

Mark 9.30-50

Great News for a New Year

FIRST Sunday of 2009 > Message Nothing NEW, but SOMETHING Wonderful Truth to CARRY US throughout Whole Year, Whole Life, all of ETERNITY

We Found NEW Joy > HEARD Christmas Story & SUNG CAROLS of Christ TIMELESS Message of BIBLE NEVER becomes TIRED OLD Message FRESH as LIFE ITSELF > New UNDERSTANDING and AFFIRMATION Reach NEW STAGE of Life > Find God WAITING at SIGNPOST – *Been Here!*

Bible FULL of GREAT NEWS > GREATEST! > God's ADVENT in JESUS So IMPORTANT NEW Form of Literature: EVANGEL, Gospel, GREAT NEWS First Recorded by man named Mark – Under INSPIRATION of God the Holy Spirit NEXT 5 Months 2009 CONTINUE & COMPLETE Study of MARK, God willing

1. Believe the Cross 2. Be the Church 3. Become like Christ

vs. 30,31 They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples.

NEW FOCUS of Jesus > Gospel Shifts from MIRACLES to MENTORING THRU Galilee > In TRANSIT > Heading for DIVINE Appointment in Jerusalem No Desire for CROWDS but CONCENTRATION on Teaching DISCIPLES

1. Believe the Cross: Forgiven

vs. 31,32 He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

Chapters 8,9,10 Jesus teaches Disciples > about His UPCOMING SUFFERING
TURNING POINT of Jesus Ministry > Heading for CROSS in Jerusalem
THIS VERY IMPORTANT Truth NEEDS to be REPEATED and RECEIVED

a. Confused v. 32 But they did not understand what he meant....

Time was SHORT and DISCIPLES still SPIRITUALLY DULL

Jesus asked them: "...Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened?
Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear?" Mark 8:17-18

Must've WONDERED how is Church to Grow led by MENTAL MIDGETS?

UNDERSTANDABLE that this NEWS was HARD for them to PROCESS
How COULD MAN of GLORY (Son of Man) be the SUFFERING SERVANT?

Son of Man DESERVES CROWN - NOT a CROSS

Should be SEATED on a THRONE – NOT Hanging from a TREE

Yet Even AFTER – Death – Resurrec – Ascension – Pentecost – EVENTS
CHRISTIANS in GALATIA – Did NOT UNDERSTAND Importance of CROSS

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes *Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified*. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by *believing what you heard*?... Consider Abraham: "*He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.*" Understand, then, that *those who believe* are children of Abraham...*So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith...Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." He redeemed us...* Galatians 3:1-14

Gospel: NOT ABOUT US > Beginning to End – Day we BELIEVE to Day we DIE
 Christian LIFE – One of GRATEFUL DEPENDENCE in Him who SAVED US
 He is ONLY SAVIOR – and FAITH in CROSS is ONLY WAY to BE SAVED
 YOU May Say We KNOW That – You’re PREACHING to Choir – I HOPE SO!

Heaven for the Godless? by Charles M. Blow New York Times - December 26, 2008

In June, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life published a controversial survey in which 70 percent of Americans said that they believed *religions other than theirs could lead to eternal life.* This threw evangelicals into a tizzy. After all, the Bible makes it clear that heaven is a velvet-roped V.I.P. area reserved for Christians. Jesus said so: “I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” But the survey suggested that *Americans just weren’t buying that.* / The evangelicals complained that people must not have understood the question. / So in August, Pew asked the question again. (They released the results last week.) *Sixty-five percent* of respondents said — again — that *other religions could lead to eternal life.* But this time, to clear up any confusion, Pew asked them to specify which religions. The respondents essentially said *all of them.* And nearly half also thought that atheists could go to heaven — dragged there kicking and screaming, no doubt — and most thought that people with no religious faith also could go. What on earth does this mean? / One very plausible explanation is that Americans just want good things to come to good people, regardless of their faith...“We are a multicultural society, and people expect this American life to continue the same way in heaven” ...we meet so many good people of different faiths that it’s hard for us to imagine God letting them go to hell. In fact, in the most recent survey, Pew asked people what they thought determined whether a person would achieve eternal life. Nearly as *many Christians said you could achieve eternal life by just being a good person as said that you had to believe in Jesus...I don’t think that they are ignorant about this most basic tenet of their faith. I think that they are choosing to ignore it ... for goodness sake.*

Skimmed 125 Written Responses > Hooray! America is so OPEN MINDED!
DAMN those CLOSE MINDED Evangelicals – think ONLY THEY get Heaven!

Bible > If you MISS JESUS & CROSS – You Miss EVERYTHING – Eternally!

What more does God have to do? If God becomes man, lives a perfect life, proves Himself with an abundance of miracles, endures the unspeakable suffering of a cross, is raised from the dead in three days, is seen alive by more than 500 people at one time, teaches the Apostles for 40 days after His resurrection, ascends visibly into heaven --- if all that happened. And if God has left an amazingly accurate record of this in a book. And if portions of that book are now in more than 1000 languages. And if churches - even though despised and attacked for two millennia - exist in every nation of the world (openly or secretly). And if the world has an abundance of opportunity to hear this good news. If, after all that, someone dares to say I don't care, I won't believe, I reject Jesus. Then I say, let them go to hell. Why would they want heaven – *an eternity worshipping God!*? Those who dare to insult God by their arrogant unbelief have turned their backs on Him. Yours Truly

b. Concerned v. 31 "The Son of Man is going to be *betrayed*..."

1st Time Jesus uses Word: DELIVERED to Hands of MEN > TREACHERY
ALREADY being BETRAYED > Not Yet Carried OUT but it was a CERTAINTY
Jesus REMAINED VERY APPROACHABLE > WELCOMING and OPEN

v. 32 they...were afraid to ask him about it / Word CROSS is STUMBLING Block
FELT that AWKWARDNESS in Relations with People SHARED MESSAGE With
DRIFT AWAY – PRICE TOO High – DEMANDS Too Great
IMPLICATIONS too ENORMOUS to CONSIDER / IGNORE IT, May Go Away!
DESTINY of Jesus > also DUTY of DISCIPLES

c. Cash In

v. 33 They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?"

Jesus & DISCIPLES Walked SINGLE-FILE on NARROW TRAILS

RABBI / MASTER always WALKED in FRONT > 12 FOLLOWED BEHIND

End of DAY'S WALK > Confronted by QUESTION of DAY'S DEBATE

v. 34 But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about *who was the greatest*.

SURPRISED by POSTURING of Disciples for MOST IMPORTANT PLACES?

Peter, James, John INVITED to TRANSFIGURATION > Got JUMP on Others

IF MESSIANIC Reign is REALLY Coming > ***I better GET MY SHARE!!***

Contrast between Jesus SELF-GIVING and DISCIPLE'S SELFISHNESS

If we did not know our own hearts we would find it difficult to believe that this really happened. But any disciple who knows himself hears the echoes in his own life of such unfaithfulness. Sinclair Ferguson

Perhaps ONE REASON Some American's DON'T BELIEVE the CROSS

Is ALL THEY SEE is the CASH – Some T.V. EVANGELISTS Incredibly RICH!

BEST Thing about TELEVISION Preachers is that you can TURN them OFF!

d. Child-like

vs. 35-37 Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

INTENTIONAL – DELIBERATE Teaching > Sit Down, Calling Them, Saying

How OFTEN do we give that QUALITY Time to Others? Even our own KIDS
Turn off TV, Computer, Phone > Tell them YOU ARE THAT IMPORTANT!

ENACTED PARABLE > EMBRACED this SURPRISED & HAPPY CHILD
NO CLAIM on Jesus TIME – Nothing of WORTH to GIVE > FREELY LOVED
MUST be CARED For > NO One Gets Any POINTS for giving Kid ATTENTION
Why EVERY CHURCH must FIGHT to get any SUNDAY SCHOOL Teachers

Lowliness is the pathway to greatness in the kingdom. Victor Babajide Cole

Jesus' ARAMAIC Language > Word for Child = Word for SERVANT

Christmas with GRANDDAUGHTER > Reminder of ABSOLUTE WONDER!
See in FACE the FASCINATION at BEAUTIFUL LIGHTS and DECORATIONS
Feel the URGENCY and OPENING a PRESENT with their NAME on Tag
UNBOUNDED JOY at GETTING JUST what WANTED but Never EXPECTED

Inevitably – Gift that CHEAPEST, Most SIMPLE evokes GREATEST THRILL
Second-Hand pair of PLASTIC Clickety-Clack SLIP-ON Sandals > Danced w/ Joy!
Not yet 5 – Endured PAIN of WOMANHOOD: Forced Feet into Shoes TOO Small
Clickety-Clacked around HOUSE with Smile covering GRIMACE – *‘they fit fine!’*

THAT is how WE BELIEVE the CROSS > Like Wonder of Child at Christmas
Something NEVER EXPECTED and could NEVER IMAGINE – WHY ME??

FAIR QUESTION: Why SUCH GRUESOME Suffering of GLORIOUS God?
WHY should ONE so GOOD DIE for ONES SO BAD like US?

ANSWER: Never FULLY Explained – WONDER of Such LOVE?

One Reason HEAVEN is ETERNAL – God’s PRAISE will be INEXHAUSTIBLE
ETERNITY is TOO SHORT a Time to PRAISE Him for Such LOVE

AMAZED Child – Sheer SURPRISE & JOY – No WORDS to Speak – Breathless!

“These in white robes - who are they, and where did they come from?"... "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and *made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." When he opened the seventh seal, *there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.* Revelation 7:13-8:1

REDEEMED in WHITE – That is US! – Great PROMISES – They’re OURS!
SILENCE – That’ll be US TOO! – What can we SAY to Such a GREAT Savior?!

May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Galatians 6:14

2. Be the Church: Family

a. For Us

v. 38 "Teacher," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because *he was not one of us.*"

John wants to BLOCK OUT these PARTY-CRASHERS – Jesus is OURS
 "WE" and "US" >> JOHN was Speaking for ALL the Disciples

9 Disciples who did NOT view TRANSFIGURATION > UNABLE to HEAL
 JOHN feels Need to DEFEND HIS HOMIES against UNKNOWN Exorcists

NO UNauthorized Use of JESUS' Name, *John had TITLE & POSITION Not Them*

John MORE Concerned w/ ISSUE of ACCREDITATION > NOT the Exorcism
 Disciples CLAIMED Exclusive Right to THEIR Rabbi // Other Traveling Teachers

TODAY – More Subtle but STILL HAPPENS – Church Groups, Staff, Denomin.
 COMPETITION has been INSTITUTIONALIZED into Church SYSTEMS

It shows how impregnated they were with the temper of their own culture where
 questions of precedence and rank were constantly arising. William Lane

GENTLE JESUS is also a JUST JUDGE > Words must NOT be IGNORED

v. 42 "And if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it
 would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around
 his neck.

Romans DID THIS in Galilee to INSURRECTIONIST Leader of ZEALOTS
 LARGE Millstone > SIZE Pulled by DONKEY – Most SEVERE Language

RE: Stopping WORKERS for Jesus > Applies to ALL Children of KINGDOM
 DOING CHURCH for YOURSELF is CLEARLY NOT the Way to Please JESUS

b. For Others

vs. 39,40 "Do not stop him," Jesus said. "No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for *whoever is not against us is for us.*"

GENTLE Rebuke > John's word were CONFESSIO Laced with CONFUSIO
Disciples OBSTRUCTIONISTS > Jesus was OPPORTUNIST / Many Possibilities

A young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses' aide since youth, spoke up and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!" But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!"
Numbers 11:27-30

ALL who Believe in Jesus as Lord & Savior are ONE BODY in Him
It is CHRIST'S CHURCH not a CHRISTIAN CLUB

TODAY we meet People who say "I do not have Anything AGAINST Jesus"
Is THAT TEPID Enthusiasm ENOUGH to be His DISCIPLE?

OTHER Side of Coin: Matthew 12:30

"He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters"

Jesus RESPONDING to John's THEM & US Mentality against OTHERS

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.
Romans 15:7

These STRANGERS who SERVE JESUS are FRIENDS NOT FOES
FIGHTS in the FAMILY of Faith > DESTROYS our TESTIMONY

v. 50 Jesus: "...be at peace with each other"

ICF Must not be COLLECTION of CLIQUES – United Family, KNOW Each other
10 Minute SUGGESTION – Ten Minutes of Tea Time / Ending talk to OTHERS

c. For Him

v. 41 I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water *in my name* because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.

NEVER appreciated VERSE until LIVED THRU 'Dry Season' in AFRICA



Without DEAR SISTER GRACE to HAUL WATER on HEAD we'd be DEAD!

TANGIBLE Acts FOR Others are SEEN by JESUS & RECEIVED by Jesus

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, *whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.*' Matthew 25:37-40

NO TRIVIAL Acts in the KINGDOM of God > Only Faith & Obedience

Not Necessary to do BIG, VISIBLE EXPLOITS

UNSEEN Acts – Welcome Child – Give Water > SEEN by All-Seeing GOD

3. Become like Christ: Focused

a. Fire of Condemnation

vs. 43-47 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell

Palestinians Rarely REFER to ABSTRACT Activities: SIN is CONCRETE
Sin NOT ABSTRACT – Not ONLY Spiritual, Realm of FEELINGS, EMOTIONS
Christian Science: SIN is in ONLY THOUGHTS > but Bible: TOTAL Depravity

Not as BAD as we COULD be, but Not as GOOD as we SHOULD Be
EVERY Part of BEING – Head to Foot – TAINTED & TWISTED by SIN

We express our sinfulness through what we do with our hands, what we gaze at with our eyes, where we go to on our feet...We are faced with two alternatives: kill sin, or sin will eventually kill us. Sinclair Ferguson

Sin CONDEMNED: Language of Final JUDGMENT: Enter LIFE or Go to HELL

Sin has IRREVERSIBLE EFFECTS with ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES

That is WHY Sin must be CUT OFF > Very HARD to DO

No Reconciliation – No Negotiation – ONLY RADICAL SEPARATION

Not a LIGHT Thing – NOT CHEAP, EASY, INSTANT to be CLAIMED

Whatever in one's life tempts one to be untrue to God must be discarded, promptly and decisively, even as a surgeon amputates a hand or a leg in order to save a life.

William Lane

Bible use word LIFE = LIFE WITH GOD / ie. The KINGDOM of God
 HIGHEST Allegiance > SOVEREIGNTY of God and RULE of Jesus
 RELATIVE, TEMPORARY Value of Physical LIFE / ETERNAL Value of Soul
 ALTERNATIVE to ENTERING Kingdom / be THROWN into HELL

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness...Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.

Romans 6:13,19

v. 48 where "'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'

Quote from ISAIAH > about END TIME JUDGMENT

HELL is FOREVER > Picture of TORTURE and INCINERATION

b. Fire of Purification v. 49 Everyone will be salted with fire.

CONTRAST between FIRE of Hell and FIRE of HOLINESS

FIRE of PUNISHMENT or Fire of PURIFYING

Peter – Source for Mark – wrote to Church in ROME SUFFERING under NERO

These (*trials*) have come so that your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire-may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 1 Peter 1.7

Satan promises you glory now, but the pain comes later. Jesus calls us to suffering now, and then we will enjoy the glory. Warren Wiersbe

c. Salt of Consecration

HEBREW Offerings were to be SEASONED with SALT -

Season all your grain offerings with salt. Do not leave the salt of the covenant of your God out of your grain offerings; add salt to all your offerings. Leviticus 2:13 v. 50 "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves"

SALT is BASIC, ESSENTIAL Commodity to LIFE ITSELF
The world cannot survive without salt. Tractate Sopherim XV.8

ONLY form of PRESERVATION in the ANCIENT WORLD
SALT from DEAD SEA was known to LOSE its SAVORY QUALITIES

What SETS Christians APART is not RANK or WORTH but SALTINESS
ALLEGIANCE to the SAVIOR and the GOSPEL

CANNOT POINT People way OUT of World if we LOOK just LIKE the World
END Anticlimax? NO! Jesus EMPHASIZING Importance of Holy COMMUNITY

Let your conversation be always full of grace, *seasoned with salt*, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Colossians 4:6

Faith EMERGES > TESTED and PURIFIED for God's GLORY

Jesus tells DISCIPLES > Going to CROSS – UNIMAGINABLE SUFFERING!
Not RUNNING AWAY but REACHING TOWARD It > EMBRACING the Cross

Jesus BORE the Cross – because He SAW BEYOND It – God's BIG PICTURE
Jesus NOT a MASOCHIST – Man on a MISSION – Focused like LASER BEAM

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than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, 48 where "'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.' 49 Everyone will be salted with fire. 50 "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other."

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