

Sermon Discussion Questions

Sermon Title: “Teaching on the Way” (3-04-2018) **Sermon Text:** Mark 9:30-50

Theme: Jesus teaches his disciples about pitfalls on the path of discipleship while at the same time showing a better way.

Outline:

- I. The pitfall of Self-Promotion (9:14-19)
- II. The pitfall of Sectarianism (9:20-27)
- III. The pitfall of Scandal (9:28-30)

This passage begins with Jesus reminding his disciples about the necessity of his upcoming suffering, death, and resurrection. The disciples still don't understand what this means. So Jesus takes the opportunity to instruct his followers about the counter-intuitive ways of the kingdom. Service over self-promotion, generosity over sectarianism, and sacrifice over scandal are the ways of the Lord and the way Jesus call us to follow him.

Discussion Questions:¹

1. What is the effect of continually using the term “Son of Man” each time Jesus teaches about his death (8:31; 9:12; 9:31)? (Read Daniel 7:9-15 and ask what kind of figure this is.) What is Jesus trying to get across?
2. What are the disciples arguing about on the road? Who does this show their basic misunderstanding of what Jesus has just told them about his mission in (vv 30-32)?
3. What lesson does Jesus teach about true greatness? How does the example of the child illustrate Jesus’ point? What does this tell us about the types of people we should serve?
4. How did John treat the person ministering in Jesus name he didn’t know? Why is this ironic?
5. What lesson do we learn about from Jesus’ in his response to John?
6. What’s the theme of vv. 38-50? How might these verses relate to what’s happened in the previous two sections? (Think, how are the disciples stumbling and causing others to?)
7. What are some ways we should guard against causing someone to stumble in their faith?
8. Why does Jesus use such dramatic language about fighting sin (vv. 43-48)?
9. What does Jesus say about hell and to whom does he say it? What effect does this have?
10. In the Old Testament, certain offerings were salted before they were burned on the fire before God (cf. Lev. 2:13). How does this image in vv. 49-50 teach us about following Jesus?
11. How does Jesus model what he teaches in this section?

Collect for the week:
 The Third Sunday in Lent

Heavenly Father, you made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you: Look upon the heartfelt desires of your humble servants, and stretch forth the strong hand of your Majesty to be our defense against our enemies; through Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

¹ Some questions adapted from “The Gospel of Mark: Participants Guide” produced by Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York, New York.

