



# THE GOSPEL OF MARK

# Mark 9:42-50 - Causing to Stumble

42 “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. 43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you die, life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 44 where Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.’ 45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 46 where ‘Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.’ 47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire— 48 where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.’

## Tasteless Salt Is Worthless

49 “For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. 50 Salt *is* good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves and have peace with one another.”

➤ This reading opened with a call to be mindful of how our actions can influence and impact others. In this section, Jesus uses hyperbole to get His message across, making His point with great clarity. When Jesus uses the phrase *little ones*, He wasn't necessarily talking exclusively about children. The term could also apply to a new believer or someone with childlike faith. And Jesus said it would be better to die than to cause one of them to sin.

1. What was a millstone used for and what was its average weight in the first century?
2. Take a moment to examine your life. Is there anything that would confuse or mislead a new believer?
3. Jesus uses strong images to convey His point. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. Jesus wasn't suggesting you literally cut it off. What do you think he meant?
4. Are there any sins you have diminished or ignored and haven't properly uprooted?
5. In a Bible dictionary look up the word *hell* in (9:47).  
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/gehenna/>
6. Does this change or give more clarity to your view of hell? If so, how?

➤ **After such graphic imagery, Jesus pivoted to a different kind of fire. He had referred to fire as an unquenchable, horrible thing associated with hell, but fire is also a purifying force.**

- 1. In 9:49-50, we see that salt also has purifying qualities. What did Jesus mean in 9:50 when he said, “Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another?”**
- 2. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus calls us to be the salt of the earth. How does this verse relate to what Jesus said in 9:50?**
- 3. What stood out to you most in this week’s study? Why?**
- 4. What did you learn or relearn about God and God’s character this week?**

# Mark 10:1-12

## Divorce

Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan. Again, crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them. 2 Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” 3 “What did Moses command you?” he replied. 4 They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.” 5 “It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,” Jesus replied. 6 “But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ 7 ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 8 and the two will become one flesh.’ So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” 10 When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. 11 He answered, “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. 12 And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.”



## Mark 10:1-12

1. **Read Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Did Moses *command* divorce or did he *permit* divorce? Why is this distinction important?**
2. **The Pharisees wanted to talk about a hotly debated topic: divorce. How do you think the Pharisees might have responded to Jesus's answer in 10:5-9.**
3. **Are there any acceptable reasons for divorce besides sexual immorality?**

## **Mark 10:13-17 - The Little Children and Jesus**

<sup>13</sup> People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. <sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” <sup>16</sup> And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

## **Mark 10:13-16**

- 1. Why were the people bringing their little children to Jesus?**
- 2. Why do you think the disciples rebuked the people for bringing their little children to Jesus?**
- 3. How does Jesus react when He saw what His disciples were doing?**
- 4. Jesus gives the instructions, “Allow the little children to come to me; and do not forbid (or, hinder) them.” What are some ways we might hinder our or other people’s children from coming to Christ?**
- 5. What does Jesus mean when He says, “Anyone who does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it?”**



## Mark 10:17-31- The Rich and the Kingdom of God

<sup>17</sup> As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>18</sup> “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’” <sup>20</sup> “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.” <sup>21</sup> Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” <sup>22</sup> At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. <sup>23</sup> Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” <sup>24</sup> The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” <sup>26</sup> The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?” <sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.” <sup>28</sup> Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!” <sup>29</sup> “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel <sup>30</sup> will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. <sup>31</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

## **Mark 10:17-31**

- 1. What do we know about the man who approaches Jesus with a question?**
- 2. What is implied by the fact that he runs up and kneels before Jesus?**
- 3. Is this man under the illusion of being in control? If so, how do his wealth and position perpetuate that illusion?**
- 4. How does the man's approach here convey the illusion that he can control God's acceptance of him? (Leaders: he believes that being good is how he can merit God's favor, and that there must be something else he can do to put God in his debt).**
- 5. How is this approach at odds with what Jesus said about entering the kingdom of God in 10:15?**