

# Mark



## Lesson 11-Life Choices, Death, and Hell fire

Focus: Mark 9:42-50

1. **Jesus warns men to be careful about how they treat the “little ones” (v.42)** *The way that God’s children are treated is very important to Him! If someone destroys their faith in God, then that someone will have a price of eternal loss to pay. It would have been better for them to have been drowned in the sea, Jesus tells us. These will suffer and die in the fires of hell (a very steep price to pay for misleading God’s children to their destruction and eternal loss). As a parent, we should all remember that children belong first of all to God, not to us. It is our God-given sacred duty to care for them and protect them in the most perfect way possible. We must guide them to have firm faith in Jesus Christ and trust in God—our Heavenly Father. If we forsook this duty then we would be forsaking a Divine commission from God. These are HIS children (they do not just belong to us—but unto Him). We must remember who the rightful owner of every soul is, and then present the young children faithfully unto Him as one who has done their sacred duty (in raising these young souls to know and obey their Maker).*
2. **Jesus warns that it is better for us to lose something dear to us, and to enter into eternal life (being wounded somehow) than to hold onto those things and be destroyed in the Lake of fire (v.43-48)** *It is so important for us to follow God’s righteous way. It is better for us to “cut off” something dear than to disobey God and be lost. Don’t let anything stand between you and obedience to God. Our commitment to Him must come first and foremost above all things!!*
3. **The followers of God are to be the salt of God’s righteousness in the world (v.49, 50)** *A little bit of salt goes a long ways!! It can season, affect, and influence everything that is around it. Jesus wants us to be this way in the world; to be the salt of righteousness, and to affect everyone and everything around us for the good of God’s plan to save souls from sin. If we have no saltiness then we have become useless!! We must learn of God to be salty, influential, and useful for Him in a good way. We must have the “fire” of His Holy Spirit and be “living sacrifices unto God” (Romans 12:1,2; Matthew 3:11; Acts 2:1-4; Matthew 5:13-16).*
4. **What does the Bible say about Death and Hell fire?** (Based on verses 43-48; and elsewhere).
  - a. **First of all, how does the Bible describe death? Is anyone in “hell-fire” right now?** (See Jesus’ view of death in **John 11:11-14**; Jesus describes death like a sleep; over 53 times in 17 different books of the Bible). **We can find the Bible’s teaching on death in Ecclesiastes 9:5,6,10.** This goes contrary to what many have said about death (but the Bible is clear). Death is like creation in reverse: Dust + Breath= a living soul (Genesis 2:7). Dust - the breath = death (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Job 27:3). **What does David say about the sleep of death? (Psalm 6:4,5)** *Do the dead praise the Lord while they’re dead? If it was true that we went immediately and consciously to heaven right at death, then surely those who died in the Lord would be praising Him—but David says it isn’t so. The Bible tells us that not even David has ascended to heaven yet (Acts 2:29,34).*
  - b. **Does Jesus say there is anyone in heaven or hell right now?** (or are they all waiting for the resurrection?) (**John 5:28,29**) *This is a future event—“IS coming!” when all who are “in the graves” will hear His voice and come forth. They will come forth to receive their eternal rewards (That is what Jesus promised His followers—John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; 1 Corinthians 15:20,23,51-54—Jesus wouldn’t need to come and resurrection His followers if they were already with Him in heaven—that wouldn’t make any sense). According to Jesus, no one is in heaven or hell right now. They are awaiting the resurrection. The wicked will rise to be “condemned” in the Lake of fire after the 1000 years of Revelation 20 are expired (Rev.*

20:4-6, 9, 10, 14, 15). **The wicked who were alive at Christ's second coming will die by the brightness of His coming** (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).

- c. **Didn't Jesus go to heaven when He died?** No. The Bible tells us he did not go there until Sunday morning (John 20:17). People often build a false understanding off of Luke 23:43. *Jesus said, "Assuredly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (to the thief next to him). However, we see that Jesus didn't go there until Sunday morning. The answer is simple. The comma was put in the wrong place. Punctuation is not in the original Greek. It was added much later by translators to make things more simple for everyone. Sometimes, they did not always do a perfect job, as we can see in other places as well. The verse should read, "Assuredly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise" (when we eventually both get to be there).*
  - d. **When do we get to be "present with the Lord"** (When Jesus comes—John 14:1-3). *And what about "near death" experiences? Many people have seen such occurrences. The reports are numerous! However, they are not all exactly alike. Different people have seen different things. Often they are these hallucinations are very similar to what people have seen when using poisonous drugs or mushrooms. Keep in mind these are "near" death experiences. No one actually died! Brains which are low on oxygen, and in many cases even drugged by medicines often see strange pictures or think strange things—many times people see something that is close in harmony with their actually beliefs about death—some people even saw nothing!!*
  - e. **Can you explain these verses in Mark 9 which seem to indicate that Hell fire will burn forever? Does it really burn forever and ever and ever and ever....? (Malachi 4:1,3; 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 1:7) "Eternal fire" in these verses did not actually burn forever, but its results were "eternal"—there was no coming back from it. These fires actually turned into ashes. Since the "Lake of fire" will actually burn on the earth's surface, and God must remake this earth new, it is really impossible for it to continue burning always (Rev. 20:9,14; 21:1). Three different words are translated as "hell" at times in the English Bible.**
    - i. **Tartarus:** a place of burning fire. **Hades:** translated over and over again as the "grave."
    - ii. **Gehennah:** a place of burning fire and garbage just outside the city of Jerusalem; i.e. *Valley of Gehinnom*. (Jesus used the word "Gehennah" in these verses). He used the burning garbage dump outside the city as an illustration of what would happen after the **1000 years** (those fires will burn outside New Jerusalem). In Gehinnom the fires continually burned and there was always worm-filled rotten flesh.
    - i. **Revelation 20:10 is also misunderstood sometimes by its use of the word "forever." Keep in mind how the Bible uses that term at times:** Jonah 2:6—Jonah said he was barred in "forever" when he was in the belly of the great fish. But, literally, it was only *"three days and three nights"* (Jonah 1:17). 1 Samuel 1:22—Hannah gave her son Samuel to live with the Lord "always" ("forever"). But, actually he stayed there for his "whole life"—as long as he lived (not literally "forever").
5. **The Bible makes it clear when we weigh all the evidence** (not just building our belief on one or two isolated texts, but on every text regarding this subject) **that death is a sleep until the resurrection. The wicked will not be punished by the "Lake of fire" until after the 1000 years. And the fires of this flaming lake will eventually go out. The wicked DO NOT continue to live and suffer in the flames over and over endlessly.** That is contrary to God's character. Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Matthew 5:7). God will judge sin, and the RESULT is ETERNAL, but the action of suffering will not continue for all eternity. If a person beat their child everyday for 20 years, because their child disobeyed them for one day, you would call that person a merciless, crazy lunatic, in need of their own punishment. How dare any accuse God of such a thing? Only the righteous get "eternal life" while the wicked will "perish" [cease to exist] (John 3:16). "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)—"the second death" (Rev. 20:14). **NOT eternal and endless suffering in the flames of some super fire.** (If that were the price for sin, then Jesus didn't pay it!! This we know isn't the case).

### **Question (s) for the Heart:**

**Is it your choice to know and follow Jesus lovingly and faithfully (to be saved and to save others)? \_\_\_\_\_ Can you see that death is a sleep until the resurrection? \_\_\_\_\_ And that hell-fire will eventually burn out? \_\_\_\_\_**