

Mark Chapter 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."

“Verily I say unto you”: A solemn statement appearing only in the gospels and always spoken by Jesus. It introduces topics of utmost significance (see note on 3:28).

“Not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom”: The event Jesus had in mind has been variously interpreted as His resurrection and ascension, the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, the spread of Christianity, or the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The most accurate interpretation, however, is to connect Christ’s promise with the Transfiguration in the context (verses 2-8), which provided a foretaste of His second coming glory. That all 3 synoptic gospels place this promise immediately before the Transfiguration supports this view, as does the fact that “kingdom” can refer to royal splendor.

Many believe that this statement just prior to the transfiguration was speaking of those (Peter, James, and John), who went with Jesus up the mountain and saw Jesus in all His glory. To many, this is a mystery.

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

“After six days”: Matthew and Mark place the Transfiguration “six days” after Jesus’ promise (verse 1). Luke, no doubt including the day the promise was made and the day of the Transfiguration itself, describes the interval as “some eight days” (Luke 9:28).

Six is significant here, showing Jesus' dealings with man had been completed and now He was ready to glorify God. Peter, James, and John were leaders among the disciples. These were loyal. He would allow these three to see His glory and to hear the Father say, "This is my beloved Son: hear him."

“Peter, and James, and John” (see note on 5:37). As the inner circle of Jesus’ disciples, these 3 were sometimes allowed to witness events that the other disciples were not (14:33).

“A high mountain”: Most likely Mt. Hermon (about 9,200 feet about sea level), the highest mountain in the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi (8:27).

“Transfigured” means to be altered in form, that is, the transformation is outwardly visible. The same word is used (in Romans 12:2 and 2 Cor. 3:18).

From a Greek word meaning “to change” in form,” or “to be transformed”. In some inexplicable way, Jesus manifested some of His divine glory to the 3 disciples (2 Pet. 1:16).

The word transfigured means "to transform or to change". This happened high in the mountain away from the others. This was not for everyone to see.

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

“Shining, exceeding white”: The divine glory emanating from Jesus made even his clothing radiate brilliant white light. Light is often associated with God’s visible presence (Psalm 104:2; Dan. 7:9; 1 Tim. 6:16; Rev. 1:14; 21:23).

A “fuller” was one who laundered clothes.

This was a white so bright that it was difficult to see. No cleanser on earth could get it this white, because this white far surpassed any other white on earth. This was Jesus seen in His glory.

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

“Elijah ... with Moses”: Symbolic of the Prophets and the Law, the two great divisions of the Old Testament. The order, “Elijah,” then “Moses,” is unique to Mark (who reverses the order in verse 5).

“Talking with Jesus”: The subject was His coming death (Luke 9:31).

We see here, Elijah as a representative of the prophets and Moses representing the law. This meeting with them on the mountain top seen by Peter, James, and John allowed these three to realize that Jesus truly was Messiah.

Moses died on the way to the Promised Land, and Elijah was carried away into heaven without benefit of the grave. So, we see here also, that these two show that Jesus is King over the quick and the dead. Elijah represented those who are alive in Christ, and Moses represented those who are dead in Christ.

Jesus was about to face the cruel death of the cross. This appearance showed that what the prophets could not bring in the way of salvation, and the law could not bring, the death on the cross would bring salvation to whosoever will.

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 Elijah."

“Master”: Literally “my master.” A title of esteem and honor given by the Jews to respected teachers. In the New Testament, it is also used of John the Baptist (John 3:26).

“Let us make three tabernacles”: So as to make the 3 illustrious figures’ stay permanent. It is also possible that Peter’s suggestion reflected his belief that the millennial kingdom was about to be inaugurated (Zech. 14:16).

Peter still did not realize fully who Jesus was. They were fully awake; this was not a dream. Three different people would not dream the same dream, anyhow. This statement "that it is good for them to be there" seems as though Peter might be pretty satisfied with his position with Jesus.

Mark 9:6 "For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid."

The word for “sore afraid” is used elsewhere only (in Hebrews 12:21), where Moses trembled at God’s self-disclosure on Mount Sinai.

Supernatural things have a way of frightening people who are just used to seeing natural things. Probably because it was night made it more frightening.

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."

“A cloud ... overshadowed them”: This is the glory cloud, Shekinah, which throughout the Old Testament was symbolic of God’s presence (see note on Rev. 1:7; Exodus 13:21; 33:18-23; 40:34-35; Num. 9:15; 14:14; Deut. 1:33).

“A voice came out of the cloud”: The Father’s voice from the cloud cut off Peter’s fumbling words (Matt. 17:5; Luke 9:34).

“This is my beloved Son”: The Father repeated the affirmation of His love for the Son first given at Jesus’ baptism (1:11). The parallel accounts of the Transfiguration (Matt. 17:5; Luke 9:35), also recorded these words, as does Peter (2 Pet. 1:17).

“Hear him”: Jesus, the One to whom the Law and Prophets pointed (Deut. 18:15), is the One whom the disciples are to listen to and obey (Heb. 1:1-2).

When the children of Israel were going to the Promised Land, a fire led them by night and a cloud by day. The presence of God was in the cloud. This cloud also, had the presence of the Father God. The voice coming out of the cloud made this even more frightening. All three of the disciples heard the voice of God say that Jesus was His Son.

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

In the account in Matthew, we read where the disciples were so afraid that they fell on their faces, and Jesus came and reassured them that all was well. And when they looked up, Moses and Elijah were gone.

This is not exact Scripture, but this is what it was saying. This would be very frightening. One thing that puzzles me a little, is how they knew the other two were Moses and Elijah. Perhaps, their understanding was opened by the Lord.

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."

“Charged them that they should tell no man” (see note on 8:30).

“Till the Son of man were risen from the dead”: This looks to the time when the true nature of Jesus’ messianic mission became evident to all, that He came to conquer sin and death, not the Romans.

“Son of man” (see note on 2:10).

Don't you know these three disciples wanted to tell the other disciples this happening? This had to burn within them. These three had to be very close to have shared so many things.

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

“Questioning ... what the rising from the dead should mean”: Like most of the Jewish people (the Sadducees being notable exceptions), the disciples believed in a future resurrection (John 11:24). What confused them was Jesus’ implication that His own resurrection was imminent, and thus so was His death.

The disciples' confusion provides further evidence that they still did not understand Jesus' messianic mission (see notes on verse 9; 8:30). Not until after the Resurrection did the disciples fully grasp the importance of some of Jesus' sayings.

Even though they had been told that Jesus would die on the cross and the third day rise again from the dead, somehow it had not soaked in; and they hadn't realized that it was really true.

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

"Elijah must first come" (8:28-29). The scribes' teaching in this case was not based on rabbinical tradition, but on the Old Testament (Mal. 3:1; 4:5). Malachi's prediction was well known among the Jews of Jesus' day, and the disciples were no doubt trying to figure out how to harmonize it with the appearance of Elijah they had just witnessed.

The scribes and Pharisees also no doubt argued that Jesus could not be the Messiah based on the fact that Elijah had not yet appeared. Confused, the 3 disciples asked Jesus for His interpretations.

In Matthew 17:13, the disciples realized that Jesus was speaking of John the Baptist when He spoke of Elijah.

Matthew 17:13 "Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

In fact, it follows the same statement Jesus made here (in verses 12 & 13).

Mark 9:12 "And he answered and told them, Elijah 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."

Jesus actually asks a question here by way of answering the question (in verse 11).

"Elijah verily cometh first": Jesus affirmed the correctness of the scribal interpretation of (Malachi 3:1; 4:5), which must have puzzled the disciples even more.

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

"Elijah" refers to John the Baptist.

"Elijah is indeed come": Jesus directly addressed the disciples' question. The prophecies of Elijah's coming had been fulfilled in John the Baptist. Though certainly not a reincarnation of Elijah (John 1:21). John came in the "spirit and power of Elijah," and would have fulfilled prophecies if they had believed (see notes on Matt. 11:14; Luke 1:17).

Because they did reject both John the Baptist and Jesus, there will be another who will come in the spirit and power of Elijah before the second coming of Christ (see notes on Matt. 11:14; Rev. 11:5-6).

"They had done unto him": The Jewish leaders rejected John the Baptist (Matt. 21:25; Luke 7:33), and Herod killed him (6:17-29).

"As it is written of him": No specific Old Testament prophecies predicted that Messiah's forerunner would die. Therefore, this statement is best understood as having been fulfilled typically. The fate intended for Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-2), had befallen the Baptist (see notes on Matt. 11:11-14).

Jesus was just saying that the spirit of Elijah was present in John the Baptist, and John had already been beheaded when Jesus spoke here. Many believe that one of the two witnesses in Revelation is Elijah. Elijah is a mystery, because he did not go the way of the grave. He was accompanied to heaven by a chariot of fire.

Verses 14-29: Jesus handles a difficult case of demon possession.

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

The nine who had remained behind.

It seems that they ran to Jesus to greet Him, when they saw Him coming and left the scribes that had been questioning them. The people had grown to a multitude. The multitude partially followed Him because they had heard of the miracles He had done. Possibly, many of them had needs in their own lives.

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

His teachings were not like the teaching of the law. They gave hope to the common people.

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

We see here, that Jesus did not avoid the scribes, but asked them, why are you asking them questions? Why don't you just ask me?

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

“Which hath a dumb spirit”: The boy had a demonically-induced inability to speak, a detail found only in Mark’s account.

The demon caused the boy to be unable to speak normally.

This man, who brought his son to Jesus, didn't even wait till the scribes answered Jesus. He grabbed Jesus quickly and told Him of his problem.

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."

“They could not”: The disciples’ failure is surprising, in light of the power granted them by Jesus (3:15; 6:13).

This problem was; that this young man had seemed to have more than one side to it. He was dumb and could not speak, but he also had something similar to epilepsy. It seems the disciples had tried to deliver the man, and they were unable to do it.

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."

“O faithless generation” (Psalm 95:10). The word “generation” indicates that Jesus’ exasperation was not merely with the father, or the 9 disciples, but also with the unbelieving scribes, who were no doubt gloating over the disciples’ failure (verse 14), and with unbelieving Israel in general.

Jesus had just about been filled completely up with the lack of faith of the Pharisees and scribes, but worse than that was the lack of faith of His own disciples.

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."

A person with this severe a problem could not be handled by just one person. Those, “they” that brought him were possibly friends helping the father.

This evil spirit did not like being in the presence of Jesus the Christ. He acted up immediately and tried to harm the boy who had been brought to Jesus.

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

Jesus knows all, so He didn't ask the man how long this had been for His benefit.

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."

“To destroy him”: This demon was an especially violent and dangerous one. Open fires and unfenced bodies of water were common in first-century Israel, providing ample opportunity for the demon’s attempts to destroy the child.

The father’s statement added to the pathos of the situation. The boy himself was probably disfigured from burn scars, and possibly further ostracized because of them. His situation also created a hardship for his family, who would have had to watch the boy constantly to protect him from harm.

It was probably, given to show the utterly hopeless condition of the boy and the desperation of the father in pleading for Jesus to have compassion and help them.

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

“All things are possible”: The oldest manuscripts omit “believe”, thus making the phrase “If you can” a question or exclamation on Jesus’ part. The issue was not His lack of power but the father’s lack of faith.

Though Jesus often healed apart from the faith of those involved, here He chose to emphasize the power of faith (Matt. 17:20; Luke 17:6). Jesus healed multitudes, but many, if not most, did not believe on Him. Luke 17:15-19.

Faith is the most powerful force a man can have. This statement of Jesus' was for the man and for all generations to come. Pray and believe.

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

“I believe; help thou mine unbelief”: Admitting the imperfection of his faith, mixed as it was with doubt, the desperate father pleaded with Jesus to help him to have the greater faith the Lord demanded of him.

He had a certain faith; but it was confession of his undeniable inner turmoil and doubt that marked his faltering faith as truly authentic, if imperfect, trust. Before God honesty is a wise course.

The father here was so desperate; this was a last resort with him. His heart was broken that his son had this problem. He had waited so long and tried so hard to believe, He was believing with everything he had left.

He knew his own faith had not been enough in the past and asked the Lord to help him have enough faith. He called Jesus, Lord. In doing so, he said: whatever happens, it is up to you Lord.

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 people came running together”: Noting the growing crowd, Jesus acted without further delay, perhaps to spare the boy and his anguished father any further embarrassment. Also, the Lord did not perform miracles to satisfy thrill seekers (8:11; Luke 23:8-9).

“I charge thee”: Jesus’ absolute authority over demons is well attested in the New Testament (e.g., 1:32-34; 5:1-13; Luke 4:33-35). His healings demonstrated His deity by power over the natural world. His authority over demons demonstrated His deity by power over the supernatural world.

This crowd (including the scribes), ran over there to criticize the Lord and His disciples. They had already been disputing (the scribes and the crowd), about this boy's condition. Take note of how Jesus delivered him. First, Jesus spoke to the evil spirit and told it to come out of the boy. Jesus called it by name: "deaf and dumb spirit".

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."

Satan had power over this boy, but this spirit had to obey the voice of Jesus. When Jesus said, "come out", the spirit threw the boy down one more time and came out. This poor boy was so exhausted that he lay there as dead. The people thought he was dead.

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

Jesus lifted this boy up and that is what He really does for us.

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

These disciples had been praying for the sick and casting out demons as they ministered. This particular evil spirit was much harder to cast out. This spirit had been in this boy for a long time and was deep seated.

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

“This kind”: Some demons are more powerful and obstinate, and thus more resistant to being cast out, than others (Matt. 12:45; see notes on Dan. 10:10-21).

“But by prayer and fasting”: Perhaps overconfident from their earlier successes (6:13), the disciples became enamored with their own gifts and neglected to draw on divine power.

While some manuscripts omit “fasting,” it seems crucial to the context. Jesus does not seem to have resorted to prayer in the course of this healing. Perhaps He refers to a life-style of prevailing prayer that yields a reservoir of spiritual power for just such a crisis as this.

Jesus was teaching a principle here. Some illnesses and demons are so severe that just prayer will not make them well. Fasting for three days will bring great results. Jesus was teaching the principle of fasting here.

Mark Chapter 9 Questions

1. In verse 1, there are some here that shall not die till after when?
2. Who did Jesus take with Him to the mountain?
3. What does transfigured mean?
4. What happened to Jesus' garment?
5. Who appeared with Jesus?
6. Who represented the prophets?
7. Moses represented what?
8. How do Moses and Elijah represent the alive and dead?
9. Why do you suppose these two appeared with Jesus?
10. What did Peter want to do to show great respect for the three?
11. What made them so afraid?
12. Where did God's voice come from?
13. What did God the Father say?
14. When the three got up off their face, who was left?
15. They were not to tell about the transfiguration until when?
16. What did they ask Jesus about Elijah?
17. Who did Jesus say represented Elijah?
18. Why is Elijah such a mystery?
19. How were Jesus' teachings different?
20. What kind of spirit did the man's son have?

21. What did the foaming, gnashing and falling down indicate was this disease?
22. Who had tried to deliver the boy and couldn't?
23. What did the father ask Jesus to have for him?
24. Why did Jesus ask him how long he had the evil spirit?
25. What did Jesus tell the man he must do?
26. What did the father answer Jesus?
27. What is possible to those who believe?
28. What did Jesus say to the evil spirit?
29. What did the people think had happened to the boy when the evil spirit left?
30. Why could the disciples not cast out the demons?

Mark Chapter 9 Continued

Verses 30-32: Jesus again foretells His death. (See 8:31; 10:33-34). The text implies that He ought to travel unnoticed in order to have undisturbed time to instill very difficult teaching in the disciples' hearts.

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

“Passed through Galilee”: Leaving the region around Caesarea Philippi, Jesus and the disciples began the journey to Jerusalem that would result in His crucifixion several months later. Their immediate destination was Capernaum (verse 33).

“He would not that any man should know it”: Jesus continued to seek seclusion so He could prepare the disciples for His death (7:24).

We see here, that Jesus left the area of Caesarea Philippi. He went through Galilee and went aside with just the disciples, so that He could teach them alone.

Verses 31-32: Jesus continued His teaching about His upcoming death and resurrection, a subject the disciples still did not understand (see notes on verse 10; 8:30-33).

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."

Son of Man (see note of 2:10).

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.

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

They, for some reason, didn't understand that He was warning them that He would be crucified.

Verses 33-50: Jesus teaches about true greatness (servant-hood), unity and judgment (in verses 33-35). Contrary to normal human assumptions, greatness is not a matter of dominance but of service, of being dominated by the will of God.

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” (see note on 1:21).

“The house”: The use of the definite article suggests this to be the house Jesus habitually stayed in when in Capernaum. Whether it was Peter's house (1:29), or someone else's is not known.

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).

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

“They held their peace”: Convicted and embarrassed, the disciples were speechless. They were afraid to tell Him, because they had been arguing about who would be the greatest in the Lord's kingdom.

“Who should be the greatest”: A dispute possibly triggered by the privilege granted Peter, James and John to witness the Transfiguration. The disciples’ quarrel highlights their failure to apply Jesus’ explicit teaching on humility (e.g., Matt. 5:3), and the example of His own suffering and death (verses 31-32; 8:30-33).

It also prompted them to ask Jesus to settle the issue, which He did, though not as they had expected.

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."

“Sat down”: Rabbis usually sat down to teach (Matt. 15:29; Luke 4:20; 5:3; John 8:2).

“If any man desire to be first”: as the disciples undeniably did (verse 34; 10:35-37).

“The same shall be last of all, and servant of all”: The disciples’ concept of greatness and leadership, drawn from their culture, needed to be completely reversed. Not those who lord their position over others are great in God’s kingdom, but those who humbly serve others (10:31, 43-45; Matt. 19:30 – 20:16; 23:11-12; Luke 13:30; 14:8-11; 18:14; 22:24-27).

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.

Verses 36-37: “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.”

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,"

“A child”: The Greek word indicates an infant or toddler. If the house they were in was Peter’s (see note on verse 33), this may have been one of his children. The child became in Jesus’ masterful teaching an example of believers who have humbled themselves and become like trusting children.

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."

“Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name”: Not actual children, but true believers, those who have humbled themselves like little children (see note on verse 36).

We see here, Jesus held and hugged a child, perhaps Peter's child. He 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 forbid him, because he followeth not us."

“John answered”: The only recorded instance in the synoptic gospels in which he alone speaks. Considering Jesus’ rebuke (verses 35-37), John’s conscience troubled him about an earlier incident he had been involved in.

It is clear that the unnamed exorcist was not a fraud because he was casting out demons. He was apparently a true believer in Jesus. John and the others opposed him because he was not openly and officially allied with Jesus, as they were.

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.

Verses 39-40: Jesus ordered them not to hinder the exorcist, making the logical point that someone sincerely acting in His name would not soon turn against Him. There is no neutral ground regarding Jesus Christ. Those who are “not against” Him are on His side, but by the same token, “He who is not with Me is against Me. And he who does not gather with Me scatters” (Matt. 12:30).

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."

This does not mean that every miracle-worker is automatically blessed of God (see Matthew 7:22-23).

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

This does not contradict (Matthew 12:30). The two verses address different situations. When it comes to the critical point of accepting or rejecting Jesus (see the context of Matthew 12:30), not being for Jesus amounts to opposing Him (see John 3:18).

But in the case of someone attempting to work in Christ’s name, but perhaps with less than a full knowledge of Him (see Acts 18:25), there is no need to quench the smoking wick (Matt. 12:20).

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.

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."

“In my name, because you belong to Christ”: Jesus considered acts of kindness done to His followers to have been done to Him (Matt. 25:37-40).

“Verily I say unto you” (see note on 3:28).

“His reward”: That is, his unique place and service in the eternal kingdom.

Every good deed is noted, even if it is no more than giving a drink of water to the thirsty.

Verses 42-50: The mention of reward in verse 41 causes Jesus to warn of the equally certain consequences of defying His words.

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."

“Whosoever ... shall offend”: The word translated “to stumble” literally means “to cause to fall.” To entice, trap, or lead a believer into sin is a very serious matter.

“Little ones that believe” (see note on verse 37).

“Millstone”: This refers to a large, upper millstone so heavy that it had to be turned by a donkey (see note on Matt. 18:6). Even such a horrifying death (a Gentile form of execution), is preferable to leading a Christian into sin.

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.

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:"

“Cut it off” (see note on Matt. 5:29). Jesus’ words are to be taken figuratively; no amount of self-mutilation can deal with sin, which is an issue of the heart. The Lord is emphasizing the seriousness of sin and the need to do whatever is necessary to deal with it.

“Life”: The contrast of “life” with “hell” indicates that Jesus was referring to eternal life.

The Greek word for hell, the eternal state of the wicked, is Gehenna, a place of torment and suffering. With but one exception, every use of Gehenna in Scripture comes from the lips of Jesus. It was probably used to describe hell because of its background in the minds of the Jews.

It had been associated with the valley of Hinnom outside of Jerusalem, the site of human sacrifices during the dark days of Israel’s history; and a refuse dump at the time when Jesus spoke.

The term Gehenna in the New Testament confirms that it is more than an ancient valley outside of Jerusalem. Gehenna is associated with fire, punishment, torment, the undying worm, the gnashing of teeth, and eternity without God. All of the language stressing the repulsiveness of hell is a description of Gehenna.

The Scriptures incompletely describe Gehenna, because such a place is psychologically impossible to comprehend. The existence of this place, where the unsaved will consciously suffer for eternity without God, ought to stir every Christian to win souls.

“The fire that never shall be quenched” (see note on Matt. 25:46). That the punishment of hell lasts for eternity is the unmistakable teaching of Scripture (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:41; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 14:10-11; 20:10).

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.

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

(9:44 and 46): The better Greek manuscripts omit these verses, which merely repeat the quote for (Isaiah 66:24 found in verse 48).

This place is so terrible that it is actually beyond our wildest dreams.

Mark 9:45-46 "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:" "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

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:"

“Kingdom of God” (see note on 1:15).

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.

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

The eye can be evil, if it is not controlled. This is why the warning here. Nothing is worse than going to hell. Compared to hell, the loss of an eye would be minor.

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

The meaning of this difficult verse seems to be that believers are purified through suffering and persecution. The link between salt and fire seems to lie in the Old Testament sacrifices, which were accompanied by salt (Lev. 2:13).

The first phrase has reference to the “fire” of testing that every believer undergoes. (See 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:12). The second refers to the salting of Old Testament sacrifices (Lev. 2:13). Christians offer themselves to

God as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1). They must not seek to do so apart from the purging fire God sends for their purifying (see James 1:2; Romans 5:3).

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.

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”: Salt was an essential item in first-century Palestine. In a hot climate, without refrigeration, salt was the practical means of preserving food.

“Have salt in yourselves”: The work of the Word (Col. 3:16), and the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), produce godly character, enabling a person to act as a preservative in society (Matt. 5:13).

“Have peace one with another” (Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:18; 2 Cor. 13:11; 1 Thess. 5:13; James 3:18).

Salt from the Dead Sea contains impurities and becomes easily stale and unpleasant in taste. “Salt in yourselves” is the distinctive quality that marks the person devoted to God. The reference to peace ties in with verse 33, which precipitated this whole discourse.

Salt, as I said before, 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.

Mark Chapter 9 Continued Questions

1. Why did Jesus not want anyone to know that He was going through Galilee?
2. What did Jesus tell the disciples?
3. Did they believe and understand what Jesus said?
4. Why did they not ask Him, if they didn't understand?
5. Where did Jesus go after Galilee?
6. Who had a home there?
7. What were they talking about along the way?
8. How did you know that Jesus knew without them telling Him what they had been talking about?
9. If you desire to be first, you shall be _____.
10. Who did Jesus take unto Him to teach a lesson with?
11. If you receive a little child in Jesus' name, you receive whom?

12. Who was the child, probably?
13. What was the Lord really saying about the child?
14. What had the disciples forbidden the man to do?
15. Why did Jesus say, "forbid him not"?
16. Who was the man, probably?
17. In verse 41, what small offering will Jesus not forget?
19. To offend a little child who follows Jesus is bad, and the punishment is compared to what in verse 42?
20. Who fights children's battles for them?
21. If your hand causes you to sin, what should you do?
22. Hell is so bad that the fire is never _____.
23. If your feet are taking you places to sin, it would be better if you were _____.
24. Jesus said, if you lust after a woman with your eyes, you have done what?
25. What does salting with fire mean in a spiritual sense?
26. What does salting do?
27. What is salt?
28. Walking daily in your salvation brings what?