



This week at MRC we continued our series in Mark, finishing off chapter 9. Jesus outlines more of what it means to follow him as his disciples. It comes off the back of a discussion about which of the disciples is the greatest 😊.

We noted two aspects of his discipleship

1. v35-41: to receive people whom we would naturally reject

The linking word is doing something 'in his name' - we mentioned that has both a relational and representative aspect (we know Jesus and act on behalf of Jesus). He gives two examples here. The first is (using a child as a teaching aid) that we are to welcome small children. We miss something of the punch in our culture as children are highly regarded and valued - in their days children were at the bottom of the pile. Jesus is calling his people to (like him) welcome anyone regardless of status or position.

The second example is to do with other disciples who are not part of Jesus crowd. Where Jesus' disciples had ordered them to stop, Jesus knows that they are not enemies if they are acting in his name.

2. v42-50: to get rid of the things that would draw us away from him

The linking word in this hard-hitting paragraph is 'stumble', again it works out in two different ways: Firstly that we are not to cause other believers to stumble and secondly that we are to get rid of anything that might cause us to stumble - even a hand, foot or an eye! Jesus is deliberately using very hard hitting language because he wants to warn people about the reality of Hell and that it must be avoided. Jesus - the most loving man in all of history lovingly spoke the most about Hell in the scriptures. Our problem is that often we forget the enormity of God's holiness, don't notice our sin and so don't see it as much of a problem.

The overall image we get of what it means to be a follower of Jesus is then summarised, a little enigmatically, in v49 as he likens us to a temple sacrifice - totally and utterly poured out and burnt up. We offer all of ourselves to Him.

Here are a few questions to start your group off.

- From v35-41, what does it mean to do something 'in His name'? What would the opposite be? Who are we to welcome and accept 'in his name'? What does this mean for us?
- From v42-50, what does it mean to 'stumble'? How are we to practically stop stumbling? Why does this matter so much?