

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus The Perfect Servant Of God

Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

II. Christ's Teaching On God's Priority Of Serving The Needs Of Others Above Our Own Pleasure (Mark 9:30-37)

I. Introduction

- A. We learned in our first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright service from personal failure.
- B. Mark had defected from service in Acts 13:13 due to some personally unpleasant reason, but regardless of that reason, he did not value serving the needs of others above his own pleasure, and Mark 9:30-37 reveals Jesus' example and teaching on God's priority of serving the needs of others above our own pleasure (as follows):

II. Christ's Teaching On God's Priority Of Serving The Needs Of Others Above Our Own Pleasure.

- A. Jesus exemplified God's priority of serving the needs of others above His own pleasure, Mark 9:30-32:
 - 1. As Jesus and His disciples left the region of Caesarea Philippi and headed south through northeastern Galilee toward Jerusalem (Mark 9:30a; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 145), He was keenly aware that He was headed for the cross at Jerusalem, His public ministry in Galilee having been completed, *Ibid.*
 - 2. Because His earthly ministry in Galilee was finished, He wanted to keep His presence secret and thus also to prepare His disciples for the next phase of ministry -- the cross, Mark 9:30b; *Ibid.*
 - 3. Thus, Mark 9:31, introduced by the conjunction "For" (*gar*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 160) to explain why He intended no longer to minister in Galilee, shows Jesus telling His disciples that He would be delivered into the hands of men to be killed and then rise from the dead on the third day.
 - 4. Of note, the verb "delivered" (KJV) here means "'deliver up' or 'hand over'" (*Ibid.*, B. K. C., N. T.) and elsewhere in the New Testament it is used both of Judas' betrayal of Jesus and of the Father's delivering up Jesus to die for the redemption of sinners, and "(t)he latter idea is probably intended here," *Ibid.*
 - 5. Jesus was thus committed to serving the needs of other people, dying as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world, at tremendous personal pain to Himself notwithstanding, in serving in the Father's will.
 - 6. The disciples did not understand Jesus' saying, and were afraid to ask Him. This fear was possibly due to Jesus' rebuke of Peter who had tried to critique this saying in Mark 8:31-33 due to the way it implied that Jesus' disciples would themselves face difficult times; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Mark 9:32.
- B. Jesus then taught on God's priority of serving the needs of others above one's own pleasure, Mark 9:33-37:
 - 1. After they arrived in Capernaum and had entered a house, Jesus asked His disciples what it was that they had been arguing among themselves along the way to Capernaum, Mark 9:33.
 - 2. The disciples remained quiet, not answering Him, for they were ashamed to admit that they had been arguing about which of them was the greatest among Jesus' disciples, Mark 9:34.
 - 3. However, Jesus as God Incarnate knew what they had argued, so He sat down, "the recognized position of a Jewish teacher (cf. Matt. 5:1; 13:1)," and summoned the disciples to teach them on the nature of true greatness in God's estimation, Mark 9:35a; *Ibid.*, Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament, p. 146.
 - 4. Accordingly, Jesus said that if anyone desired to be first, to have the highest rank, he must by voluntary choice become the very least, or the last, the servant of all the others, Mark 8:35b.
 - 5. The word servant here is *diakonos*, "one who attends to the needs of others freely, not one in a servile position (as a *doulos*, a slave)," *Ibid.* "Jesus did not condemn the desire to improve one's position in life but He did teach that greatness in His kingdom was not determined by status but by service," *Ibid.*
 - 6. To illustrate, the Lord took a little child and set him among the men, humbling the child among the big men, and then He took him in His arms to comfort him, and told His disciples that he who received such a little child in His name received Jesus, and he who received Jesus received God the Father, Mark 9:36-37.
 - 7. In other words, Jesus exalted the work of stooping to meet the needs of even the least of other people.

Lesson: Both by His example in submitting to the Father's will to go to the cross and also by His teaching, Jesus promoted the priority God places on serving the needs of others above doing what gratifies one's own pleasure.

Application: (1) May we believe in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) As believers, may we NOT seek to achieve our own personal pleasure in serving the Lord, but rather heed God's will in meeting the needs of others of even the lowliest of people around us.