

THE GOSPEL *of*

MARK



THE GOSPEL of **MARK** 9:42-50

Setting for Today

- Jesus predicts death and resurrection
- Discussion among disciples – Greatest
- Jesus object lesson – child
- first and last – servant of all
- John and others using Jesus name

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“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell.

THE GOSPEL of **MARK** 9:42-50

And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

1. Special Responsibility

- heart of God for his children

a) little ones

- child in his arms
- vulnerable, those we teach & impress

b) causes

- persuades, entices, leads astray
- draws away from truth
- promotes lies

2. Graphic Realities

- strong language and images
- big themes we need to examine

a) Life on Earth not our end game

- better for you to
- counter cultural – get all you can, live it up
- day of accounting, judgement (Heb. 9:27)
- something bigger than this earth and our life going on here

b) eternal conscious torment – hell a reality

- unquenchable fire, hell
- Jesus talks clearly about God's wrath
- cross is dealing with a real problem – sin

c) sin is a serious issue

- huge consequences – for us and others
- causes you to
- know yourself – weak areas

d) action is required from you

- cut it off, tear it out, tie a millstone
- build a fence, control your environment
- participation in sanctification

e) everyone will face temptation & trials

- salted with fire
- Jesus words to Peter – asked to sift you
- Matthew 18

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“Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.”

3. Real Character

- salt

- used in certain sacrifices (Lev. 2)
- preservative, gave flavor, essential item
- dead sea – can lose it's use

a) salt is good

- created in image and likeness of God
- unique and giving flavor, preserving etc

THE GOSPEL of **MARK** 9:42-50

b) can lose it's essence – useless

- integrity, not hypocritical
- not claiming to but actually becoming
- roots going deep, character emerging
- beyond behaviors – heart change

c) have salt – be at peace

- conversation – who is greatest
- be a servant, see the vulnerable, perspective
- not comparing or competing - serving

So What?

1. You have a Special Responsibility

- don't miss heart of God for the vulnerable
- take great care – what you say and do matters
- caution – getting others to join you in.....
 - rebellion, sin, theological error

2. We live with some Realities

- reality of eternity
- wrath of God – dealing with sin

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- Hell is real – and terrifying
- there will be trials and temptations
 - affecting not only us – but those around us
- knowing ourselves – dealing with sin important
- a) cut it off – repentance
 - acknowledgement, turning from, pursuing
 - participation with Christ – sanctification
 - takes humility, surrender, confession
 - needs community

b) take preventative measures

- identify environments
- set up fences in your life

3. Live Authentically

- embrace your unique character
- pursue Christ
- flavor your world
- be at peace – deal with self, serve others
 - note – don't cut off others stuff