

## “What are you arguing about with them?”

**A. Intro:** *Walking Into an Argument*

**B. Sermon in a Sentence:** *Intimate faith and prayer lead us through the darkest valleys. (Psalm 23)*

### **C. Context of Today's Question**

As Jesus, Peter, James, and John descend from the mountaintop revelation of Christ's true identity, they walk into a brewing spiritual storm. The remaining disciples and the crowd are arguing with Jewish legalists who capitalize upon the disciples' failure to cast out a persistent demon tormenting a man's son. Jesus' question brings to the fore the real issue: **without intimate faith in God we are powerless against evil.**

### **D. MARK 9:14-29 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes arguing with them. <sup>15</sup> And immediately all the crowd, when they saw him, were greatly amazed and ran up to him and greeted him.

<sup>16</sup> And he asked them, **“What are you arguing about with them?”**

<sup>17</sup> And someone from the crowd answered him, “Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. <sup>18</sup> And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able.”

<sup>19</sup> And he answered them, **“O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me.”**

<sup>20</sup> And they brought the boy to him. And when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth.

<sup>21</sup> And Jesus asked his father, **“How long has this been happening to him?”** And he said, “From childhood. <sup>22</sup> And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.”

<sup>23</sup> And Jesus said to him, **“If you can! All things are possible for one who believes.”**

<sup>24</sup> Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!”

<sup>25</sup> And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, **“You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.”**

<sup>26</sup> And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, “He is dead.” <sup>27</sup> But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

<sup>28</sup> And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”

<sup>29</sup> And he said to them, **“This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.”**

### **E. Small Group or Individual Study Questions**

1. How have you experienced the Enemy's counterattack following a spiritually encouraging time?
2. How have you experienced God's encouragement during tough times?
3. Prayer is not rote or manipulation, but a deep two-way connection with God through His Spirit. Where and when are you enjoying this kind of intimacy with God? If you haven't set aside a special retreat time with the Lord, decide today when you will do so.
4. Consider sharing a brief recorded video online for a mid-week devotion for our church. In the video, please share a word or phrase from Psalm 23 (next page) and how it has been particularly meaningful to you when you've faced dark valleys in your life. *Thank you!*

## The LORD Is My Shepherd

**A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

<sup>3</sup> He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness

for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil,

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff,

they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD

forever.