



Stepping
STONES



And the apostles said to the

Lord,

“Increase our faith!”

Luke 17:5-6

GROWING FAITH

- Internal growth is essential, since Christianity is not just about being outwardly righteous (Matt. 23:28), going through the motions of religion, or securing a “spiritual insurance policy.”
- Notice the level of commitment to change in scriptures like Romans 12:1–2, Galatians 5:24, Romans 6:2, 6:6, and Colossians 3:8–10.
- While repentance is certainly expected BEFORE forgiveness (Acts 2:38, 3:19) there is a sense in which our transformation is a lifelong process. We must stop sinning, obviously, but our understanding of God, the depth of our Bible knowledge and its application, our deepening appreciation of grace — these things take a lifetime!



**So what does this
process look like?**

AWARENESS

KNOWLEDGE

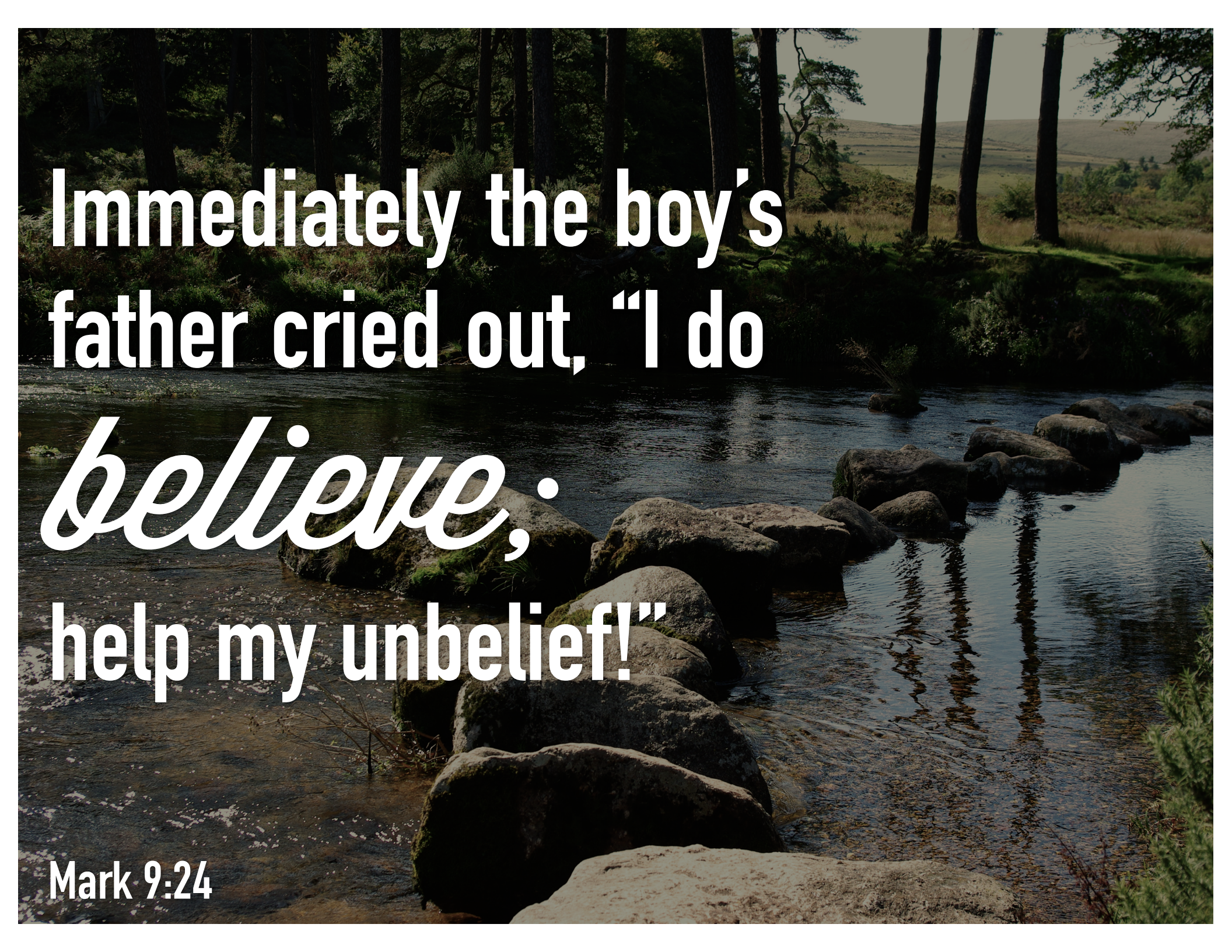
SKILL

DISCIPLESHIP

AWARENESS



- One cannot begin to comprehend his or her immense need for salvation without first answering some basic questions. Is there a spiritual component to all of us? Is there a god? What is the condition of my soul? If you're not even pondering questions like these, you are, in psychological terms, still at the point of "unconscious incompetence."
- Ephesians 4:17-19
- While some are simply ignorant, like the Ninevites (Jonah 4:9ff), others are ignorant by choice. They do not want the light (John 3:19-21) even though it promises enlightenment to all who move toward it (John 1:9). Notice the two responses to the gospel in Acts 17:22-32.



Immediately the boy's
father cried out, "I do
believe,
help my unbelief!"

Mark 9:24


KNOWLEDGE



- At first, all we can do is acknowledge how incapable we are of saving ourselves. After all, we have all sinned (Rom. 3:23). This is the state of every person without Christ. Until we come to grips with the immensity of our sin, the depth of our depravity, and the completeness of our spiritual failure, we cannot undergo the rebuilding project that God promises — a change so striking that Jesus calls it “being born again” (John 3:3ff).
- Consider the connection between our spiritual growth and knowledge in scriptures like 2 Peter 3:18, 1 Peter 2:2, and Romans 10:11–17. As we feed upon the wisdom of the Word, we move away from spiritual incompetency to competency. This was the chief concern of the writer of Proverbs (Prov. 9:9–10).

SKILL

- Knowledge must move from theory to practice, especially with something as eternally-significant as your faith. Remember, true faith does not remain in the mind – it is not merely a mental discipline – but is expressed in action (James 2:14ff).
- Jesus frequently challenged His disciples to put into action His teaching (John 15:1–8, Matthew 25:14–30, John 13:15, Mark 4:20).
- Try to keep carnal concerns away from the expression of your faith. The reward must be deeply internal and personal, otherwise your satisfaction with it is tied to things like success/failure in evangelism, the superficial quality of worship, attendance or lack of it, what other people think, or how my work compares to another's. Remember Matthew 6:1.



Finally, there is
discipleship

DISCIPLESHIP

- “A disciple is not greater than his teacher, but everyone when fully trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40).
- Discipleship is a total submission to Christ. It means we don't keep anything back (Luke 9:23, 14:27, 14:33) and we have aligned our will with His. This is why people like Peter and Paul were able to rejoice under trying circumstances (Matthew 10:24–25, Acts 5:41–42, Colossians 1:24, 1 Peter 4:13).
- A disciple has moved past ignorance, has grown in knowledge, has put that knowledge to good use, and has eagerly sought to fulfill the Great Commission — to make new disciples (Matthew 28:19). This is just what Paul told Timothy to do in 2 Timothy 2:1–10.