



# 1 Youth Ministry

## Grades 7-12

### January 21, 2024

### God in a box

### Contact Us

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### Links

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### Foster Care Teens

#### Personal Care Items

We are always collecting "Personal Care Items" for teens in foster care throughout the year. Items for both male and female teens are being collected in the bin just outside our youth room. These items will be sorted into personal bags and given to DCS to be distributed to teens who may not even have their own tooth brush or comb.

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This Week's Bible Verse

**Mark 6:1-12**

### Service Times

Sunday regular service 10:00am  
Sunday Pre-Service Coffee Q&A 9:00am

### Sunday



### God in a box

Last Sunday, we started by talking about what it means to "think outside the box" and we discussed various things that boxes are used for.

We said, as humans, our thoughts tend to stay stuck in our own "box" that we create by way of our own worldly experiences and knowledge. We just can't seem to wrap our heads around the whole idea of an All Powerful Spirit Being so we end up putting God in our box of things that we can understand.

We looked at **1 Samuel 4** to see what can happen when we put God in our box of things that we can understand.

The Israelites thought that they literally had a "God in a box" with the Ark of the Lord's Covenant (where the actual stone tablets of the Ten Commandments were kept).

The Israelites made two huge mistakes in the battle

6 Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples.<sup>2</sup> When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing?"<sup>3</sup> Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph,<sup>[a]</sup> Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home."<sup>5</sup> He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them.<sup>6</sup> He was amazed at their lack of faith.

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against the Philistines. Rather than calling out to God and praying that He help them beat the Philistine army, they put their trust and faith in their "God in a box", the Ark, as they carried it into battle before them.

The second mistake was in using God like a genie by pulling Him out just when they needed Him to do something for them.

These mistakes not only cost the Israelites the battle, losing more than 30,000 men, but they also lost the Ark itself. Looking ahead in **1 Samuel 5** we saw that they did eventually get the Ark back but at a great cost to both sides. Having "God in a box" clearly did not work out very well for anyone.

As silly as it seems for the Israelites to think they had "God in a box", it's something that is so easy for us to do in our own lives every day.

- We limit what God can do in a way that fits with how we think He **should** work.
- We limit God by our own thoughts of what we think He can do for us.
- We choose to bring God into our lives only when it's convenient or we really need Him.

Now, we all agreed that even if we had the biggest box in the world, we couldn't really put God in it. But, what we can do is put our **faith** in God in a box. When our faith in God is limited by our box, we are limiting what God can do in our lives.

We saw this in **Psalms 78** where even though the Israelites personally experienced God rescuing them from Egypt, and all the miracles that included, they doubted that God could supply them with food and water in the wilderness. Their doubt and unbelief in what God could do became so strong that it led them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years rather than entering the Promised Land.

We looked at the Pharisees to see how they also limited what God could do by putting him in a box of rigid tradition and rules that they made. Churches and Religions today can also limit what God can do by their strict rules and traditions.

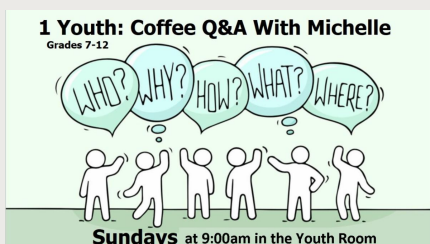
In **Mark 6:4-12**, we even saw Jesus not being able to perform miracles in His own hometown because of their lack of faith. They had put Jesus in a box based on what they knew of Him growing up as a young carpenter's son.

We said that virtually every occurrence of Jesus

healing someone, He said it was **according to your faith** it is done. When we limit our faith, we limit what God can do.

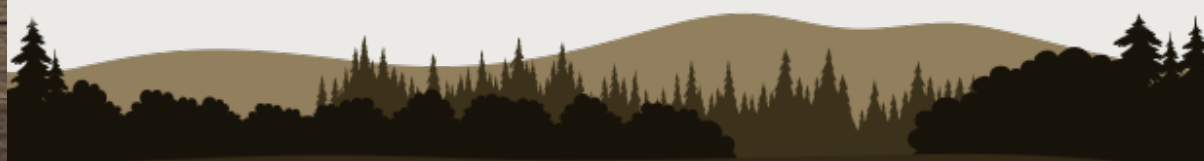
God is so much more than our human minds can comprehend. He doesn't think like we do, He doesn't act like we do, and there is no way we could even imagine all that He can do.

We said to think about what could be holding God back from performing what He desires to do in your own life. We said that it's time to throw away the box and just let God be God, with absolutely no limits. It's time to let go of the limits you put on your faith and experience what God can do in your life.



## Pre-Service Coffee Q&A Sundays at 9:00am

Join us in the Youth Room every Sunday, starting at 9:00am, for refreshments in a casual atmosphere for an opportunity for you and your friends to ask questions and discuss answers to your most pressing questions about God, Jesus, the Bible, other Religions, Christianity, or just about Life in general.



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