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Chapter 9:

vs 2-8: The Transfiguration

After Peter had recovered somewhat from the shock of seeing the transformed Jesus together with Moses and Elijah, he tried to convince Jesus to allow the building of the three dwellings. It was the voice of God from the clouds who spoke in response: "This is my Son the Beloved; listen to him!"

What does it mean to you to "Listen to Christ"?

vs 9-13: The coming of Elijah

Jesus is indicating that Elijah has indeed come. He is pointing to John the Baptist who prepares the way for the Messiah. Do you think that there are yet ways to be prepared for the Lord? What might they be?

vs 14-29: Healing of a Boy with a Spirit

Jesus object to the father of the child's words, "...if you are able..." by saying that all things can be done for the one who believes. To which the father responds, "I believe; help my unbelief."

Is faith a matter of either/or? How is it that we can have faith and doubt at the same time?

vs 30-32: Jesus again Foretells his Death and Resurrection

Here we encounter the 'Messianic Secret' again. Why did Jesus not want his disciples to tell about his true nature? While we know through faith and the witness of scripture who Jesus really is and of his saving work, why are so many people unbelievers?

vs 33-37: Who is the Greatest?

In the culture of the day children were considered insignificant, weak, and of low status; one did not invite them to anything. What did Jesus mean when he instructed his disciples to welcome the children? Does our Lord just talk about children here? Is there a lesson for us?

vs 42-50: Temptation to Sin.

Jesus warns us, who bear his name, to beware of becoming a stumbling block to the 'little children'.

How would we be stumbling blocks to the seeker?

How can our hands, feet, or eyes cause us to stumble on the way into the Kingdom of God?

Chapter 10

vs 1-12: Teaching about Divorce

Instead of answering the Pharisee's questions, Jesus states God's intent for marriage.

How can we apply the principles of marriage stated here?

Do you think Jesus would give the same answer to someone in a troubled marriage who asked this question sincerely?

vs 13-16: Jesus Blesses Little Children

The disciples were blocking the children to come to Jesus.

Do you think little children should be in the sanctuary during worship? Why or why not?

Jesus said the Kingdom belongs to people who are childlike. What does he mean?

vs: 17-31: The Rich Man

Jesus grieves the fact that it is very hard for a rich person to enter into the kingdom of God.

Do you agree with Christ's words? Why and how is it difficult for a rich one to follow Jesus in this?

In vs 27-31, Jesus lays out the conditions for entering the kingdom. How is this promise to come true for believers?

vs 32-34: The third Time Jesus foretells his Death and Resurrection

This is a turning point in the journey. From here on they are heading to Jerusalem.

Why would hearing Jesus predict his death and suffering and resurrection make the disciple astonished and afraid? When thinking about the Lord's passion, what are your feelings?

vs 35-45: The Request of James and John.

James and John had not understood what Jesus had said. They were still thinking that he would rule with power and might and wanted to share that rule. But Jesus' rule is one of loving service.

How do we share in Christ's rule?

vs 46-52: Healing Blind Bartimaeus

Jesus asks Bartimaeus what he can do for him.

What do you want Jesus to do for you?

Chapter 11**vs 1-11: The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem**

Jesus uses a donkey colt to ride into the city. Why do you think the Lord chose a donkey over a horse?

While the disciples were astonished and afraid (32-34) the crowd greets Jesus with "Hosanna.." meaning "Bless now!" . What does the crowd know the disciples don't?

vs 12-14: Jesus Condemns the Fig Tree

This is an act of symbolic action. The fruitless tree represents a fruitless people who are not ready for the Lord. How are we fruitful?

vs 15-19: Jesus Cleanses the Temple

Jesus is opposed to selling merchandise in the temple. Ours and other congregation conduct bake sales and the like on the church property. While this is done to help congregational finances, some church leaders feel such activities should not take place.

How do you feel about this praxis? Do you think that Jesus would frown on this? Why or why not?

vs 20-25: The Lesson from the Withered Fig Tree

Jesus starts his lesson with "Have faith in God!" Jesus does not want us to focus on prayer requests that have not been granted, but when we pray with faith, our prayers lined up with God's will.

Is praying for our own needs according to God's will? If so, to what extent?

vs 27-33, Jesus' Authority is Questioned

They questioned the Lord's authority, which is the issue throughout his ministry.

Do you believe that the word of Christ in Scripture authoritative? And how does that affect your faith?

Chapter 12

Vs 1-17: The Wicket tenants and The Question about Paying Taxes

They killed the prophets and they killed Jesus. These Jewish leaders recognised that Jesus was accusing them. Is the death of Jesus the responsibility of all Jews?

Jesus is talking about the 'Two Kingdoms', the worldly, secular one, governed by governments and the spiritual one directed by God. As Christians, our first allegiance and commitment is to God's reign.

Can you identify instances where the state has interfered in God's reign?

Do you think the church's voice should be heard in those cases?

vs 18-27: The Question about the Resurrection

For those among us, and there are quite a few, who do not believe that there is a resurrected life for us after our death? Jesus quotes God's words to Moses: "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob", meaning that these patriarchs and our deceased loved ones are living in their resurrected state in heaven.

How is that a comfort to you, or not?

vs 28-34: The First Commandment

Why are these two commandments the greatest?

How do they relate to the Ten Commandments?

vs 41-44: The Widows Offering

Who do you identify with in this story? The poor widow and her last coin, or the rich people?

The widow gave all she had. She had to rely on God to provide. What is your attitude toward giving to the church? By what standard do you give?

May we pray together?

Dear Christ of love and mercy. The evangelist Mark told and wrote the gospel story of your life, death, and resurrection faithfully and with total truth and transparency. He leaves us many questions and challenges. Protect us, dear Lord, from paying 'lip service' to the truth and grant us the energy, the will, and the skill to tell our story of your presence and rule in our lives to those needy ones, you are sending into our lives. In your blessed name we pray. Amen