

Mark 9:41-50
The Surpassing Value of Knowing Christ
August 17, 2025

1. Review:
 - a. The section from Mark 8:27-9:50 is a short period of time, probably 2 or 3 weeks, Jesus set aside to focus His attention on teaching the disciples three key concepts they would need to carry on their mission after His ascension.
 - b. The three concepts:
 - i. Jesus is both the Suffering Servant *and* the Triumphant King promised in the prophecies of the Old Testament.
 - ii. Man's *best* interests are nested in God's interests. The best and highest path we can follow is the pursuit of God's interests, trusting He knows better than we do what is best for us.
 - iii. The highest path is followed by. . .
 1. Denying ourselves
 2. Taking up our cross (our garden)
 3. Following Jesus
 - c. Jesus appeared to sow confusion in the minds of His disciples, rather than resolve it. He wants us to "camp out" in the areas that don't make sense, wrestling with Him through the Holy Spirit.
2. This morning we are going to talk about value and belief through two questions:
 - a. Do we understand the value of Jesus' offer to us?
 - b. What would be different if we really believed what we claim to believe?
3. Read Mark 9:41-50. Pray
4. Do we understand the value of Jesus' offer to us?
 - a. What is your value?
 - i. Be honest. When life is not going as you would like; when you feel like your prayers are bouncing off the ceiling; do you feel valued by God? Does He really love you? You accept the premise of Romans 8:31-32 **What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?** But question its application in the midst of your daily grind.

- ii. Look again at verses 41 and 42. "For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as *followers* of Christ, truly I say to you, he will not lose his reward. Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea." These two statements are expressions of your value to God.

1. When someone does good to you, it is as though they were doing it to Jesus Himself.
2. Likewise, when someone hurts you, it is as though they are hurting Him.
3. The Father values you as He values His Son!

b. What is the value of the offer?

- i. Contrast with what we hold dear.

1. Look at verses 43-48: If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire, [where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.] If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame, than, having your two feet, to be cast into hell, [where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.] If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell, where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.
2. And Matthew 10:37-39 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of

Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it."

3. And Matthew 13:44-45 "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid *again*; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."

ii. Paul summarizes the point in Philippians 3:7-11

1. But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.
2. And Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
3. And 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are

seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

5. What would be different if we really believed what we claim to believe?
 - a. Do you agree with my premise that your *best* interests are nested within God's interests? If so. . .
 - b. What would change about your approach to the Bible?
 - c. To prayer?
 - d. To this community of saints?
 - e. In the world of your sphere of influence? Your garden?
 - f. Pause to think about these things! Watch your email later today for a follow up I wrote to this mini-series on Mark 8:27-9:50.