

# Lesson 8: Helping or Hurting?

## Mark 9.38-50, NIV



- ☞<sup>38</sup> “Teacher,” said John, “we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”
- ☞<sup>39</sup> “Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “For no one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, <sup>40</sup> for whoever is not against us is for us.



✻<sup>41</sup> Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.



✻<sup>42</sup> “If anyone causes one of these little ones — those who believe in me — to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. <sup>43</sup> If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out.



☞<sup>[44]</sup> 45 And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. <sup>[46]</sup> 47 And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell,



☞<sup>48</sup> where “the worms that eat them do not die, and the fire is not quenched.’

☞<sup>49</sup> Everyone will be salted with fire.

☞<sup>50</sup> “Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other.”

# Lesson 8: Helping or Hurting?



Or, the Serious 'Business' of being a Christ-follower!

All of us are either:

1. Helping someone know or grow in Jesus
2. Hurting someone in such a way that it drives them away from Jesus

## 3 Points:



1. Helping others
2. Hurting others
3. Hurting oneself

Hurting others is very bad!



- ❧ If anyone causes one of these little ones – those who believe in me – to stumble,
- ❧ it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea.



# Please explain!



- ☞ Is Jesus being literal here?
- ☞ Note who bears the blame
- ☞ What actually is 'stumbling?'
- ☞ Simply put, sinning



John Calvin comments on today's passage that the millstone punishment shows us **"how dear and precious those persons [believers] are in the sight of God."** The children of God are immeasurably loved by Him, and He will not take kindly to any who lead them astray or cause them to sin. That is reason enough to be **careful in our words and conduct** lest we cause others to transgress God's law.

# Take care of yourself!



- ☞ If your hand, foot or eye . . .
- ☞ "causes you to stumble"
- ☞ Who is to blame here?
- ☞ Repeated warning: Sin is serious!

# Take action!



Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.



☞ For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

☞<sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

☞ Hebrews 12.1-3

# Helping can be simple:



☞ *anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.*

☞ Ask yourself:

☞ What does that person need?

☞ Thirsty = water!

☞ Or, what else?

☞ Encouragement?

# You are the salt . .



☞<sup>13</sup> “You are *the salt of the earth*. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

☞ Matthew 5

# Action Plan:



☞ Yes, take action!

1. Assess yourself in the light of the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and a Christian friend
2. Stop, look, and listen for what others are needing!





In our struggle to serve Jesus,  
remember:

God composes hope  
from tragedy's notes.

 *New Morning Mercies*, Nov 2, Dr Paul David Tripp