



God or Hell

Community Group Study Guide: **Mark 9:30-50** –Week of February 11th, 2024

1. Life through Death

Once more, we see that Jesus intentionally veils Himself from the general public. He does this so that He can spend time teaching His disciples. He was trying again to teach them how He would be arrested, killed, and would rise from the dead. The disciples still did not understand. Out of fear, they did not inquire further from Jesus. We see the ongoing effort of Christ to change the mindset of His disciples. They could not understand that victory would be achieved through suffering, or that the Messiah's path would lead Him to die. Even though Christ told them over and over again, they still could not grasp that life would come through death.

2. Greatness through Service

Jesus engages with the disciples, to again change their views on the Kingdom of Heaven. While on the way to Capernaum, they had been discussing who amongst them was the greatest. Jesus then instructs them on how counter-cultural Christianity is. There is still a hierarchy within Christianity, but the criteria for it are radically different. Jesus tells them that to be the greatest, their objective must be to be the servant of all. That those who seek themselves last would find themselves elevated to first. This is a rebuke for all of us. Our pride wants to put ourselves first, but in the Kingdom of Heaven, prioritizing self leads to being last. The greatest amongst us are those who are the greatest servants. To further illustrate this, Jesus uses a small child. He tells the disciples that they should receive this responsibility like they would a child... Taking on total care through sacrificial service. We are to

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

Christ is the ultimate example of service leading to greatness. His death is the utmost representation of this service. Because He has been the greatest servant, He is now worthy of the greatest honor.

Heart

We must combat our natural inclination to return to our past. The pursuit of self and the temptation of the flesh must be replaced with a love for Christ. Furthermore, we must hate the sin that once held us captive, and be willing to take great steps to remove it.

Hands

Remember that the new life of Christ comes out of death. Therefore, but to death all earthly things that remain in you, and put on all that Christ has commanded. Replace the old with a compassion, kindness, meekness, and patience. Bear with and forgive one another.

view those around us as an opportunity to serve, just as you would your child.

3. Power through Loyalty

During this conversation, John informs Jesus how they had tried to stop a man from casting out demons in Jesus' name. John's reasoning for this? "Because he was not following us." Jesus rebukes the disciple's actions in this matter. He reminds them of the dichotomy of what is happening... that there are two sides to this fight. Jesus makes it clear that there are those who are on His side, and those who are not. He instructs the disciples not to oppose those who are on His side, who do mighty works on the behalf of Jesus. Likewise, for us, we should remember that God uses many to do mighty works for His kingdom, and the meaningful part is that they follow God, not man.

4. God or Hell

Jesus goes on to explain the stakes involved with sin. It isn't something to be trifled with; it isn't something to be entertained. The severity of sin is so great, that Jesus uses the metaphor of removing parts of your body in order to get rid of it. Not only is sin very serious in your own life, but it is terrible if you cause it in someone else's life. Jesus states that it is better to be drowned in the sea than to cause a little one to stumble. Ultimately, Jesus once more shows the great divide between good and evil... How you must commit yourself to God, or face the unending burden of Hell.

Read Mark 9:30-50

1. Once again, Jesus tells His disciples about His coming arrest, death, and resurrection. They still are unable to understand. Why are they unable to understand? What is their response to not understanding? How should we respond when we do not understand?
2. How do you become first in the Kingdom of Heaven? How does this radically change the way we should look at our lives? What is the purpose of Jesus' statement in verse 37?
3. What ways has the Christ redefined greatness and significance in your life? How are you learning to trust Him in these areas?
4. Is it right for Christians to strive for greatness? How can we do so in a humble and God-honoring way?
5. **Read Verse 38-41** What is the meaning of Jesus in verses 39-40? How do we see this principle played out in our life today? What is Jesus' meaning in verse 41?
6. **Read Verse 42** Who are the "little ones" that Jesus is referring to? How should the weight of this statement affect our interactions with others?
7. **Read Verses 43-47** How does Jesus' warning and instruction practically play out in our lives? How does/How should this passage change the way we consider sin, and our responses to it?