

# Faith In Practice

Life Changing Medical Mission



## Every Secret, Every Pain

*“Teacher, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid.... Jesus asked the father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us.” Jesus said to him, “If you are able! —all things can be done for the one who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out, “I believe; help my unbelief!”*

*Mark 9:17-24*

All things can be done for the one who believes. Immediately, the father of the child cried out, “I believe. Help my unbelief.” Throughout my life, different bible verses have resonated with me in different ways, but this one, this one never ceases to strike me to my core.

I think it does so, because in only five words the intimacy of our faith is revealed. This honest cry, this authentic prayer that captures our most private and exposed moments, the moments that matter the most in our lives. When it counts the most. When you want to believe so badly and yet cannot. When you want to trust and yet are afraid. If you could just believe hard enough, you could save the one you love, the one for whom you would give your own life. If I could just believe hard enough, he would not die. If I could just believe hard enough, she would not suffer. If just.... I believe. Dear God, please, please help my unbelief.

For me, one of the many blessings of leading Faith In Practice is that I have the chance to see scripture lived out in unique ways. This familiar passage, lived out before me. Two little boys. Osman, 6. Brandi, 14. Two fathers, trying to be strong for their boys. Crossing years and miles to get to this moment where their boys would finally receive their surgeries. Tears standing in their eyes. In their eyes, the deep desire to take away the pain and the fear of these little ones, who they love more than their own lives. Battling their own fear and yet desiring to take upon themselves their children’s pain and fear, if only they could. Their quiet cries, their deep prayers of “I believe, help my unbelief.”

Guatemala is a land of broken promises, so trust is hard to come by. A hard life and painful experience has taught them not to trust and yet there they were trusting, believing, handing over their precious children first to God and then to the surgical team, just the same.

As I stood watching these fathers, the Mark passage came to mind. But this time, I saw something I'd never seen before. You see, I had always seen myself in the story as the father. The one struggling so hard to believe and yet could not, a quiet struggle that we all have known, I think, in the dark of night.

But this time, in the faces of Osman and Brandi's fathers, I saw my father, my God. My God reaching out with so much love, wanting so badly to take away my pain, my fear, my struggle. Your pain, your fear, your struggle. Wanting so badly for me to know in the depths of my being, and you in yours, that it is God's deepest desire to take it all on. The joy and the pain. The belief and the unbelief. And, that God does take it all on, if only I, if only we, could just let go and fall into God's loving and outstretched arms. Arms ever opened for us. Opened as wide as the cross, waiting to enfold us in God's loving embrace. In the deepest and most secret places of our hearts.

The days now before us are the dark and somber days. The days when we are called upon once again to open ourselves up to the pain, to the struggle, to the denial, the betrayal, the shame and ugliness of a brutal death. To walk beside him once again to the cross. To let it hurt us, to humble us, to let our hearts be broken open, to let our belief be changed, to allow our unbelief to be laid bare. To let him happen to us again. To let him happen to us for the first time. To fall into God's loving arms outstretched upon a cross, to trust him with every secret, every pain, every way we have betrayed and denied, to trust him with everything that has ever happened to us, to trust him with every death. To die with him again. Called upon once again to enter into his pain, so that maybe, just maybe, we might be able to let go and allow him to enter into ours. I believe, help my unbelief.

In these days, let us not rush too quickly to Easter, but rather let us linger and pray with him at Gethsemane. Let us sit at the foot of the cross. Let his wounds enter us and heal us in the dark, so that in the dawn of Easter, we can be ready. Ready to serve him. Ready to sit with others in their pain and darkness. Ready to tell them of how he died with us intimately, yet once again and then how he somehow miraculously brought us up out of death into new life with a love so amazing, so divine that it demands our souls, our lives, our all. May it be so for you, for me, for us all. All to God's honor and glory and praise.

**Rev. Linda L. McCarty**  
**President & CEO**

**Faith In Practice: Life Changing Medical Mission.**

[Consider supporting the mission today.](#)



**4 Stars - 11 Consecutive Years - Top 1%.**

Visit us at [www.faithinpractice.org](http://www.faithinpractice.org).

