
Church in Campbell Weekly News

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The danger of considering ourselves better than others

In Mark 8:27-38; 9:1-13 we have a vision of Christ as our all-inclusive replacement through His death and resurrection. Throughout chapter nine the Lord was teaching the disciples to realize that they should be terminated and be nothing. However, in Mark 9:33-37 we see that they were arguing with one another over the matter of who was greater. The Lord was teaching the disciples and trying to help them realize that they should be nothing, but they were arguing in their effort to be somebody, even someone who was greater than others. Therefore, in 9:33-37 we have the Lord's teaching concerning humility.

In 9:38 John said to the Lord Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name who does not follow us, and we forbade him, because he was not following us." The remainder of this chapter is given over to the Lord's teaching concerning tolerance for the sake of unity, a teaching given in response to John's statement in verse 38.

We need to see that if we forbid others in the way John did in verse 38, this indicates that we consider ourselves greater than others. Furthermore, when we forbid others, thinking ourselves to be greater, we also cause others to stumble. While we are causing others to stumble, we are also causing ourselves to stumble. The evil one may use the members of our body — the hand, the foot, or the eye — to express lust and cause us to stumble. We need to be very careful regarding this.

We should not consider ourselves great. Instead, we need to realize that we are nobody and nothing. If we have this realization, we shall pray. For us to pray indicates that we realize that we are nothing and that we can do nothing. We need another One — Christ Himself — to replace us.

If we do not consider ourselves to be someone great, someone greater than others, we shall not cause others to stumble. But if we think that we are great, we shall cause others to stumble. At the same time, we shall open the gate for the enemy to use the lust in our members to cause us to stumble.

The members of our body, especially the eyes, are lustful. If we cause others to stumble by considering ourselves

greater than they are, we may have a wicked eye. Then the way will be open for the enemy to utilize the lust in our members to cause us to stumble.

We all need to learn to take the cross, to bear the cross, and to apply the Lord's terminating death to our situation. If we put ourselves to death in this way, we shall not consider ourselves to be great. Rather, we shall regard ourselves as nothing. As a result, there will not be any ground for the enemy to come in to utilize the members of our body to cause us to stumble.

If we do not take the cross and apply it to ourselves, we shall not only cause others to stumble, but we shall cause ourselves to stumble again and again. We shall be caused to stumble by the lust in our hand, in our foot, and in our eye. If this is our situation, then eventually when the kingdom age comes, we shall need salting because we are still full of "germs."

Purged and preserved by fire

The salting about which I am speaking is the salting with fire. Concerning this, the Lord Jesus said, "Everyone shall be salted with fire" (v. 49). Here we have the "fire-salt," or fire as salt. In the coming age, some may be put into fire to be salted. This salting by fire will purge them. In a sense, this purging is a discipline, a chastisement, a punishment. But in another sense this purging causes the believers to be preserved. Hence, this purging is not merely a punishment but also a preserving that keeps the purged one from perishing, from being eternally lost.

As we have pointed out, the fire in 9:49 is a refining fire (Mal. 3:2), a purifying, purging fire. As in 1 Corinthians 3:13 and 15, this fire will purge, in the kingdom age, those believers who commit sin and are unrepentant in this age. Therefore, this refining by fire will be a dispensational punishment. We have seen that even in this age God purges the believers through trials as by fire (1 Pet. 1:7; 4:12, 17). Dispensational punishment by fire in the coming age is in the same principle as God's chastisement through sufferings as by fire in this age.

At peace with one another

In 9:50, which is the Lord's concluding word in this section, we see the real significance of this portion of Mark. In this verse the Lord says, "Salt is good, but if the salt has

lost its saltiness, with what will you restore its saltiness? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” Here we see that the underlying meaning of this portion is that we should be at peace with one another.

We have emphasized the fact that 9:38-40 begins with John’s word about forbidding someone to cast out demons in the Lord’s name, because he did not follow the disciples. In response to John’s word, the Lord seems to be saying in these verses, “That one who cast out demons in My name did not follow you. But he is nevertheless one of My believers, and you should be at peace with him. However, you were not at peace with him because you regarded yourselves as greater than he. You also considered that you are closer to Me than he is. You think that you are better than he. This kind of thought causes him to stumble and also opens the door for the enemy to come in to cause you to stumble by using your lustful members.”

Actually, this portion of the Gospel of Mark is profound. Here we see the real cause of the divisions among today’s Christians. Christians certainly are not at peace with one another. In 9:50 the Lord says, “Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” But the entire situation among believers today is the opposite. We cannot say that the believers are at peace with one another.

The reason the believers are not at peace with one another is that so many consider themselves to be somebody and think of themselves as greater than others. The result is that others are caused to stumble, and the door is open for the enemy to utilize the lustful members of the believers’ body to cause them to stumble. Therefore, eventually the vast majority of Christians today have been caused to stumble.

Where are those Christians who have not been caused to stumble either by others or by their own doing? The situation is that the believers cause others to stumble, and then Satan comes in to utilize their hands, feet, and eyes to cause them to stumble. Hence, the believers cause one another to stumble, and each one causes himself to stumble.

Salt and grace

Because of the situation among believers, a situation full of stumbling, we urgently need the vision of Christ that the disciples saw on the mountain of transfiguration. Mark 9:7 says, “And a cloud came overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, This is My Son, the Beloved. Hear Him!” We also need to hear Christ, God’s Beloved. We should not hear ourselves or anyone else.

We need a vision in which we see not only Christ but also His all-inclusive death and His resurrection. We need to be replaced by Christ through His death and resurrection. This means that we need to apply His death to ourselves and then receive His rich supply in His wonderful resurrection. If we are replaced by Christ in this way, we shall be healed of the “germs” within us. We shall be salted even in this age. There will be no need for us to wait for the coming age in order to be salted.

(Excerpts from Life- Studies of Mark Message #29)

Burdens for Church Prayer

- 2026 Targets, # of baptized:22; # of prayer meeting attendance:35; average Lord’s Day and small group attendance:10% increase
- Spread the kingdom of God by preaching the gospel on the WVC campus and by Bible distribution in the community.
- Multiply the number of small groups for the increase and building up of the Body of Christ
- Perfect young working saints with shepherding families as containers for the next generation.
- Practice PSRP, BNPB, and vital small groups.
- Blending in the Body, by participating in conferences and trainings
- Establish and strengthen the church services, including children, YP, ushering, etc.
- Establish a prayer life individually and corporately
- Pursuing the truth and growth in life to live in the reality of the kingdom.

Announcements

- Life-study of Mark MSG 29, 30
- HWMR: 2025 Winter Training, Week 2
- 4/28 (Tue) 7:45pm, Prayer meeting at the meeting hall
- 4/17-5/15 8th Term FSCC corporate pursuit on Fridays weekly; \$30/person
- 5/1-3. FSCC 6th Grade Conference. \$50/person.
- 5/9, 6/13, 8/8 10am.
On-line Lessons on small groups by br. Minoru
- 5/22-5/25 International Memorial Day Blending Conference will be held in Dallas, TX.
- 6/15-19 2026 Bay Area Bible Camp at FSCC. \$85
- 6/29-7/4 Semiannual Training registration by 5/1
- 7/21-26. NorCal Summer School of Truth.
- 7/29-8/2 FSCC. North America Chinese speaking perfecting training, west coast session.
- 9/4-6 NorCal Labor Day Conference held at Burlingame Hyatt
- Financial Giving:
PayPal/Zelle: churchincampbell@gmail.com
Venmo @Churchin-Campbell
Church in Campbell bookroom account
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churchincampbellbooks@gmail.com