

Last is First: Part 2

Mark 9:38-50

Series: Christ our Focus

1. Introduction:

- a. In last week's portion of scripture we saw Jesus teach the disciples a valuable lesson in humility. Today we will see that same theme continues and we will also discuss the cost of discipleship.
- b. It is important that we as Christians understand that humility and discipleship go hand in hand.
 - i. To be a disciple of Jesus means to walk in his life example. Christ is the highest standard of humility and dedication to the cause of righteousness.
- c. It is also equally important for us to understand that pride is the Christian's greatest weakness. It destroys the unity and harmony of the family of God.
 - i. Pride is one of the favorite tools of the enemy of our souls.
 - ii. **In Speaking of the qualifications for a new pastor, 1 Timothy 3:6** He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.

2. Verses 38-40 – Pride creates unbiblical exclusivity

- a. It appears that the man referenced here was a genuine disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ
- b. However, this man was not one of their group.
 - i. John demonstrates an elitist attitude
 - ii. To John, his call as a disciple is not one of service but entitlement of privilege and exclusion of others.
 - iii. John and the disciples fail to grasp the teaching of humility.
- c. John claims that he was not following "us."
 - i. Presumptuous for him to believe that they were worthy of being followed.
- d. They tell this man to stop doing what they could not do.
 - i. **Mark 9:28** And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"
- e. V. 39 – Do not stop him – anyone authentically working for the kingdom of God should be commended and not condemned.
- f. V. 40 – Jesus is more inclusive than his followers.

3. Verse 41 –a cup of cold water
 - a. One of the few times that Jesus calls himself the messiah
 - b. True and Eternal reward will be offered to the humblest act of kindness done for one of his disciples.
 - i. Vastly different than forbidding a fellow disciple.

4. Verses 42-50 – Introduction
 - a. This passage of scripture is full of graphic terminology, dramatic acts, severe warnings, and shocking threats.
 - b. Discipleship is serious business.
 - c. This message here runs counterculture to modern Christianity.

5. Verse 42 – Radical Love
 - a. Because Christ loves the church, Jesus called for love for other believers that prevents leading them into sin.
 - b. As we learned last Sunday, how one treats a fellow believer is how one is treating Christ—Matthew 25.
 - c. The little ones here are not the children – these believe in the Lord.
 - d. This is speaking about disciples.
 - e. The word sin – Greek *skandalizō*—stumble.
 - i. Causing one to be tripped by temptation.
 - ii. This is a dire warning for each disciples to have the utmost care for a fellow disciple.
 - f. It would be better – for them to drown in the depths of the sea than to cause one disciples to fall into temptation.
 - i. Our duty is great.
 - g. Four ways we cause a fellow disciple to sin:
 - i. Direct temptation – to the point
 - ii. Indirect Temptation – Provoking your children to wrath by playing favorites.
 - iii. Setting a Sinful Example –
 - iv. Failing to Stimulate Righteousness –
 1. **Hebrews 10:24** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,

6. Verses 43-48 – Purity – Do not endanger yourself
 - a. Metaphor –
 - i. Instruction to hack off body parts that cause one to stumble

- ii. This means to remove anything, and God means anything, from our lives that impedes us from entering into eternal life in the kingdom of God.
 - iii. This must be done continuously as we struggle with the sin of this world continuously.
 - iv. A person with one eye, hand, and foot is still capable of sinning.
 - v. The problem with man is the heart.
 - b. We value eyes, hands, and feet supremely but there is not more worthwhile than eternal glory.
 - i. Eyes – what we view
 - ii. Hands – what we do
 - iii. Feet – where we go
 - c. We are told that we must shun sin –
 - i. **Romans 8:13** For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
 - ii. **Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
 - iii. **Titus 2:11-12** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, (12) training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,
 - d. We are asked to give up what is highly important to us (eyes, hands, and feet) in order to gain what has incalculable worth.
 - e. The choice is between God’s Kingdom and an unquenchable fire.
 - f. Verse 48 – ***Gehenna*** – the eternal hell, the lake of fire.
 - i. Old Testament – The Valley of Hinnon
 - 1. Apostate Israel sacrificed their babies in the fire to the false god Molech – contrary to what God had revealed to them.
 - 2. It became known as ***Tophet***—meaning drum. Drown all that babies cries.
 - 3. Josiah destroyed that place and desecrated it by making it the garbage dump of Israel where the fire continuously burned and never die.
 - 4. Christ uses the example for the lake of fire.

7. Verse 49 – Everyone will be salted by fire

- a. The Grain offering –
 - i. **Leviticus 2:13** You shall season all your grain offerings with salt. You shall not let the salt of the covenant with your God be missing from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.
 - ii. This offering demonstrated total consecration to God.
 - iii. Everyone—all believers—should make a long-term, enduring, permanent sacrifice of their lives to God.
 - 1. **Romans 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
 - iv. As believers, we are going to be salted by fire through the trials that we undergo.
8. Verse 50 –Have Salt in yourselves
- a. By preserving righteousness in our daily lives
 - i. Walking in humility
 - ii. Cutting away what would hinder us
 - iii. Living consecrated lives
 - b. And be at peace with one another –
 - i. Seek peace
 - 1. **Romans 12:18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.
 - ii. Serve one another – stop trying to get your way, be first, be the greatest!
9. Conclusion –
- a. **Ephesians 4:31-32** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. (32) Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.