

## PART ONE: Motives Matter

Mark 9:38-10:31

Last week, we learned that for the believer glory follows suffering. We also learned about the power of faith, and we watched as Jesus began to teach the disciples a lesson in humility and service after an argument over who would be the greatest.

Read Mark 9:38-50.

All of these verses should be viewed in context with one another.

1. Summarize the following passages to bring clarity to the context.

What was John concerned with in verse 38? \_\_\_\_\_

Did Jesus share his concern? \_\_\_\_\_

Instead, Jesus showed concern over what? (v. 42) \_\_\_\_\_

**Stumble** - to entice to sin

Who is Jesus speaking to in verses 43-48? \_\_\_\_\_

Summarize verses 43-48. \_\_\_\_\_

**Worm** - a worm, specifically the kind that preys upon dead bodies

**Life** - life breaking forth from the abode of the dead

Who will be seasoned with fire? (v. 49) \_\_\_\_\_

**Seasoned with fire** - every true Christian is rendered ripe for a holy and happy association with God in his kingdom by seasoning, i.e. by the pain of afflictions and trials, which if endured with constancy tend to purge and strengthen the soul

What will be seasoned with salt? (v. 49) \_\_\_\_\_

**Salt** v. 49 - Salt with which food is seasoned and sacrifices are sprinkled

**Salt** v. 50a - a symbol of that health and vigor of soul which is essential to Christian virtue

**Salt** v. 50c - a symbol of lasting concord, because it protects food from putrefaction and preserves it unchanged

What two things are true about salt? (v. 50) \_\_\_\_\_

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What two instructions did Jesus give to John and the other disciples? (v. 50c) \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Go back and read Mark 9:34 and 38. What had happened prior to this conversation?  
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3. **THINK:** How do you think verses 43-48 and specifically Jesus' statement, "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another," relate back to the disciples disputing over who would be greatest and forbidding the other believers from casting out demons?  
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In verses 43-48, Jesus explains to His disciples and to us that, as true believers and disciples of Christ, our biggest concern should be ourselves. He stressed the importance of this by suggesting that His followers spend less time worrying about who's the greatest and stifling the work of other believers, and instead be diligent in taking extreme acts of self-discipline to keep themselves from sin.<sup>1</sup>

4. Read Romans 8:13. Describe the actions of true believer.  
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<sup>1</sup> It is important to remember that true believers cannot sin themselves out of salvation. A person who claims to be a believer yet feels no remorse over their sin likely never was a true believer in the first place.

5. “For everyone is seasoned with fire” (v. 49), but everyone has a choice. Read the following verses and describe the different fires people can experience, then consider which fire you desire to be seasoned with.

Matthew 13:41-42 \_\_\_\_\_

Malachi 3:2-3 \_\_\_\_\_

6. “... and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt.” What instruction is given to believers in Romans 12:1?

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7. What instruction is given in Leviticus 2:13a?

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Salt on the offerings was a symbol of the covenant between God and His people. Jesus tells believers in Matthew 5:13 that our character, as Christians, is the “salt of the earth”. Jesus used this conversation to show His disciples that their pride would need to be cut off or they would risk losing their “saltiness.”

8. Take a moment to consider your own life. Have you lost an element of your “saltiness?” If so, take this time to examine your heart and use this space to record your thoughts on how you desire to move forward.

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9. Read 1 Peter 5:10-11 and use it to sum up the lessons Jesus taught in all of Mark chapter 9.

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Read Mark 10:1-12.

10. What was the motive for the Pharisees coming to Jesus? (v. 2) \_\_\_\_\_

11. Look closely at how Jesus answered those seeking to test Him. What did He do? (v. 3)  
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12. According to Jesus, Moses wrote a precept regarding marriage and divorce. Why was this necessary? (v. 5)  
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Jesus didn't argue with the Pharisees about their interpretation of the law; instead, He pointed them back to God's original plan and design for marriage.

13. What can you learn from Jesus' example when disingenuous people seek to test you about God and His Word in an effort to discredit them?  
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14. Compare how Jesus answered His disciples regarding the same matter. (v. 11-12)  
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Jesus modeled what He taught in Matthew 7:6, "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample you under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces." Jesus understood that the Pharisees were not seeking the truth for understanding; they sought to discredit Jesus.

Read Mark 10:13-16.

The Pharisees' motive in coming to Jesus was to test Him. The people who brought the children to Jesus sought to have Jesus touch them and bless them.

15. **THINK:** What do you think was the motive behind the disciples rebuking those who brought the children to Jesus?  
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16. **THINK:** Why do you think Jesus was greatly displeased with the disciples for doing this? Consider Mark 9:36-37 and Mark 9:42 when answering.

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17. What had the disciples failed to do that led to their rebuking these people?

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18. Jesus pointed out that we must become like children if we want to enter the Kingdom of God. Consider each of the following situations. Describe how the behavior of children can be an example to us in our relationship with God.

What do most children think about their parents? \_\_\_\_\_

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How does a child handle physical needs like food and shelter? \_\_\_\_\_

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How does a child handle emotional and physical pain? \_\_\_\_\_

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How does a child handle personal safety? \_\_\_\_\_

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How does a child love? \_\_\_\_\_

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How does a child handle things they don't know how to do or aren't capable of doing?

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19. How does Jesus respond when we come to Him with the motives of a child? (v. 16)

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It is important to remember that as we grow in our walk with the Lord, we must continue to come to Him in humility for everything we need for life. Likewise, we must be faithful to listen and apply what He has already taught us.

Read Mark 10:17-31.

20. Matthew 19:22 and Luke 18:18 tell us that the one running to Jesus was a young, rich ruler. What could his running to Jesus and kneeling down before Him tell us?

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21. This young man sought eternal life. What did he hope to glean from Jesus? (v. 17)

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22. Romans 10:9 tells us that if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, we will be saved. How does Jesus' command to go, sell everything, give to the poor, come back, take up the cross, and follow Him correspond to confessing that Jesus is Lord?

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23. When it came to spiritual things, this man's understanding merely scratched the surface. Record the understanding he lacked in each statement that he made.

"Good teacher" \_\_\_\_\_

"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" \_\_\_\_\_

"All these things I have done." \_\_\_\_\_

Being sad at Jesus' words \_\_\_\_\_

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Like many, this rich young ruler thought there was something he could do to make himself worthy of eternal life. He did not comprehend the seriousness of sin or the holiness of God. Nor did he understand the fleetingness of worldly riches compared to the gift of reconciliation with God.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus described the character of a believer. Here, He sums up the message in just six commands: Go, sell, give, come, take up the cross, and follow.

24. In your own words, describe the spiritual context of what Jesus was asking this man to do to inherit eternal life.

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25. This man saw himself as good under the law; he felt his outward actions testified to his goodness, but he failed to see the sin in his heart. Jesus addressed that sin by asking him to give up the thing he loved most - his money. What prompted Jesus to point out this man's covetousness and love of money? (v. 21)

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This man's money wasn't the issue. The issue was wanting the money more than God. As true followers of Christ, we have to be willing to let go of whatever is holding us back from fully surrendering to His being Lord of our life.

26. Many Jews viewed wealth as a symbol of God's blessing and approval. Jesus' statements about trusting in riches (vs. 23-25) caused the disciples to question - if the wealthiest would have a hard time getting into Heaven, was there any hope for the poor? What point was Jesus trying to make about salvation? (v. 27)

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27. What promises does Jesus give to the person who is willing to give up those material things, personal relationships, or worldly success that the enemy tries to convince us are so important? (v. 29-31)

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Nothing we have or anything we earn in this life can make salvation possible. Salvation is the gift of God, and the only way to receive it is to be poor in spirit (recognizing that you are destitute without God) and to mourn over your sin.

28. **THINK:** Why do you think success and wealth can make being poor in spirit and mourning over one's sin difficult?

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## PART TWO: A Closer Look at the Peril of Trusting in Riches

### Mark 10:24

Jesus makes a shocking statement in Mark 10:25. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

29. What was the disciples' response in verse 26?

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30. Mark 10:22 gives us insight into the mind of a rich man. Consider the rich man's response, Jesus' statement in verse 25, and the disciples' response in verse 26, and summarize why Jesus' statement is true.

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31. Look up the following verses and write down what you learn about trusting in riches and/or works.

Psalm 62:10

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Proverbs 11:28

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Jeremiah 49:4

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32. Read Revelation 3:17. What is the reality of taking pride in riches?

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Read the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:13-21.

33. What are we to take heed of and beware? (v.15) \_\_\_\_\_

34. What does our life **not** consist of? (v. 15) \_\_\_\_\_

35. What was the man's attitude in verse 19?

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36. What does God say about this attitude?

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37. God called this man a Fool! Why is this way of thinking foolish?

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38. How can we be rich toward God? Read Matthew 6:19-21. Where do we need to lay up our treasures?

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39. A study on being rich toward God and laying up heavenly treasures would take many pages. Scripture is rich on this subject. For the sake of time and space, read Colossians 3:12-17 and summarize the attributes of a believer who has eternal worth and brings glory to God.

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40. Read Colossians 3:23-24. How do we receive an eternal reward?

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The tragedy is when our **trust** is in our own accomplishments. Whether it be in monetary success or in worldly credentials, neither secures our place in Heaven. We must put our trust in the only One who is able to provide our eternal security.

41. Look up the following verses about where our trust must be and/or what attitude we should have, and write down what you learned.

Psalm 52:7-9

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Proverbs 30:8-9

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Philippians 4:19

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1 Timothy 6:10, 17

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We put our trust in our God, Who is rich in mercy, Who gives us richly all things to enjoy, and Who supplies us with all we need. With this beautiful knowledge, we should then ....

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

- Proverbs 3:5-6

42. Take some time to consider where your trust lies. Is it in your own achievements? If so, how has this *Closer Look* changed your thinking? With whom do you need to put your trust? If your trust is already in eternal things, finish your study, committing to continuing to live out Proverbs 3:5-6.

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