

The Second Prophecy of Jesus: Mark 9:30-41

Mark 9:30-41

Sermon Parables and the Teaching of Jesus Not stated

Mark 9:30-32 (quoted)

Mark 9:33-35 (quoted)

Mark 9:36-37 (quoted)

Mark 9:38-41 (quoted)

Dear friends, today we look at a profound moment in the Gospel of Mark, in Mark 9:30-41. In this passage we find Jesus delivering His second prophecy concerning His suffering, death, and resurrection — not only a moment of foretelling, but a revelation of His mission and purpose. As we explore the themes within this Scripture, we will draw out insights that speak deeply into our own faith journey today.

And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him. (Mark 9:30-32, KJV)

Jesus speaks plainly to His disciples about what is to come: that the Son of Man will be delivered into human hands, killed, and after three days will rise again. Yet the disciples fail to grasp the weight of His words, and are afraid to ask Him about it. This is a crucial moment in their understanding of who Jesus is, and of the nature of His ministry. His prediction points not only to the physical suffering that awaits Him, but to the spiritual struggle at the heart of fulfilling God's plan for humanity. As we reflect on this, we must consider what His suffering means for our own lives.

Jesus was also, in this moment, setting before His disciples the path of discipleship — a lesson for us also today. Following the prophecy of His death and resurrection, the disciples fall into a dispute about who among them is the greatest. This reaction is telling: it reveals how little they had yet understood of Jesus and of His mission.

And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. (Mark 9:33-35, KJV)

True greatness in the Kingdom of God is not measured by status or power, but by service and humility. Here Jesus turns His disciples' whole idea of greatness upside down: discipleship is not about climbing ladders of success, but about bending low to serve others. As followers of Christ, we too are called to embrace this countercultural way, setting aside our desire for personal glory, and investing instead in the lives of those around us, reflecting Christ's own love and humility.

And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me. (Mark 9:36-37, KJV)

Jesus takes a child in His arms and teaches that to receive a child in His name is to receive Him. This simple, powerful illustration shows us the importance of valuing the least, the vulnerable, and the overlooked. In our world today, many face neglect and indifference; as Christians we must recognise the inherent worth of every person, aligning our hearts with God's own compassion. When we lift up the least among us, we embody the very essence of Christ's love, and further His mission on earth.

This passage also teaches us the power of unity and shared purpose.

And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. (Mark 9:38-41, KJV)

John expresses concern to Jesus that someone was casting out demons in His name without belonging to their number, and the disciples had tried to stop him. Jesus responds with grace, telling them that anyone who performs a miracle in His name cannot easily be turned against Him. This teaches us the importance of unity in the body of Christ — a lesson as needful now as then, for the temptation to one-upmanship is no stranger to our own churches. The Church is diverse, made up of many members serving in different ways. Let us not be quick to judge or dismiss those who serve differently from us; rather, let us rejoice in the work being done for God's glory, remembering that whoever is not against us is for us, and let our focus be on advancing the Kingdom together, united in purpose and mission.

As we reflect on Mark 9:30-41, this second prophecy of Jesus serves as a powerful reminder of His purpose — suffering, death, and resurrection — and calls us to re-examine our own understanding of greatness, urging us to embrace a life of service, humility, and love. Let us go forth this week, not seeking our own advancement, but lifting others through our actions, recognising the worth of every person, and standing united as we carry out the work of Christ. May we be a people who do not only hear the words of Jesus but live them out, shining His light in a world that desperately needs hope and compassion.

Amen.