**September 23, 2021**

**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

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**“SALTY SAINTS”**

**Mark 9:30-50**

***Mark 9:30 "And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know [it]."***

***Mark 9:31 "For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day."***

***Mark 9:32 "But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him."***

Jesus again foretells His death. The text implies that He sought to travel unnoticed in order to have undisturbed time to instill very difficult teaching in the disciples’ hearts. Jesus teaches about true greatness (servanthood), unity, and judgment. They traveled from there through Galilee, but Jesus was keeping a low profile. He was focused on teaching his disciples. Again, he told them that he would be betrayed, killed, and would rise three days later. However, they were just as confused about this second prediction as they were about the first.

***Mark 8:31-33***

***31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.***

***32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.***

***33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.***

We see, here, that Jesus left the area of Caesarea Phillipi. He went through Galilee and went aside with just the disciples, so that He could teach them alone. Jesus was telling them in detail about His death on the cross and was reminding them that He would rise from the grave. He told them over and over that this would happen. He wanted them to still believe that He was Messiah. The disciples forgot everything He had told them when He died, and Peter denied he even knew Him. They, for some reason, didn't understand that He was warning them that He would be crucified.

***Mark 9:33 "And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?"***

***Mark 9:34 "But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who [should be] the greatest."***

***Mark 9:35 "And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, [the same] shall be last of all, and servant of all."***

Upon their arrival in Capernaum on the north side of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus asked his disciples to explain their argument he had overheard while they were traveling. Obviously, they hadn’t realized that the Master had been listening because they all fell silent. They were ashamed to admit that they’d been arguing about which of them was the greatest. Contrary to normal human assumptions, greatness is not a matter of dominance but of service of being dominated by the will of God. This house was, probably, Peter's house, because Peter had a house near the Sea of Galilee in Capernaum. Jesus knew what they were talking about (they could keep no secrets from him). They really were afraid to tell Him because they had been arguing about who would be the greatest in the Lord's kingdom. You see from this that it was not necessary for them to tell Jesus, He already knew what they had been arguing about. In an indirect way, Jesus shamed them for wanting to be first. The Lord honors the humble, not the proud. It’s interesting to note Jesus’s response. He didn’t correct them for having a desire to be great; rather, he corrected them with regard to the manner of becoming great. Greatness comes by being a servant to others not by exalting yourself above others. You must believe that God will honor your servanthood in history and in eternity.

***Mark 9:36 "And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,"***

***Mark 9:37 "Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me."***

Jesus illustrated his point with a child. To show kindness to a child who can offer nothing in return is to serve God. Greatness is not achieved through marvelous actions that all see. It’s often achieved through lowly and unseen acts of service toward those who cannot repay. But God sees, and God repays. Child may refer to just that; or Jesus may be anticipating John’s report in verse 38 by saying, in effect, “You should be tolerant of those who show a measure of openness to Me, and thus to God, even if their faith lacks maturity.” We see, here, Jesus held and hugged a child, perhaps Peter's child. He really was saying that you must become innocent as this little child to be great in God's kingdom. Jesus was, also, saying to receive children into the kingdom of God. The innocence of the child was what appealed to Jesus. We must be humble and not proud. Jesus said an interesting thing about receiving Him. You receive the Father who sent Jesus. This could apply to ministers, too. If they receive his message, they receive the One who sent him. If they reject him, they have rejected the Lord who sent him.

***Mark 9:38 "And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us."***

Casting out devils was one of the things that Jesus had told the disciples to do as they went through the country ministering. John was upset because this man was not one of the twelve and was using the name of the Lord to cast the evil spirits out. The disciples told him not to do this; but Jesus said that as long as he cast them out in the name of Jesus, the man was on Jesus' side. Possibly, he was a convert of one of their meetings who had enough faith for it to work. Jesus said it all in the next verse.

***Mark 9:39 "But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me."***

***Mark 9:40 "For he that is not against us is on our part."***

***Mark 9:41 "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."***

They were offended when they saw an exorcist casting out demons in Jesus’s name because, they said, He wasn’t following us. They considered themselves part of an exclusive team. After all, they were the only ones they knew who’d been deputized by Jesus to minister in his name. Jesus made it clear that someone cannot work for him and against him at the same time. Whoever is not against us is for us. Then he broadened the scope of that principle beyond exorcisms. Not only would God reward the man for casting out demons in Jesus’s name, but he will also reward all kind deeds done in Jesus’s name even giving a fellow disciple of Christ a cup of water. God sees and remembers all things done for his glory and for the good of others, especially those who belong to the household of faith. This does not mean that every miracle-worker is automatically blessed of God.

***Galatians 6:10 “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”***

***Matthew 7:22-23 “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?***

***23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”***

This does not contradict his teaching in Matthew. The two verses address different situations. When it comes to the critical point of accepting or rejecting Jesus, not being for Jesus amounts to opposing Him.

***Matthew 12:30 “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.”***

***John 3:18 “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”***

But in the case of someone attempting to work in Christ’s name, but perhaps with less than a full knowledge of Him, there is no need to quench the smoking wick. John was spokesman for the disciples this time. This tells me that one group should not be arguing with the other group, because they are not of the same denomination. If they are doing good in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, leave them alone. God does not overlook the slightest thing. Every good deed is noted, even if it is no more than giving a drink of water to the thirsty.

***Mark 9:42 "And whosoever shall offend one of [these] little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."***

The mention of reward in verse 41 causes Jesus to warn of the equally certain consequences of defying His words.If anyone causes one of these little ones like the child in (vs 36-37) or the man in (vs 38-39) who believe in Jesus to be led astray, he would be better off having a millstone wrapped around his neck and tossed into the sea. A millstone was used to grind grain, and it was so heavy that a donkey was typically used to move it. Thus, the consequences are grave for leading a follower of Christ astray through deception or false teaching. God’s severe judgment will fall. These little children cannot fight their battles for themselves, and Jesus protects them. It seems as though many little ones do believe in Jesus. To have a millstone hung around your neck and to be thrown into the sea, you would have no chance of survival. You can see how evil a sin it is in the Lord's sight for you to offend a little one who believes in Him.

***1 Corinthians 8:9-13***

***9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.***

***10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;***

***11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?***

***12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.***

***13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.***

***Mark 9:43 "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:"***

***Mark 9:44 "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."***

***Mark 9:45 "And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:"***

***Mark 9:46 "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."***

This was just speaking of things that cause you to sin should be removed from your life. It would seem drastic to cut your hand off, but anything you could do to keep from going to hell would be worth the loss. This was, possibly, speaking of the lake of fire. This place is so terrible that it is actually beyond our wildest dreams. Here, again, we see that if our feet are taking us to the wrong places, we would be better off if we couldn't walk. Whatever it takes to keep us from sinning and going to hell is what we must do.

***Mark 9:47 "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:"***

***Mark 9:48 "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."***

Jesus said if you looked upon a woman to lust, you had committed adultery already in your heart. The eye can get you into trouble. Lust is carried out by first looking with the eye. The eye can be evil if it is not controlled. Therefore, the warning here. Nothing is worse than going to hell. Compared to hell, the loss of an eye would be minor. There are a variety of things that can keep a person from coming to Christ, including the hand foot and eye. Of course, you can cut off your hand, hack off your foot, and gouge out your eye and still fail to believe in Christ. But Jesus’s point was that the hand (representing things you handle), the foot (representing the places you go), and the eye (symbolizing the things you look at) can open doors to sin; thus, an unbeliever must take drastic measures to remove sinful hindrances from coming to faith. Inconveniencing oneself and forgoing pleasure are far preferable to being thrown into hell. The kingdom of God is worth any sacrifice. Quoting from Isaiah, Jesus described hell as a place where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

***Isaiah 66:24 “And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”***

There are several things we learn about hell from this brief statement. First, it’s clear that Jesus considered it a real place. So though many today deny the existence of hell, their claims run contrary to Jesus’s. Second, hell is a place of intense suffering, both external and internal. The “fire” represents the source of external suffering. The “worm” represents the source of internal suffering the gnawing from within. Third, hell is eternal. Some today argue that unbelievers are “annihilated” after death, but Jesus says the worm doesn’t die and the fire isn’t quenched. The suffering of hell, then, is never-ending. The good news of Jesus Christ is so good because the bad news of hell is so bad.

***Mark 9:49 "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt."***

***Mark 9:50 Salt [is] good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."***

Salting with fire in a spiritual sense could be purifying and preserving the Christian. We know in the spiritual sense God purifies with His fire. Perhaps, this means we shall be preserved (salted) with the fire of the Holy Ghost. Each Christian is tried, as if with fire. Salt is a preservative. You must constantly walk in your saved condition. How can you bring others to a saving knowledge of God, if you have lost your own salvation? To know within yourself that you are saved, walking daily in that salvation brings peace. Even believers (signified by the word everyone) will have to deal with the salt of trial in their lives. As Old Testament sacrifices were offered with salt, so believers must live their lives with sacrifice in mind. Salt had a variety of helpful uses in New Testament times: it was a medicine, a seasoning, and a preservative. Similarly, believers are to be like salt in promoting peace among fellow believers. This demonstrates the preserving power of God.

***Matthew 5:13 “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”***

**QUESTIONS**

1. Why did Jesus not want anyone to know that He was going through Galilee?
2. Where did Jesus go after Galilee?
3. Who had a home there?
4. What were they talking about along the way?
5. If you desire to be first, you shall be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. Who did Jesus take unto Him to teach a lesson with?
7. If you receive a little child in Jesus' name, you receive whom?
8. Who was the child, probably?
9. Why did Jesus say, "forbid him not"?
10. Who was the man, probably?
11. In V-41, what small offering will Jesus not forget?
12. Who fights children's battles for them?
13. If your hand causes you to sin, what should you do?
14. Hell is so bad that the fire is never \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
15. If your feet are taking you places to sin, it would be better if you were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
16. Jesus said, if you lust after a woman with your eyes, you have done what?
17. What does salting with fire mean in a spiritual sense?
18. What does salting do?
19. What is salt?
20. Walking daily in your salvation brings what?