



## 34 - The King's Warning - Mark 9.38-50 - Discussion Notes

### Introduction

Jesus taught of a place/condition that people will end up at who remain loyal to their own ways (sin) while turning from God's love. He used the word Gehenna (or Hell) to describe it. This was a familiar place south of the city of Jerusalem used for dumping garbage. Because the waste was regularly being burned and consumed Jesus used this place as an appropriate metaphor of what happens to humans made in the image of God who give themselves over to their sin (and shame) rather than humble themselves before their Creator God, who loves them. In Mark 9.38-50 Jesus gives a warning to his followers that it would be better to suffer loss in this life than to give oneself over to sinful desires and actions that will set one on a path to eternal ruin and dehumanization (Sin and Hell).

### Questions

- What are some of the ways in which Hell has been caricatured in our culture and misused as a means of portraying God as unloving or unjust?
- J.I.Packer writes: "Scripture sees hell as self-chosen. Hell appears as God's gesture of respect for human choice. All receive what they actually chose, either to be with God forever, worshipping him, or without God forever, worshipping themselves." (J.I.Packer, Concise Theology p.262-263.) Do you agree with this? Why?
- James 3:6 says "The tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell." If we look carefully the flames of Hell are already burning/consuming/destroying God's image (in people) in this life. One Bible teacher described a Christian as being, "one who's been given the **Power** to extinguish the flames of hell in their life". What sins are you committing that are consuming/destroying God's good purposes in your life and that by God's power need to be repented of? (e.g. Gossip, lust, cynicism, anxiety, bitterness, hatred, covetousness)

### Prayer

- Pray for yourselves and those you know who are being destroyed/consumed by their sin (or religious arrogance) asking God to open your/their eyes to see His love as portrayed on the cross, which has already taken the consequences of your/their sin (Hell) upon himself. He did this so that those who trust in Him may receive the consequences of His obedience (embrace, approval, love and acceptance).

#### Community Group Discussion

- Read the passage together out loud.
- Involve your group by asking/answering the study questions, taking the time to share.
- Ask for prayer requests and be sure to pray together.

#### Family Discussion

- Have your child/children read the passage aloud, if old enough otherwise you read it aloud.
- Involve them by asking questions.
- Ask for prayer requests and invite them to pray together as a family.

A great way to use of these notes is to start/join a Community Group

These notes can be used for personal bible study, yet, another way would be to invite some people together. We call these intentional gatherings, 'Community Groups'.

What is a Community Group?

Community Groups are small gatherings of believers (non-believers welcomed too!) that meet regularly for accountability, friendship, study of the Bible and prayer. Community Groups are an essential part of the mission of Calvary SLO Church as they are a place where we wrestle with the truths of the Bible and encourage one another toward the life God intends. Each community group is unique and molded by the people who attend it. Most community groups gather weekly and involve food, dialog, prayer, discussion for applying the Bible to practical living, and loving service to one-another. They're meant to be an organic and authentic expression of the church, actively living like the body of Jesus.

Why should I join/start a Community Group?

God is a Trinitarian God who is revealed as one in three persons: Father, Son and Spirit. We've been made to image God, which means we're designed for community & friendship. We often suffer when we're not in community, due to the brokenness of life, complexity of this world and the temptation to isolate ourselves. We encourage you to gather with a small group of friends, family or roommates on a weekly basis and use these discussion notes to press deeper into God.

How do I join the Calvary SLO Community Group eco-system?

We're enthusiastic about all forms of biblical community, however there are definite benefits to joining with the Calvary SLO Community Group (CG) eco-system. In short, the benefits are:

- **Training:** We have trainings intent on equipping leaders.
- **Support:** Each CG leader is assigned a coach to provide assistance and ongoing support.
- **Visibility:** CG's are promoted via the bulletin, website & given access to The City (our online social network).

To join all you have to do is sign up for the next upcoming training! Info: pastor James: james@calvaryslo.com.