

Mark 9:14-50 “The Faith of the Servant”

Please stand and open your Bibles to Mark 9:14-29

We are now coming down the mountain of transfiguration with the three disciples. We are getting to the end of Jesus’s earthly ministry, and He has been telling them that He is going to go to Jerusalem and be arrested and die and rise again from the dead. We will see today that they still just don’t get it, but Jesus will turn it into another lesson. Before that happens, He needs to help someone’s son.

Delivering the Tormented

Mark 9:14-29

The first thing we see is that Jesus immediately confronts the scribes who were disputing with the disciples. As soon as Jesus left there, they were starting to cause chaos. This is what a shepherd is supposed to do.

1 Peter 5:2

Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly

Titus 2:15

Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

2 Timothy 4:2

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season.
Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

This is why Jesus has set up the church with leaders. We are here to serve you and to look out for you. We are supposed to confront the wolves and point them out.

Now the problem they had was they could not cast out this particular demon. This is not a medical condition. This is not epilepsy. This is Demon possession! And we are told it is a deaf and mute one. How did they know it was a demon? The possibility of why the disciples were having so much trouble is the Jewish exorcists would always ask the name of the demon and then command them out by name. But anyway, the man comes forward and explains to Jesus what had happened. Now we need to get out of our mind that Jesus is giving a harsh rebuke here. He is just sharing His heart. We are a faithless generation. We doubt more than we believe. The man asked for help, and you need to underline His answer...

Mark 9:23

Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

That is a factual statement and up to you to believe it. And if you don't? Ask Him to help you! We know it is not how much faith you have but where you direct it.

Luke 17:6

So the Lord said, “If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.”

And if you want to increase your faith...

Romans 10:17

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

And when it is all said and done the Disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast it out and He said it could only come out by “prayer and fasting”. This is not a formula. It points to whether you care about them or not. If you pray and fast for someone it means you really care about them. That is what he is saying. Ministry is not a job. It is not a career with a list of formulas that you practice to get it done. If you do not have heart for people you need to get out ASAP!

The second prediction

Mark 9:30-32

Jesus is telling them what is going to happen, and they just can't understand it. We will find out in minute that they are not even listening! Don't hate, are we not doing the same?

Matthew 24:44

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

But what are most Christians doing? Talking about their best life now or how they are bringing Heaven down here to earth. It is same thing they were doing then...

Who is the greatest?

Mark 9:33-37

Jesus confronts them on what they were talking about on the road. They had gotten into a dispute of who would be the greatest. We don't know if this started off on honest rivalry or just joking around. But as Jesus has said...

Matthew 12:34

For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

He then tells them the key to greatness in God's economy, be the servant. What does He do? He takes a child up in His arms and show them what real faith looks like. Childlike faith is real faith. A Child believes and then wants to serve. You don't have to talk them into it. They don't have all the answers but still hang on. If you need someone to pray for you go and ask the kids! Your greatness will never be found in who you are but in what you do. But right in the middle of this teaching by Jesus John speaks up...

John wants to start a denomination!

Mark 9:38-41

Now, the first thing I need to bring up is Jesus is not giving a green light to those that are apostate. This is at the beginning of the ministry of the Church at a time when everyone is invited to Follow Him. Notice what Jesus is correcting, John said that he didn't "Follow Us" meaning the twelve. This all goes back to the argument about who would be the greatest. I am not against other churches and ministries. I am against false unbiblical practices and will point them out when necessary but churches that have some differences in non-essentials that are holding true to God's word I have no business judging. If they are not against us, they are for us. Don't worry if you are into some weird false teaching it won't take long here under our teaching to either get in line with God's word or you'll leave! I love what Jesus says here...

Mark 9:41

For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

You want to be great? You want a high place in the kingdom? Serve everyone, everywhere. This is all about motivation not ability. It's about faithfulness and not skill. Every act you do in the name of Christ will reap huge rewards in the kingdom!

Ministry comes with a warning

Mark 9:42-48

This is some radical talk from Jesus! Where's the love? There are two truths that we learn here. First, that sin is bad and needs to be dealt with. Remember what Paul said in Romans...

Romans 6:1

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Jesus is not advocating that you maim yourself, but that sin is so serious that we need to get rid of the causes of it. (Pride and the cross) We already know for a few weeks back that sin is a heart issue and that is why Jesus will have to die to break its bond on us, but it can still hurt us and our witness. If there is anything in your life that is causing you to sin you need to get rid of it fast!

Second, He is reminding us of the reality of hell. Hell is a real place that will last forever. It is serious. Not something to joke about. The verse He is using is from Isaiah...

Isaiah 66:24

“And they shall go forth and look
Upon the corpses of the men
Who have transgressed against Me.
For their worm does not die,
And their fire is not quenched.
They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

This is the last verse in Isaiah and is speaking of the death of all those at the second coming that have sided with the Antichrist. But that is not the end of them or for any that have rejected the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 19:20-21

Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Revelation 20:10

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Forever!)

Revelation 20:13-14

The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Hell is a real place that you do not want to go to and do not have to. Put your faith in the finished work of Christ while you still can!

But Jesus leaves us with the reason why believers need to stay away from sin...

Mark 9:49-50

“For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.”

Salt was valuable in that age. It was never treated in a way that would have destroyed it. It was not to be left out in the elements to lose its flavor and use. What happens to a believer that is caught up in sin? He becomes a horrible witness. You and I are supposed to be...

Matthew 5:13

You are the salt of the earth

You and I are to watch out for sin. We are not to allow it to reign in our lives.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and

honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; * 6 that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. 7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. 8 Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 3:11

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness

2 Peter 3:14-15

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation

God is merciful to us. He has given us salvation for free and empowered us by the Holy Spirit. Let us make the most of it and have salt in ourselves as we serve Him and one another.