in particular the Lord’s servants, so that the Lord’s speaking through His words will not be concealed from us.**

Luke 9:46 An argument arose among them as to **which of them was the greatest.**

The difficulty in today's church life is **to ask or think** "who is the greatest"; "who is the greatest" is an inevitable difficulty in today's church life.

"Who is the greatest ?" **Why can't we pray and agree in one accord?**

"Who is the greatest ?" **Why can't we support and collaborate one another?**

"Who is the greatest ?" **Why can't we trust each other?**

"Who is the greatest ?" **Why can't we be able to completely open to all members of the service team when we serve?**

"Who is the greatest ?" **Why are so many blessings of God sliding away from our hands and services without realizing them?**

"Who is the greatest ?" **Seemingly and outwardly, it's just the question of who can make the final decision, who is willing to listen to whom, and who can obey whom. From a practical point of view, all of these are centered on the matter of "Who is the greatest ?"**

**Praise our Lord, there are three organic orders in the church life**

- A. The order of church administration,**
- B. The order of life,**
- C. The order of burden.**

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Do we care for our second generation? Do we receive them? Do we give them room to grow in the church life? This is a true test of whether we actually receive the Lord. We may claim to receive the Lord, to receive His speaking, to receive His words, to be anointed in our speaking or giving many messages. But the test of whether we actually receive the Lord and His speaking is whether we receive the “children,” the young ones, and whether we are raising up the pillars in the church life.

What does it mean to be “great” in the church life? This can be the greatest frustration to the growth of the saints. This does not mean that we are “humble” or “nice,” or that we yield to others. Rather, it means that we have a burden, and we are faithful to deny ourselves in order to carry out the burden. For example, on Lord’s day, many brothers like to give messages. These messages may be full of life and anointing, and even nourishing. However, are the saints growing? Are the younger ones exercising to carry out the burden the Lord has given them? Or are they frustrated or afraid to carry out their burden because of the older ones? The ones who are so-called “great” need to lay aside their “greatness” to receive the burden of the “children” or younger ones, and allow them to exercise and develop. Otherwise, there may be no continuation. This may mean that we (the older brothers) may need to become the “least,” to find another field where we can labor, in order to become “great.”

Do we take “a child” and put them by our side, to accompany them, to raise them up, to give them a field, to give them the liberty, to grow and develop? Can we deny ourselves to find another field? Or do we argue and insist on our so-called portion or function?

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**Matthew 18:2-6** provides a clear picture concerning the meaning of “a child,” **young in age or young in the life of Christ in the church life**” and how we see, care for, support, treat, teach and perfect them in our church life. **In the church of God in Montreal, the services provided by parents for their children in their homes are the most crucial teaching, practice and blessing of a healthy church life.**

Matt 18:2 And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them

Matt 18:3 and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and **become like children**, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matt 18:4 Whoever **humbles himself like this child** is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Matt 18:5 “Whoever **receives one such child** in my name receives me,

Matt 18:6 but whoever **causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin**, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.