

“Learn from Him”
(Mark 9:30-32)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. After Jesus had delivered the demon-possessed boy, He left Caesarea Philippi – which was north of Galilee – and began to head south with His disciples.
 - a. Where was He going?
 - (i) It was time to head toward Jerusalem.
 - (ii) He had come into the world to die – to lay down His life to pay for the sins of His people.
 - (iii) He had to be betrayed, handed over to the Romans, and crucified.
 - (iv) And this had to happen in Jerusalem.
 - (v) He will still minister in Judea and east beyond the Jordan.
 - (vi) But He was heading south.
 - (vii) In order to get there, He had to pass through Galilee.
 - b. But He didn’t want anyone to know about it – as we had seen earlier – for several reasons.
 - (i) Things had reached the point where it was no longer safe for Jesus.
 - (a) There was growing opposition.
 - (b) They might arrest Him at any time.
 - (c) But His work wasn’t yet complete.
 - (ii) He also didn’t want to be delayed:
 - (a) The needs all around Him were many.
 - (b) But He didn’t necessarily come to meet them all.
 - (c) He needed to keep His Father’s time table.
 - (iii) Finally, He needed to spend more time with His disciples.
 - (a) There were things they still had to learn – things He had to teach them.
 - (b) They needed to be ready for His coming crucifixion,
 - (c) And to carry on the work.
 - (d) And so as they were walking,
 - (1) He began to teach them,
 - (2) Especially regarding the theme He had introduced them to earlier:
 - (2) “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.”
2. Notice their reaction:
 - a. They didn’t understand.
 - (i) It’s not that they didn’t understand what He said.
 - (ii) They had heard it now at least three times.

- (a) The first time was when Peter rebuked Him.
- (b) The second time, they said nothing.
- (c) This was the third.
- (d) They knew what He was saying.

(iii) But they didn't understand how this could be – how the Messiah could die.

- (a) They believed His kingdom was about to come.
- (b) They knew it would last forever.
- (c) They didn't know what kind of kingdom He had come to bring,
- (d) And how it would work itself out in the world.
- (e) Jesus had told them – that's what the kingdom parables were all about.
- (f) But they still didn't comprehend.

b. And they were also afraid to ask.

- (i) Peter's reaction earlier and Jesus' response left them a bit reluctant.
- (ii) They had also just been rebuked for their lack of faith.
 - (a) And so rather than own up to their ignorance,
 - (b) They just remained quiet.

B. Preview.

1. This morning, you need to see yourself in the position they were in.

- a. They eventually learned what they needed to know.
 - (i) They completed the work the Lord called them to do.
 - (ii) And they've gone to be with Him.
 - (iii) You and I are those who must follow in their footsteps
 - (iv) And do the same.

b. And so there are things we need to learn

- (i) Before we can complete our work and enter our rest.
- (ii) The question before us is: Will we?
- (iii) Or will we avoid the truth because we're afraid?

2. This morning, let's consider,

- a. That the Lord calls you to grow in your understanding of Him and His will.
- b. That there are three obstacles that stand in your way.

II. Sermon.

A. First, the Lord calls you to grow in your understanding of Him and His will.

1. Peter writes in our meditation, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen" (2 Pet. 3:18).

- a. This gives us the two things we are to grow in:
- b. First, He wants you to grow in grace:
 - (i) In the fullness of the Spirit.
 - (ii) And in your experience of that Spirit of grace – in love.

- c. And He wants you to grow in knowledge:
 - (i) He wants you to know His Son more intimately,
 - (ii) The power of His resurrection,
 - (iii) And the fellowship of His sufferings.
 - (iv) In doing His holy will.
2. In short, you are to press on to maturity.
- a. The author to the Hebrews writes, “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil” (Heb. 5:12-14).
 - b. In one sense, you are not to be a perpetual student.
 - (i) You should always be learning – you’ll never know it all.
 - (ii) But there needs to be an end to your discipleship and a beginning to your work.
 - (iii) That was the end the Lord had in mind when He gave you teachers.
 - (a) Paul writes, “And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-13).
 - (b) Once you are firmly established in the truth, you will be better able to stand and serve the Lord.
 - (c) Paul continues, “As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love” (Eph. 4:14-16).
- B. What’s in the way of your growth? There are at least three things:
- 1. The first thing that gets in your way is the world,
 - a. More specifically, your pleasure, the things you think are fun:
 - (i) Not the sinful kind of fun –
 - (a) You had to give that up
 - (b) When you began to follow Jesus.
 - (ii) But the legitimate/lawful kind.
 - (a) This can be even more dangerous.

- (b) Because it's not sinful for you to do.
 - (c) Yet it can hold you back,
 - (d) And keep you from moving forward, from growing,
 - (e) And so it becomes sin.
- b. How can you overcome this road block?
 - (i) First, you can pray that the Lord will give you the strength to let go of it.
 - (ii) That He would give you a servant's heart in the place of a self-serving heart.
 - (iii) You also need to remember that giving too much of your precious time away
 - (a) To things that have little or no value
 - (b) Will stunt your spiritual growth in grace and knowledge,
 - (c) Possibly hurt others that may depend on you,
 - (d) And rob you of the rewards
 - (e) You might otherwise have had
 - (f) To enjoy for all eternity.
- 2. The second reason you may not be growing as you should is that you just don't understand what the Lord really calls you to be or do.
 - a. For many believers today, the fault lies with their teachers.
 - (i) So many pastors downplay the truth to build large churches.
 - (ii) They hide the more difficult teachings –
 - (a) The Ten Commandments,
 - (b) The absolute need of repentance from every sin and holiness of life (Heb. 12:14),
 - (c) The cross of Christ –
 - (1) That not only did Jesus die to satisfy His Father's justice,
 - (2) But that you must die to yourself as well,
 - (3) If you are to enter at last into heaven.
 - (iii) Because of this, so many professing Christians believe
 - (a) They can live like the world and still go to heaven.
 - (b) That's not what Jesus meant by the path to life being narrow (Matt. 7:14).
 - b. How can you overcome this obstacle?
 - (i) First, join yourself to a church that teaches the truth.
 - (ii) Second, let the truth of God work its way into your heart.
 - (iii) And thirdly, follow that truth with all your heart.
- 3. The final reason is fear – either a fear of being thought ignorant – as the disciples – or the fear of knowing what following the Lord is really going to cost.
 - a. Sometimes we don't like to be thought of as ignorant, so we're afraid to ask questions – and because we don't, we don't learn.

- (i) Don't be afraid to ask.
 - (ii) Don't let your pride get in the way.
 - (iii) Especially you who are young.
 - (a) It's not a sign of weakness to ask questions.
 - (b) It's a sign of wisdom.
 - (c) The fact is, you don't know everything – only the Lord does.
 - (d) You still need teachers.
- b. But there is another reason we're sometimes afraid to learn: once we know what we're supposed to do, we're accountable.
- (i) There is an old saying, "Ignorance is bliss."
 - (ii) It can be applied here as well:
 - (a) If I don't know, the Lord won't fault me.
 - (b) But once I do, He'll hold me responsible.
 - (iii) How can you overcome this?
 - (a) Remember that He commands you to learn.
 - (1) You can't avoid it.
 - (2) You must press forward.
 - (3) You need to grow up.
 - (b) One of the reasons some young and even older adults
 - (1) Become addicted to such things
 - (A) As drugs,
 - (B) Or immorality,
 - (C) Or even entertainment,
 - (2) Or why some abandon everything and go out to live on the streets,
 - (3) Is that they understand something of the cost of growing up.
 - (4) It means you need to take on responsibility.
 - (5) You no longer have someone standing between you and the harsh realities of life.
 - (6) It's hard to grow up –
 - (A) It's hard to be responsible for yourself.
 - (B) It's even harder to take on the yoke Jesus calls you to bear as His disciple.
 - (C) But don't forget that He will get into the yoke with you.
 - (D) He will help you bear it.
 - (E) He will guide and strengthen you.
 - (F) The more you can bear, the more He will give you.
 - (G) And the greater the responsibility you bear,
 - (H) The greater the rewards.
- c. And so press on to maturity.
- (i) Set the world aside when it gets in your way.
 - (ii) Learn what Jesus has to teach you

- (a) Every day in His Word, as you spend time with Him,
- (b) And every week in the services He has ordained for this very purpose.

- (iii) Stop being afraid of growing up, but embrace it as a necessary part of your service to your Lord.
- (iv) The Lord wants you to be a spiritual adult, not a perpetual child.

4. One final thing,

- a. If you haven't yet learned of your *need* of Jesus Christ,
 - (i) This is where you must begin.
 - (ii) The Lord gave you His Law, so that you would see your sin,
 - (iii) And your need of a Savior.
- b. If you haven't yet learned this as you should, then do these four things:
 - (i) Read the book of nature until you're thoroughly convinced that God exists.
 - (ii) Read the Law until you have thoroughly convicted your conscience of sin.
 - (iii) Read the Gospel until you thoroughly understand what God has done to save you from your sins.
 - (iv) Then pray and ask the Lord to help you trust in His Son, turn from your sins, and begin to press forward towards holiness. Amen.

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