

Mark 9

Mark 9:1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

Either the kingdom of God has come or we have got some very old Apostles still running around this world. Both Jesus and Judas died before the Kingdom of God which is the Church of Christ came on the day of Pentecost in 30 AD as we learned in last week's lesson.

Jesus uses Church and Kingdom interchangeably cf:

Matthew 16:13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 16:14 And they said, Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 16:15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 16:17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

The transfiguration of Jesus

Mark 9:2 And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them

This was six days after Peter had confessed that “Thou art the Christ, The Son of the Living God.”.

Luke says, "About eight days," he is counting the day of the confession and the day of the transfiguration. There was a total of eight days, but six days if you count only the intervening days. Jesus takes the three favored disciples who had seen Him raise Jairus' daughter, and a few months later, they were with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Paul later, speaking of them, called them pillars. Cf:

Galatians 2:9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Some think the Mountain was Mount Herman or Tabor.

Transfigured means He changed in form and appearance. The inhabitants of the Heavenly regions wear an appearance of surpassing glory. The face of Moses, when he came down from the mountain, after being with God forty days, shone with such glory that the Children of Israel could not look upon it. Cf: Exodus 34:29-34. This was a reflected glory. When Jesus appeared to Saul on the way to Damascus it was as a light above the brightness of the sun blinded him. This appearance of Jesus on the Mount represents Him in His glorified state. When He came to earth, he veiled His glory under the flesh of humanity.

Mark 9:3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

The Transfiguration shows His Chosen Disciples His true spiritual appearance, for He is the very image of God.

I John 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; 1:4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

1:5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

**This is a picture and a promise of what we will become in the future
cf:**

Philippians 3:21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

I John 3:2-3 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

From these verses and others it seems plain that in Heaven in Glorified bodies, Christians will preserve their identity.

Mark 9:4 And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

The two who appeared from the spirit world were, Moses the great lawgiver, and Elijah the great Old Testament prophet. Both were a shadow of the Christ to come. They were in the state of the dead, or in spirit form. With the death of Jesus, the dispensation, of which Moses was the lawgiver, Elijah the most prominent prophet, would end. Cf: Colossians 2:14 and Galatians 3:19-25. How the apostles knew who they were is not told. Jesus probably told them.

Mark 9:5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

A tabernacle is like a tent to protect people from the heat of the sun and the weather. It was a temporary fixture, not permanent. Peter is proposing that they should prolong this interview and dwell there.

This seems to have been a suggestion to get the departing Moses and Elijah to stay.

Mark 9:6 For he wist (*knew*) not what to say; for they were sore afraid.

Mark 9:7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

This cloud was the representative of the Divine Glory and Presence of God. Out of this cloud came the voice of God, as it did after Jesus' baptism, and now it adds the words "hear him.", showing that Moses and Elijah are no longer to be the way of salvation. Jesus is He who now speaks from Heaven and is the mediator of the New Covenant. Cf:

Hebrews 12:22-25 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 12:23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of Abel*. 12:25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:

Mark 9:8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

The cloud had passed away and carried these visitors back to the spirit land. Henceforth, there is to be one authoritative teacher and lawgiver, Jesus. Fifteen hundred years before, Moses told of a prophet to come. Cf: Deuteronomy 18:13 ff. He is now come, His exclusive authority is proclaimed in “hear ye him.”, and Him alone, for everything depends upon it.

Mark 9:9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

Peter delighted to refer to the Transfiguration. Cf:

II Peter 1:16-19 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 1:17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 1:18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

The Son of God is the fulfillment of all prophecy.

Mark 9:10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

Jesus frequently and clearly told He must be crucified and rise again, but they did not understand it, or thought that He was speaking figuratively. This vision is to give them a vision of future glory. They could not now understand it but after His resurrection, they remembered it and understood.

Mark 9:11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?

The Scribes expected a literal fulfillment of Malachi prophecy that Elijah would come before the Christ. The disciples were surprised when He appeared on the mountain and did not remain to do the work predicted of Him, hence their question cf:

Malachi 3:1-4 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. 3:2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he *is* like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: 3:3 And he shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. 3:4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

Malachi 4:5-6 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: 4:6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Mark 9:12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

It was a true doctrine that the Scribes taught that Elijah would appear before the coming of the Messiah. Restoreth all things means heal, correct, and put in proper order. He would be the agent in reforming the people. Jesus keeps the lesson of His coming suffering constantly before them. His suffering and death finishes the restoration of all things that John began. Jesus was set at nought which means to be esteemed as worthless as Isaiah 53 prophesied.

Mark 9:13 But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah. Jesus again teaches them that Malachi used the name Elijah figuratively for John the Baptist.

Mark 9:14 And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them

After the transfiguration, He saw a great multitude. Cf: Matt. 17:14-21 and Luke 9:37-42. Mark's account is the fullest. The symptoms given by Mark are like those of epilepsy. Mark also states that he had been afflicted from childhood.

The scribes and curiosity seekers saw the failure of the disciples to heal this demonic and began to dispute with them.

Mark 9:15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to *him* saluted him.

The sudden, and unexpected appearing of Jesus resulted in the crowd receiving Him with affection and respect.

Mark 9:16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

He surprised the scribes with His question.

Mark 9:17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

In the absence of Jesus, the disciples undertook to do this work. We should learn from this lesson, not to undertake a work for which we are not prepared.

Mark 9:18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

He has become thin and haggard. Their lack of power was due to their weak faith. They had been given power to cast out unclean

spirits. Mark 6:7. The three favored apostles were with Jesus on the Mount. The faith of the nine was not equal to the task for this was a very difficult case.

Mark 9:19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

This generation and race was indeed faithless. Jesus had confidence in Himself, the emphasis is on me.

Mark 9:20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

The boy fell and wallowed on the ground, foaming at the mouth like one with epilepsy.

Mark 9:21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

This careful inquiry of Jesus was not for His own information, but for the trial and strengthening of the father's faith.

Mark 9:22 And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

The demon was hard-hearted, just like the Devil is today. He would destroy the son of every father in Hell.

Mark 9:23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

The question is not whether Jesus can, but whether the afflicted father can. Can he have the needful faith in Christ? Faith is the great need.

Mark 9:24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

The spark of faith has been kindled; if his faith is not strong, he prays the Lord to give him stronger faith. So should the doubting Christian always pray. If your faith is weak, cry to God for help.

Mark 9:25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

The demon would desire to repossess the boy without the interference of Jesus.

Mark 9:26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

The evil spirit obeys most reluctantly and seeks to destroy one whom it can no longer use. The paroxysm of departure was fearful, and left the boy exhausted and as dead. The touch of Jesus completed the cure.

Mark 9:27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

Mark 9:28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

Mark 9:29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

Why could we not cast him out? His answer first was, according to Matthew (17:20), "Because of your belief." The whole difficulty centered in their want of faith. No demon could defy them if only they had faith enough. And then Jesus illustrates the power of faith by showing that even a small amount of active, living faith, like a grain of mustard-seed, could remove "this mountain," perhaps pointing to Mount Hermon, at whose base they were, and which towered in its grandeur above them.

The faith which will be effectual must be a faith exercised in prayer. The work of the Church is still to cast out devils, the unclean spirits of: pride worldliness, selfishness, greed, infidelity, lust, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking the failure to assemble as we are taught cf:

Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

These still defy the ordinary efforts and faith of God's people. How shall we get that higher faith? By prayer and fasting.

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

They traveled in a quiet and private manner. This is the last mention made of privacy.

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.

Teaching His disciples seems to be the purpose of the private journey. He had before predicted His suffering and He wished to further instruct the disciples without the multitude. In this verse, notice the word “is” the present-tense verb is used because the future event is so clear and present in Christ’ mind. Jesus had already been given up to suffering by the plan of God cf:

Acts 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

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

They were probably afraid to ask Him for fear that He would rebuke them as He did Peter.

Cf: Matt. 17:22, 23. Compare Luke 9:43-45.

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?

Capernaum was His headquarters in Galilee. The disciples had asked questions among themselves, wishing to know who would have the principal offices and posts of favor in the coming kingdom.

Cf: Matt. 18:1-9 and Luke 9:46-50.

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

Desiring to be the most eminent shows they expected the kingdom to be a temporal, earthly kingdom. Self-denying service in Christ' kingdom is the true road to greatness.

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.

The two conditions of true greatness are humility and service; not to be the servant of friends, or kindred, or of a class, or even of church members, but of *all*, like Christ.

All of them had mistaken ideas about the kingdom of God and needed instruction. To be first in rank and honor, service is the path that leads to the highest honors in the kingdom of God, through humility. A servant, or minister, is a waiter or an attendant who renders voluntary service. The most distinguished Christian is the most humble cf:

Colosians 1:25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God;

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,

Children are, to a great extent, destitute of ambition, pride and haughtiness. They are characteristically humble and teachable. Jesus requires His disciples to become like them cf:

Matthew 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

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.

Whoso shall receive and love someone with a spirit like this child, one who is humble, meek and unambitious, is a real Christian. In receiving a representative of Christ, we not only receive Christ, but the Father also. Jesus teaches that the kingdom is spiritual and that humility and a child-like spirit are essential to true greatness.

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 forbid him, because he followeth not us.

The disciples had shortly before returned to Christ from their first missionary tour, in which they were empowered to cast out devils (Matt. 10:8). The man here referred to they probably met during this tour. He must have been a disciple of Christ, who was enabled by his faith, yet without a commission, to cure the possessed. Casting out devils in thy name. Not in a wrong spirit, as did the Jewish exorcists (Acts 19:13-14); for it was done *in thy name*. Such workers as this man believed in him, or they would not have used his name. He followed not us, he did not join himself to the apostles as one of their followers.

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

He neither praises nor blames him for following an independent course, and not working with his disciples. He simply declares that he

must not be forbidden, and that those who work the same kind of work that we do should be regarded, not as enemies, but allies. Thousands, in every period of church history, have spent their lives in copying John's mistake. They have labored to stop every man who will not work for Christ in their way from working for Christ at all.

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

Here Christ clenches His argument. There is no neutral ground between in the contest between God and sin.

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.

Anyone who recognizes a Christian's relation to Christ has the grounds for doing them a good deed, he honors Christ by the act. Any approved service, however simple and commonplace will be amply rewarded. Miracles have ceased, but acts of kindness in the name of Jesus are not out of date. Cf: I Corinthians 15:58

Matthew 10:41 says, "he shall receive a prophet's reward", which is not synonymous with final salvation, but simply means he shall be rewarded.

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.

Little ones are not infants, because infants cannot believe on Christ. Stumble here means to put temptation before others to induce them to sin. The millstone is not the common household stone which

was turned by women cf: Matthew 24:41, but the larger one which was turned by the strength of an animal, usually an ass. It is better for him because his actual fate will be worse than that.

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:

Hand, foot, and eye are the most valuable of the members of the human body and denote anything particularly dear and valuable. They are used here to denote the dearest objects of one's desires. The honors, possessions, or enjoyments we most prize, if these cause us to sin, stumble, fall away, these must be mortified and subdued cf:

Colossians 3:5-10 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 3:7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 3:10 And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Galatians 5:19-24 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 5:24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Cf: Matt. 5:29. The fires that were occasionally lit in the literal Gehenna, or Tophet, were burning trash they were necessary and only temporary. They died out for want of fuel. It was to be otherwise with the "fire" of the other and ulterior Tophet. The "fire" referred to is, of course is hell that no mere symbol of the certain dreadful realities, for which there are no adequate representations in human language.

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

Gehenna is here correctly translated as hell. Jesus shows the sense in which He uses the word by adding the explanatory clause “ into the fire that shall never be 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.

Jesus repeats Himself in verse 44 showing how certain and long Hell is. It is placed in direct opposition to life.

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:

These sacrifices of hand, foot, eye, must be made;

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

Jesus uses this term for the third time, emphasizing how certain eternity in one place or another can be counted upon.

An expression borrowed from the last verse of Isaiah, and probably in current use among the Jews of our Savior's time, as applied to the state of future retribution.

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

The word for introduces the verse as the reason for the solemn warnings in verses 43 thru 48. Every one who contrary to the teaching just given in the context who refuses to cut off the offending hand, or pluck out the offending eye shall be salted with fire. As salt on account of its power to preserve meat is a symbol of long lasting. To be salted with fire is to be kept in a state of severest pain. This verse kills the annihilation theory.

Fire is used in the Scripture to denote suffering, persecution, trial, distress of any kind. Salt is used to denote permanence, preservation from corruption. *Every one, good and bad, must suffer.*

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.

Salt is good and useful for purifying and preserving cf: II Kings 2:19-22 Every Christian who has given himself as a real sacrifice to God shall be salted not with fire to be destroyed, but with salt to be preserved for the kingdom. There is a putrid and corrupt part in every Christian which must be purged out. If a Christian loses the power of perseverance, there is no restoration for him. Have the preserving and purifying influences of God's Grace in your heart. Make every sacrifice necessary to be at peace with one another. Peace is one of the Fruits of the Spirit cf:

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 5:24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

The contention of the apostles, as to who should be greatest in the Kingdom of God, verses 33-34, and their jealousy towards a brother who was casting out demons, verse 38, would impair this peace and cause discouragement among themselves. Strife among them would destroy their salt, peace would preserve it. Let each one retain a seasoning virtue in themselves that he may sweeten and season others. Thus upholding union and peace, one with another, will declare that you have the saving qualities of salt in yourself. In so doing, you will avoid contention and quarreling struggles for places of honor and office, and seek others welfare.

Have salt in yourselves. The spirit of self-sacrifice, and thus you will "have peace with one another."