

Afraid To Ask / Stumbling Blocks of the Believer

Mark Chapter 9

A. Afraid to Ask

Mar 9:1 **1) On the Mountain** vs 1-13

And Jesus was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."

- *Talking about the transfiguration "standing here" "see the Kingdom of God" "Not taste death"*

Mar 9:2 Six days later, Jesus *took with Him Peter and James and John, and *brought them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them;

- *High Mountain would be Mount Hermon.*
- *Luke 9:29 says Jesus was Praying. Luke 9:32 says disciples fell asleep.*
- *Transfigured - In entirety not in appearance, but totality. Not in hypocrisy but in fullness.*
- *Do you was to be transfigured fully or have the appearance. It is the difference between praying and falling asleep. You see the disciples were not transfigured. This prayer is the private prayer between a man and God. This is where one is transfigured. In your private prayer life.*
 - *No Prayer (sleeping) no change*
 - *Public Prayer too much posturing not enough humility*
 - *Private Prayer honest conversation with God free from shame yet we can reveal who we really are to someone. And someone who can make a change in us.*

Mar 9:3 and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

Mar 9:4 Elijah appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.

- *1 Cor 13:12 "we shall know as we are known."*
- *The disciples recognized Elijah and Moses. They didn't wallet pictures of these guys.*
- *Luke 9:31 they were talking about Jesus soon departure in Jerusalem. (KJV says decease. Not death but the Hebrew means exodus.)*
- *Moses and Elijah represent the Law and the Prophets. The days ahead, the crucifixion and death of Jesus will be fulfilling all the Law and Prophets. (1 Cor 15:3 & Luke 24:4)*

Mar 9:5 Peter *said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

Mar 9:6 For he did not know what to answer; for they became terrified.

Mar 9:7 Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!"

- *Peter (who was sleeping) has an idea. Peter feels he has to say something. Notice the selfish nature of what is said. "It is good for us" - He was implying lets stay here. Forget the rest of the guys.*
- *Elijah and Moses are rolling their eyes*
- *God tells him from the clouds. to be quiet and listen to Jesus. We need to listen to Jesus. Jesus didn't come to abolish the Law and the Prophets but to fulfill them. Many want to live under law. But God says to Listen to Jesus.*
- *Why did Peter blurt out such a vain idea? Verse 6 has the answer. He didn't know what to say and they were (KJV) sore afraid.*
- *If ever you do not know what to say, If ever you are sore afraid ...say nothing.*

- Mar 9:8 All at once they looked around and saw no one with them anymore, except Jesus alone.
- "Jesus Alone" This is a beautiful picture of the Christian. In our lives we tried to be good. We tried to live according to law (MOSES) and for a myriad of reasons we fail. We can't seem to behave according to God's holy standard. The Law shows us we have sinned. We tried to be gifted to have some special knowledge or ability (ELIJAH) that would set us apart from worldly ways and yet we find that I seem to find the real me and I am falling short.
 - Then is when we see all these other attempts at following God are vain. We have no hope in our own ability or giftedness. We come to realize that He alone stands there with GRACE for us. No other option remains for you. He alone is your Savior. Jesus alone..
- Mar 9:9 As they were coming down from the mountain, He gave them orders not to relate to anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man rose from the dead.
- Mar 9:10 They seized upon that statement, discussing with one another what rising from the dead meant.
- Jews believed in a general resurrection Dan 12 Job 19 Isaiah 26 the just and unjust raised together.
 - This passage "from the dead" because of a 'ek" (a mark before the vowel is a preposition that effects genitive.) the "from the dead" reads "out from among the dead" Jesus resurrection is separate. It is His resurrection separated from a general resurrection that they were wondering about.
 - This is a new concept for them "Rising out from the dead" More will be taught later but this was a new concept for these disciples.
 - 1st Resurrection (a category not an event)
 - Matthew 27:52-53 Tombs were opened and many walked into Jerusalem after Jesus' resurrection.
 - 1 Thess 4:16-17 The Church taken up at the rapture
 - Rev 11:11 The two prophets after laying dead for 3 days in the street ...raised.
 - Dan 12:13; Matt 8:11; Old Testament Saints will be raised in the Millennial Kingdom
 - 2nd Resurrection (an event) the unrighteous unto judgment. Revelation 20:5-15.
 - "discussing with one another" Discussing with one another, as in brothers and sisters in the Lord, has some merit. There is a sharpening of understanding that can occur. Sometime we misread a text or mis define
- Mar 9:11 They asked Him, saying, "{Why is it} that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"
- Mar 9:12 And He said to them, "Elijah does first come and restore all things. And {yet} how is it written of the Son of Man that He will suffer many things and be treated with contempt?"
- Mar 9:13 "But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him."
- Matt says that the disciples understood that Jesus was speaking about John the Baptist. Not that John the Baptist was Elijah but that he came in the Spirit of Elijah Matt 17:13 Matt 11:11-15
- Mar 9:14 **2) At the Foot of the Mountain** vs 14-29 From Mtn top to the valley - we all experience this
- When they came {back} to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them, and {some} scribes arguing with them.
- Mar 9:15 Immediately, when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed and {began} running up to greet Him.
- The entire crowd saw Jesus and they are amazed and run towards him. Some believe that the people see Jesus in an illuminated state similar to when Moses descended from the mountain and had the Glory of the Lord upon him. Possibly! But nothing more is mentioned. This could easily be that they had been with the disciples and that they witnessed a botched healing/deliverance and then an argument that when Jesus showed up that they are amazed that they might now get to see something happen.
- Mar 9:16 And He asked them, "What are you discussing with them?"
- Jesus is asking not really wanting an answer. He knows. No answer is really given about the discussion. Jesus knows the futility of an argument with the religious.
- Mar 9:17 And one of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit

which makes him mute;

Mar 9:18 and whenever it seizes him, it slams him {to the ground} and he foams {at the mouth,} and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not {do it.}"

- Here we see an evil spirit the controls a boy and a father who is broken for concern for his son.
- This Demon Seizes him (total control), Slams him (KJV = teareith / to throw down to break),
- The disciples could not cast it out. (previously Jesus sent them out to cast out devils. Mark 6:7

Mar 9:19 And He *answered them and *said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!"

- Jesus is speaking to the entire crowd, the father, the scribes, His disciples
- Unbelieving, The father brought the boy to Jesus. Isn't that believing?
The scribes had the scriptures & studied them. Isn't that believing?
The disciples were going out doing what Jesus asked them to do. Isn't that believing?
- "Bring him to Me!" emphasis on to Me!
-

Mar 9:20 They brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he {began} rolling around and foaming {at the mouth.}

- This spirit is viciously stubborn. He sees Jesus and the spirit grips the child and attacks the boy to intimidate Jesus.

Mar 9:21 And He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood.

- When? From a child. The saying goes "alls fair in love and war" We are in a war. It isn't fair that an evil spirit attacks a child. This is how hideous our enemy is. The purpose is simple, to destroy him, to destroy the hope and dream of a father.

Mar 9:22 "It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!"

- If You can do anything? The father reveals that he really doesn't believe.

Mar 9:23 And Jesus said to him, " 'If You can?' All things are possible to him who believes."

- Jesus turns the focus from His ability. Sure He can. But Jesus quickly replies by asking the father If He can ...believe? Believe in Jesus not our wonderful faith or our wonderful service. But belief in Jesus.
- All things possible to him who believes. What is all things to this father. I am sure all things is just one thing. His boy's life. He probably would give up the world for his boy's deliverance. All thing in a crisis is very easily defined.

Mar 9:24 Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief."

- Faith and Humility is a combination found in genuine prayer.

Mar 9:25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again."

- Jesus delivers him and secures his future "do not enter him again."

Mar 9:26 After crying out and throwing him into terrible convulsions, it came out; and {the boy} became so much like a corpse that most {of them} said, "He is dead!"

Mar 9:27 But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him; and he got up.

Mar 9:28 When He came into {the} house, His disciples {began} questioning Him privately, "Why could we not drive it out?"

Mar 9:29 And He said to them, "This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer."

- This kind = there are different kinds (lots of ??? there. Not many answers)
- Come out by prayer (KJV = and fasting) This is a great position to be in when you do not know or even if you do know what kind this is.

Mar 9:30 **3) Away from the Mountain** vs 30-32

From there they went out and {began} to go through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know {about it.}

- *Jesus is trying to spend more and more time with His disciples and have them understand what is about to happen*

Mar 9:31 For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later."

Mar 9:32 **But they did not understand {this} statement, and they were afraid to ask Him.**

- *Isn't it amazing that we can read verse 31 and the disciples don't get it. We know what it means. The disciples did not and it caused fear.*
- *We are not better than the disciples, we just simply have a different perspective due to our histories. We have seen this fulfilled. So we simply know.*
- *But there are those who today hear these words of a death and a resurrection, victory over death and it causes fear in them. Why? Because it can cause a change in them. Man is adverse to change.*
- *This happen to you in the last chapter when you heard the words "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." You see you do not know what that verse means with regard to change in your life. To meditate on that verse and to put yourself in that verse will cause concern for you.*
- *"Afraid to ask Him" What a sad place we find ourselves in at times. Afraid of staying the same, Afraid to ask Him, Afraid of understanding, Afraid of change.*
- *We have seen*
 1. *The disciples Sleeping the (Peter) speaking without thinking (not knowing what to say)*
 2. *The disciples discussing among themselves.*
 3. *The disciples arguing with the religious.*
 4. *The disciples not asking because of fear.*
- *But we have also seen*
 1. *The disciple ask about Elijah coming first - Jesus answers their question*
 2. *A father ask for help for his son - Jesus delivers his son*
 3. *A father ask for help for his unbelief - Jesus strengthens his faith*
 4. *The disciples ask why couldn't they - Jesus, without scolding answers them.*
- *Jesus Alone is before us. To answer our questions, to heal and deliver us, to forgive our sins. We need to come to Him and see our fears relieved to find forgiveness, salvation, and deliverance. Won't you come?*

B. Stumbling Blocks of the Believer

Mar 9:33 **1) Stumbling Blocks of a Believer - Comparison** vs 33-37

They came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house, He {began} to question them, "What were you discussing on the way?"

Mar 9:34 But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which {of them was} the greatest.

- KJV = Dispute a heated argument
- Earlier 3 were taken up the mountain top while the other 9 remained below. The 3 on the mountain saw Jesus transfigured and those below failed. Jesus said to them in verse 1, "There are some of those standing here that will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power." We can see that by experience & Jesus own words are causing questions and these questions can cause divisions.
- The dispute discussed the Preference Jesus made for the 3. The spoke of the failures of each.
- When Jesus asks the disciples are silent (what we think is acceptable thoughts or behavior many times is brought into correct perspective when talking to Jesus about them) How Embarrassing!
- We do this. We speak of those that are babes in Christ verses those that are Mature in Christ. It isn't the truth concerning Babes and Mature that is wrong, it's the fact that we engage in this conversation not building up Babes but posture ourselves as the Mature.
- A self proclaimed "Mature in Christ" person is actually still a babe. Let your works/deeds proclaim your maturity. Then you are truly mature.

Mar 9:35 **Sitting down, He called the twelve and *said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."**

- They were silent yet He knew their entire thoughts elites
- Pastors expectation You are/have been:
 - 1) Part of the World Selfish Man
 - 2) Part of the Crowd Seeking Man
 - 3) Becoming Disciples Student Man
 - 4) Becoming Apostles Servant Man
- An Example of Greatness = Jesus could have answered them, "Guys, none of you will be the greatest. I am the greatest!" But by example Jesus doesn't proclaim Himself. He could have. All he tells them is the greatest will "be last of all and servant of all."
- Proverbs 20:6 "Most men will proclaim his own goodness." That is the average. We need to be above average. We need to excel Be Last; Be A Servant Of All.
- Servant - Not what we want to be naturally
- Of All - I can serve some, and at my best I can serve most, but all? This
- "True greatness is not how many serve you but how many you serve." (Guzik)

Mar 9:36 **Taking a child, He set him before them, and taking him in His arms, He said to them,**

Mar 9:37 **"Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me." .**

- Another example / Another self examination as to measuring Greatness.
- Another Example - Jesus takes a child and sets him before them. KJV uses midst of them. He takes a child and places this child in an equal position as the disciples. I like to picture this as Jesus setting the child before or in a preeminent/closer position than the disciples.
- This is important because children in an agricultural setting are valued as workers or farm hands. Other than that they are an expense on the system. In Jesus' day children were not considered and overlooked and in many times considered in the way of adult or important matters. In some ways not much has changed in our culture.
- Disciples refused the children in the very next chapter Mark 10:19. and Jesus was displeased with the disciples.
- Jesus gives importance / value to those who are devalued. Can you do this? Should you do this?
- Another Self Examination - In the whole log in eye teaching a statement by Jesus is "first take the log out of your own eye..." telling us to examine ourselves first. How do you treat those people who are in a lesser position than you? Children, Convenience food or store attendants, Wait staff at restaurants... This can be a flag in your life. How you receive them is how you receive God.
- 2 Cor 10:12 "We are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves by themselves and compare themselves by themselves, they are with out understanding."

Mar 9:38

2) Stumbling Blocks of a Believer - Competition vs 38-41

John said to Him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to prevent him because he was not following us."

- *Someone who had been following Jesus from the crowd had heard Jesus and believed His teaching and was out doing what He said. "Casting our demons in Your Name" John said. John saw this and tried to stop him because he wasn't in the inner circle. Plus the disciples couldn't cast out a demon so why should he.*
- *It is difficult when someone else is succeeding in ministry when you are not. (Example: Pastor Larry Graduating with High Honors from Bible College. {that isn't good for any minister} Other lesser classmates were getting Senior Pastorates. I couldn't buy my way into a pastorate. 10 years it took for me to find a ministry setting. Talk about jealousy and competition. I believe it took 10 years for the swelling of my head from High Honors to go down for me to be useful and humble for our Lord)*
- *Jealousy and Competition between ministries is a wickedness that poisons the church*
- *Psalms 119:63 Who is my brother? "I am a companion of all those who fear You and of those who keep your precepts."*

Mar 9:39

But Jesus said, "Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me.

Mar 9:40

"For he who is not against us is for us.

Mar 9:41

"For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as {followers} of Christ, truly I say to you, he will not lose his reward.

- *Jesus' heart is that there are many ministries out there that are ministering "In His Name". Their emphasis or logistics may be varied and have different structure. But if they have a biblical presentation of Jesus and who he is, they are not against us. They are not our enemy.*
- *Phillippians 1:15-18 "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? Not withstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."*
- *A True Pastors Prayer. "Lord bless this church. Make us strong and sure in our faith. Empower us with boldness to proclaim the Gospel to all the world, yet let us be the weakest church in the community, knowing that as you bless, strengthen and empower us the entire Christian community is better."*
- *"Cup of water" There is a reward for all those who are out there doing even the simplest most insignificant act of kindness ...In His Name.*

Mar 9:42

3) Stumbling Blocks of a Believer - Complacency vs 42-50

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea.

- *Jesus uses a word for a large millstone tied around his neck and thrown into the sea.*
- *That is the better choice for the one who causes the little ones who believe to stumble.*
- *Little ones = children Little ones could also mean the new believers.*

Mar 9:43

"If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire,

Mar 9:44

[where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.]

- *If a your hand*
- *It is better to cut it off.*
- *Then to go to hell*
- *Where there is unquenchable fire and the worm does not die*

Mar 9:45

"If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame, than, having your two feet, to be cast into hell,

Mar 9:46

[where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.]

- *If a your foot*
- *It is better to cut it off.*
- *Then to go to hell*
- *Where there is unquenchable fire and the worm does not die*

Mar 9:47 "If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell,

Mar 9:48 where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.

- *If a your eye*
- *It is better to gouge it out.*
- *Then to go to hell*
- *Where there is unquenchable fire and the worm does not die*
- *The proper way to understand the Bible is literally. We believe the Bible literally. When the Bible says God created the Earth, Sun, Moon, Stars, Vegetation, Animals and man in SIX DAYS, we believe it means SIX DAYS.*
- *We believe the Bible literally within the confines of the literary context.*
 - *In a Historical Narrative we understand it so. When Israel went to war with the Amalikites, We understand that ...they went to war with the Amalikites.*
 - *The Bible also has Poetry in it. David says in Psalm 6:6 that he cried all night and that he caused his bed to swim. We understand this in the literary context of poetry and the picture it paints of great sorrow and weeping. Not that he shed a room full of tears enough so as to float his furniture.*
 - *Jesus uses Hyperbole (Exaggeration to make a point) Jesus called the Pharisees a brood of vipers. These men were not a pit full of snakes.*
- *Jesus is using Hyperbole to teach disciples to sacrifice in the battle against sin.*
- *The problem of taking this literally is that cutting off a limb is not enough. Sin doesn't originate in the limb, the hand, foot or eye. It originates in the heart.*
- *He is saying that we must not live comfortable or settled with our shortcomings or weaknesses.*
- *Revelation 3:16 Speaking to the Church of the Laodiceans Jesus says, " Because you are lukewarm, neither hot or cold I will spue you out of my mouth. "*

Mar 9:49 "For everyone will be salted with fire.

Mar 9:50 "Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty {again?} Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

- *2 ways of looking at this*
- *Salted or seasoned with Fire = Tribulation or suffering it will make you distinctive*
- *Romans 5:3-5 "we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us"*
- *Fire of the Holy Spirit in our lives will season us with preservation and flavor*
- *We as Christians are not to be settled with "Well, That's just the way I am." We are to be wrestling striving to be conformed into His Image. It will take Salt, Fire and Sacrifice.*

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