



Be at Peace with Each Other

Mark 9:50

February 9, 2020

Do you have peace in your relationships? If not, it will most likely hinder your personal peace and your peace with yet other people. Previously we have focused on making peace with God (Luke 2:8-14; Romans 5:1-2) and personally assimilating the peace of Christ (John 16). Today we will explore how to find peace with others. Are you interested?

We want peace with others, and this is God's will for us (Mark 9:50; Ephesians 4:3; Hebrews 12:14). Yet most of us struggle with relationships at times. Like Jesus' disciples, we may argue about who is the _____ (Mark 9:33-34), have _____ attitudes (9:38), _____ others to sin (9:42) and sin ourselves (9:43-47). But Jesus cares enough about us to guide us in the right direction both by pointing out the deadly seriousness of sin (Mark 9:42-49; cf. Isaiah 66:24) and by teaching us a better way to live (Mark 9:30-50). One key to being at peace with others is to have _____ in us (v. 50).

The meaning of salt that most resonates with me is having and displaying the _____ of _____ that Jesus shows us. Elsewhere this quality of life is referred to as full or abundant life (John 10:10), eternal life (which begins in the present—John 3:36; John 5:24a; 17:3), or simply "life" (John 5:21, 24b, 40; 6:53). It's opposite is sometimes called (spiritual) death (John 5:24; Romans 8:6; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 3:13). Three things point to this as the meaning:

1. The words used to describe the lack of salt mean dull, flat, insipid, tasteless (Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34). In contrast, Christ-followers are the salt of the earth, those whose lives have a unique quality.
2. Elsewhere one of the major keys to peace and unity among God's people is the distinctively Christian qualities of life such as humility, gentleness, patience, selflessness, consideration, submissiveness (Ephesians 4:2-3; Philippians 2:3-4; Colossians 4:6; James 3:17-18).
3. In the one place where the context shows what Jesus meant by being salt, it is the qualities of the beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12). These distinctive characteristics of a Christ-follower and give them a quality of life that will do much to create and preserve peace between people. Can you see how each one contributes to peace? Which aspect of the "salt-character" do you most need to develop?

Jesus taught similar "salt qualities" whenever the disciples behaved badly. Instead of arguing about greatness, they should _____ and _____ people who may have less status than us in the world (Mark 9:33-37). Instead of having exclusivist attitudes, they should _____ the _____ that can be done by people not like us (Mark 9:38-41). And they should take sin very _____ (Mark 9:42-49). Having "salt qualities" like these will enable a person to be at peace with others (v. 50). As noted in #2 above, similar qualities are taught elsewhere in Scripture.





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