

LENT DEVOTIONAL APRIL 7, 2014

SCRIPTURE

Mark 9:30-41

30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; 31 for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." 32 But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

33 Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" 34 But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. 35 He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." 36 Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, 37 "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

38 John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." 39 But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. 40 Whoever is not against us is for us. 41 For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward."

DEVOTIONAL

In case we **missed it** in the previous chapter, Jesus again explains what's coming. We've come through the halfway point of the book now, and once again Jesus points us to what is coming. We also see a continuation of a theme that popped up **earlier in this chapter**, this attention to children. We saw Jesus heal the child at the foot of the mountain, and here we see Jesus doing something interesting. In the previous story, the people were focused on an argument, which caused them to neglect a child in need. In this passage, Jesus physically places a child in their midst. We actually get a lot of physical description in the story—at least compared to the rest of Mark. We're told that Jesus sat down, that he put a child in the middle of the conversation, and then picked the child up in his own arms. Mark actually describes Jesus' posture here, and what we see is Jesus sitting down, holding a child. He is physically correcting the errors of the previous passage. In the midst of another argument, Jesus is forcing them to focus on a child. He then takes it even farther and encourages them not only to notice children, but to welcome children as if they were welcoming Jesus himself. Once again, he highlights how silly some of their arguments are when the arguments overshadow the people around them.

*Message provided by the **Miller Summer Youth Institute**.*

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Devotional

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