

## Mark 9:42-50

We are now back in Mark. Last time here, we covered **Chapter 9:33-41**. We learned that God was giving instructions before giving the lessons. What is really neat is the lesson actually flows in great detail what we covered in our service right before the New Year. We, by the way of refreshing our memory, showed how there is to be humility in the life of the believers. We also learned about being divided and what that should and should not look like. Now we discuss the teaching of offenses and then we get to the actual lesson that God wants us to learn.

- I. Third thing to watch for – Causing Stumbling
  - a. Interesting word stumbling
    - i. It can be translated as sin, offend, stumble, cause
    - ii. Accordingly, it has been used to describe that which causes to close (a stick in a bear trap) or even to entice to something wrong.
  - b. This stumbling of either someone else who is not as strong as we are Spiritually (the child) or even to ourselves (hand, foot and eye), brings with it very horrible results.
    - i. Of course, the focus being on the eternal, we realize the stumbling is that of a spiritual nature. Not a physical.
    - ii. The fear and the warning is to not cause those who are weaker than we are spiritually to be caught in a trap of which is sin
  - c. There is great concern of this for ALL BELIEVERS TO WATCH FOR
    - i. Jesus here is teaching on this of causing one to stumble – It would be wise to heed **1 Corinthians 10:32**
    - ii. Paul also warns about this
      1. **1 Corinthians 8:7-13** – Food is the object, but this can be used for anything
      2. There are many other verses of warning - **Romans 14:14-22; 1 Corinthians 10:25-29; Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 10:23**
      3. Why such warnings? – **2 Corinthians 6:3<sup>1</sup>**
      4. Every concern is not just for the temporal loss of anything...everything, EVERYTHING is geared for the effective working and ministering in the world around us. That is it!
- II. There is a plea here from Jesus?
  - a. The plea is to do whatever drastic means necessary to not offend one another...even if it means we put ourselves into bad positions and hurt – **1 Corinthians 6:7**
    - i. It is drastic to put a millstone around our heads and jump into the ocean
      1. First, what is a mill stone – **It was a heavy stone that was used to grind grain to wheat. Some estimates was it was a stone about 5-6 feet in diameter and about 8-10 inches thick. The weight with this dimension would have weighed about 1600 lbs give or take a few hundred**

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<sup>1</sup> **2 Corinthians 6:3** We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed.

depending on the size. Question: How far can we swim with 1600 lbs on our neck?

2. Even the smaller “Grinding stone” which sat on top of the other one was heavy enough to kill someone. **Judges 9:53**
  - ii. It is drastic to cut off our foot, hand and pluck out our eye
  - iii. However, it is better for us to cut off our hands, feet, pop out our eyes, and jump into the ocean with a millstone weighing us down compared to causing offense.
    1. We are to watch out for those who are not as strong in the faith as we are.
    2. We need to help guard them, help grow them, and help them to mature – **Proverbs 27:17**<sup>2</sup>
- III. So...what is the lesson? Why these three things
- a. Being humble, not being divided and not causing a brother to stumble serves one purpose and therefore Jesus has taught this.
  - b. The answer is **Mark 9:49-50** – We are called to be salt
  - c. Salt is a very powerful thing.
    - i. It can enhance food
    - ii. It can destroy food. (Example: In college the salt poured in my food)
    - iii. It can power objects (Salt Water specifically)
    - iv. it can drive people to the water.
  - d. Salt is good, unless it is bad. Then it is thrown out
  - e. God then calls us to be salty in this world. We are to have salt.
  - f. By our life (remember what we covered on the Sunday before New Years Eve) we can either chase people away or drive people to the water
    - i. We may need to, as we have seen, dedicate or re-dedicate our lives to Jesus
    - ii. We can live in such a way to make mankind thirsty for water. What water?
      1. The water of life. – **John 4:14**<sup>3</sup>
      2. Question...who is the water of life? – **John 7:38-39**
      3. If the Holy Spirit is the Water of life, and the Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity, and Jesus is part of the Trinity and Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one that means that Jesus is the Water of Life!
    - iii. This is a question we all must ask ourselves... “Is my life drawing all men toward God and true water or pushing away?”
      1. That is it.
      2. Our answer will dictate whether we rededicate our lives to God or not.

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<sup>2</sup> **Proverbs 27:17** As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

<sup>3</sup> **John 4:14** but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."