

Help, Thou, My Unbelief

By Doug Irving & Gary Randolph



Theme and Purpose

Faith is hard work. Satan makes it hard by sowing seeds of doubt. But also the passing of time and the daily grind of life wear away at faith. Our faith is inspired by stories of what God has done for others. But too often we feel that God would not do the same for us. Even when we are walking in faith, we find it easy to give in to doubt. But faith, too, is a gift of God's grace and grows as we grow in relationship to Him.

Cast list	Actor-Narrator. Can be either man or woman.
Approximate Running Time	4 minutes
Scene Description	None
Prop List	None
Other Production Notes	This should be acted as a one-person play. The narrator tells the story in third person, using gestures and possibly voice characterizations to portray each of the characters. As such very little – probably nothing – is needed in terms of scenery or props.
Related Scriptures	Mark 9:14-27, Romans 1:17, 1 Corinthians 13:13, Genesis 22:1-14, 1 Samuel 7:12
Song Suggestions	Help Thou My Unbelief (Ragamuffin Band), Great is Thy Faithfulness, So You Would Know (Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir), Trading My Sorrows, For Every Mountain

FATHER:

It had been a long, tiring journey - tiring from the emotion as much as from the heat and dusty roads. At times my son and I had walked side-by-side talking about the sights we passed. But then suddenly he would be seized and thrown to the ground. My poor little Levi. I would have to hold him still, clean his wounds, and carry his rigid body for hours until he became himself again.

It wasn't a journey Levi should be making in his condition. But what choice did I have? What other hope remained? The doctors had failed. The priest's exorcists had failed. But wonderful things were said of this prophet, this healer from Nazareth. And so we had set out, braving the elements and the demon, to reach this man.

At last we found his camp, only to find the healer wasn't there. But I had waited this long, and just knowing the prophet would soon come to that very place filled me with hope. Then Levi was hit by yet another seizure, shattering that hope. He rolled in the dust, foaming at the mouth. I pleaded to the prophet's disciples. "Can't you do anything?" One of them said he could. He said they had gone out in pairs, healing and teaching. This disciple placed his hand on him and commanded the demon to depart in the name of God. But Levi rolled out from under the disciple's hand, shrieking and gnashing his teeth.

Then dozens of voices filled the air - more disciples, teachers of the law, other people who had come for healing. It seemed like everyone had an opinion - whether the problem was medical or demonic - whether it was caused by my sin or my son's - whether this technique or that should be used. More talk. And with each word I felt my hope draining away. I shrank from the crowd, holding my son tight in my arms, quietly weeping in despair.

Suddenly everyone grew quiet. I looked up and saw a new face in the crowd, a face of compassion and wisdom. Surely this was the prophet. Levi saw him too, and immediately collapsed, seized by yet another convulsion.

"Please take pity on us," I sputtered out. "You're our last hope. If... if you can do anything at all..."

"If?" the master asked. That single word cut through me as a sword. For an instant I feared I had offended the prophet and squandered our chance at healing. But his next words seemed reassuring. "Anything is possible for him who believes."

For him who believes. At that moment I would have done anything, believed anything if it would help bring about my son's healing. "I do believe," I insisted. But even as I said it I felt my own demons of doubt assail me. All the prior failures, all the other dashed hopes. Could I really believe this time would be any different?

Month after month, year after year of praying for a healing that did not come had worn me down. Like a stream struggling in drought, my faith was now a mere trickle. And with every seizure it dried just a little more. Yet, was not this journey an act a faith? Was not just being here belief? Yes. But it seemed so inadequate.

My eyes met the master's. "Help... help my unbelief," I stammered. I asked it as a beggar. I couldn't heal my son. I couldn't even keep my own faith together. All I could do was come, and this I had done. And something in the master's eyes told me it was enough.

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