

It is not the quantity of thy faith that shall save thee. A drop of water is as true water as the whole ocean; so a little faith is as true faith as the greatest. A child eight days old is as really a man as one of sixty years; a spark of fire is as true fire as a great flame; a sickly man is as truly living as a well man. So it is not the measure of thy faith that saves thee—it is the blood that it grips that saves thee; as the weak hand of a child that leads the spoon to the mouth will feed as well as the strong arm of a man; for it is not the hand that feeds thee but the meat. So if thou canst grip Christ ever so weakly, he will not let thee perish.—*T. Adams, quoted by J. C. Gray.*

This act of his in putting forth his faith to believe as he could, was the way to believe as he would.—*Trapp.*

HELP MINE UNBELIEF. "Help away my unbelief."—*Roth.* It was earnestness itself. He CRIED OUT, not fearing the faultfinders and skeptics.

5. THE MASTER'S POWER, vers. 25-27. (1) In rebuke, ver. 25; (2) In command, ver. 25; (3) In action, ver. 27. DEAD, ver. 26. The way of life in God leads by the way of death to self. LIFTED HIM UP. This is what the Gospel does for all repentant and believing souls. Christianity *lifts* up men, families, nations.

6. THE MASTER'S SECRET, vers. 28, 29. Self-denial necessary to spiritual power. "A wise and religious exercise of fastings and other acts of severity and self-denial cuts off the luxuries of nature; they take away the matter which the tempter's suggestions work upon; they put us in a better condition of standing our ground, and gaining the fort within, by starving out the enemy's forces that lie intrenched there."—*Dean Stanhope.*

7. Learn: 1. CHRIST IS THE RESTORER. He comes to correct whatever is abnormal. A man with eyes should see. A man with a tongue should speak. A man with ears should hear. Through sin malformations occur. Through sin disease weakens and breaks down the organs of the body. By sin evil spirits get possession of men. By sin man holds man in subjection and servitude: though he has ears, tyranny says, "Thou shalt not hear;" though he has a tongue, tyranny says, "Thou shalt not speak." Christ comes to restore man's true power and prerogatives. He heals malformation, strengthens weakness, banishes disease, casts out deaf and dumb devils, breaks the master's power over the slave, and bids free men think, speak, act for themselves in God's

sight. 2. SIN BEGETS SPIRITUAL DEAFNESS. God speaks in nature; we do not hear him. There are spiritual harmonies in this universe. They are only discords to us. God calls us to repentance, holiness, self-sacrificing labor, and immortal life. But we go on, our ears stopped all the time. 3. DEAFNESS BEGETS DUMBNESS. The child that never heard never speaks. He who has never listened to God, nor known the enjoyments of a spiritual life, does not know how to *talk* about the things of God. How helpless are the deaf and dumb! What a sad helplessness! and it is hopeless helplessness! O who can cause the spiritually deaf to hear, or the dumb to sing? Look to Jesus! 4. The faith of the parent avails to a great extent in behalf of the child.

English Teacher's Notes.

The fact that the demoniac in this narrative was a young person enables us to give the subject an unusually direct application to our scholars—an application which ought to be peculiarly effective. For what is the subject? It is, *A child possessed of the devil!*

Are there any such now? Perhaps not, as to the body; but as to the soul, most certainly. For,

1. It cannot be doubted that the great Enemy is ready to assail the soul of a child at the earliest moment of its being susceptible of either good or bad spiritual influences.

2. It cannot be doubted that he is sometimes successful in no common degree. Most teachers have met with actual cases—cases of ungovernable temper, or incorrigible wilfulness, or seemingly incurable deceitfulness—cases which fill us with apprehension, and even with despair.

And this spiritual possession is worse than the bodily possession. That involved suffering and misery; this involves *guilt*. The demoniac boy could not help his unhappy condition; we are responsible for ours.

Now Jesus said of the afflicted boy in the narrative, "*Bring him to me.*" In giving this lesson the teacher should very plainly put it to his class that their attendance at Sunday-school is nothing less than a being "brought unto the disciples" to be delivered from Satan's influence, and that his earnest efforts are to "bring them to Jesus," who can cure the worst cases. And though the application points specially at the "hard cases," at the boys or girls who seem to be in all things "led captive