

CHILDLIKE “these little ones who believe”

<i>Negative example</i>	<i>Positive example</i>
Immaturity	Lack of status
Selfishness	Follower
Simple appetite	Teachable
Naive	Vulnerable

Why are we to be “childlike”?

Greatness

is marked by humility.

Discipleship

is marked by following, and teachability.

Saltiness

is marked by the treatment of the vulnerable.

Mark 9

³⁸ John said to Him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to hinder him because he was not following us.” ³⁹ But Jesus said, “**Do not hinder** him, for there is no one who shall perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. ⁴⁰ For he who is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as followers of Christ, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward. ⁴² And whoever **causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble**, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea.”

⁴³ And if your hand **causes you to stumble**, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire, ⁴⁴ where *their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched*. ⁴⁵ And if your foot **causes you to stumble**, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame, than having your two feet, to be cast into hell, ⁴⁶ where *their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched*. ⁴⁷ And if your eye **causes you to stumble**, cast it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell, ⁴⁸ where *their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched*. ⁴⁹ For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰ Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and **be at peace with one another.**”

The common theme

“We tried to **hinder** him”

“Do not **hinder** him”

“**causes** one of these little ones who believe **to stumble**”

“**causes** you **to stumble**”

The exhortation

“Have **salt** in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Mark 9

³⁸ John said to Him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to hinder him because **he was not following us.**”

The disciple’s question

- ✓ There are people who are ministering outside our group -

Their ministry is in Jesus’ name and they are effective.

They don’t have it all together.

Our impulse is to shut their operation down.

Examples: Sectarian competition today

Question: Can God actually use anyone who is not “following US?”

Mark 9

³⁹ But Jesus said, “**Do not hinder** him, for there is no one who shall perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. ⁴⁰ For he who is not against us is for us.”

Jesus’ response

- ✓ Don’t hinder those who may not yet have it all together but give them a break.

Examples: John Mark, Peter,

Question: Do we shoot our wounded or too quickly discard those who disappoint us?

Mark 9

“41 For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as followers of Christ, truly I say to you, **he shall not lose his reward.**”

Jesus' response

- ✓ **At the final judgment there will be some who will be unexpectedly rewarded.**
Matt.25:34-40

Question: Have we disqualified ourselves and others long before God has?

Mark 9

“42 And whoever **causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble**, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea.”

Jesus' response

- ✓ **We are better off dead if we hinder the weak and immature among us.**

Question: Has our lack of graciousness hindered the spiritual life of some one around us?

To “stumble” is translated “fall away” in Mark 4:17

“they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they **fall away.**”

Note the Apostles' sensitivity.

Galatians 4:19

“**My children**, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you”

1 John 2:1

“**My children**, I am writing these things to you so that you do not sin.”

Who are the spiritually vulnerable

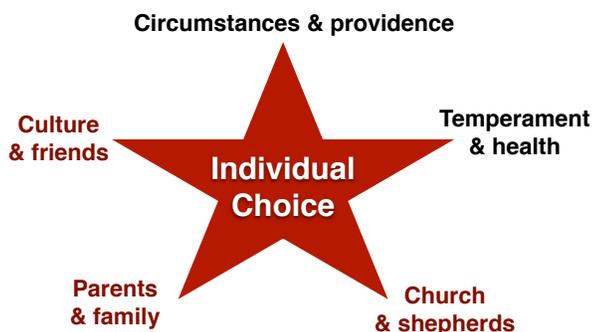
Example #1
vs.38-41

The immature who minister in Jesus' name

Example #2
vs.42

The weaker brother who can easily stumble

Temporal Responsibility for Faith



Romans 15

“1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.
2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.”

- ✓ **The strong take on the needs of the weak - One gives up his freedom in order to be salt - protecting and preserving the other.**

Question: Do we judge others in terms of our own strengths and preferences?

1 Corinthians 12:21

“And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you;” or again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

- ✓ **The analyst vs. the activist** - The “eye” is better at analysis, while the “feet” are better at action. But all are needed to work together.

Question: Do we judge others in terms of our own strengths and preferences?

“43 . . . 47 And if your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell, 48 where *their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.*

Jesus’ response

- ✓ **Sacrifice what you must in this life to keep the faith.**

Question: Do we see our faithfulness as an investment in the lives of others?

“49 For everyone will be salted with fire. 50 Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Jesus’ response

- ✓ **Everyone will face trials of fire in this life that should strengthen your faith.**

Question: Do we let your trials turn us into the salt that preserves unity - makes peace?

Summary

Last week vs.33-37 This week vs.38-50

What does it mean to be “great?”

What does it mean to be “salt?”

Promote
those who are lowly.

Preserve
those who are vulnerable.

Example of Jesus being IN but not OF the world.

Disciples see the “extra grace required” believers to be an opportunity not a hindrance to the ministry.

Practical challenges for the evangelical Christian.

- 1. We need one another more than we sometimes realize.***
- 2. Caring demands sacrifice.***
- 3. We may give up on ourselves & others long before God does.***
- 4. The “extra grace required” folks are an opportunity not an obstacle.***