MARK: Drastic Measures 6.22.08

33 And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" 34 But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. 35 And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." 36 And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, 37 "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him 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 mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. 40 For the one who is not against us is for us. 41 For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward. 42 "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.

43 And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. 44 45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. 46 47 And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown 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 has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another." Mark 9:33-50 ESV

"But they kept silent" They were embarrassed about their topic of conversation.
"If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." Calls for drastic reframing.

P: The nature of Jesus' Kingdom is upside down.

P: Being first in the Kingdom is about being *last* (serving others.)

What is your definition of greatness? Does that square with Jesus' definition?

Why do we want to be 'great' in the first place?

Could be healthy. Most likely there is something more sinister behind it.
Pride. Lust for power/glory. Ultimately, failure to believe and live the Gospel.
How Do We Address It? Begin with the Gospel. Pray for humility. Study toward humility. Enlist your community.

"And he took a child" Jesus, Master of the object lesson. Possibly showing them what it looks like to be 'last' and also the kind of people they will need to serve. To serve the 'least of these' is to serve God.

P: God has a heart for the marginalized and oppressed.

Are we being faithful to serve the poor before us (physical, also spiritual, relational, emotional)?

"stop him, because he was not following us." He wasn't part of their inner circle.

P: God's work is not limited to our little corner of the Kingdom.

How do I respond to and speak of those brothers and sisters who aren't from my theological stream?

"a cup of water to drink" Even the smallest act of hospitality.
"because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward. Positive example.
"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, Likely believers, not just kids.
"a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. Horrible death.

P: How we treat one another really matters! *(both now and in eternity)*

Positive: Even the smallest gestures can make a big difference.
"Do I live my life with a sense of this reality?"

Negative: Leading other believers into sin is a serious offense.
"Do I live my life with a sense of this reality?"

"hand…foot…eye…causes you to sin, cut it off" Not advocating self-mutilation. Hyperbole.
"hell…unquenchable fire…where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' Trash heap outside of Jerusalem. Also real, actual place for those who are not in Christ.

P: Desperate situations call for drastic measures.

- Our sin caused the death of the priceless Son of God. Our remaining sin damages our relationship with God and others.
- How we see sin affects how we perceive everything in regard to our spirituality (God, Jesus, the Cross, ourselves, others, Mission, etc.).

Do we see our sin calling for drastic measures?

"For everyone will be salted with fire." Difficult. Seems like trials and/or persecution.
"Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another." Proverbial statement leading to command.

What drastic measures do you need to take today?

Visit www.crossinglouisville.com for more helpful resources, including study guides on Mark.
Works Consulted : Expositor's Bible Commentary, Life Application Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, Messages by Steve Hart, Hunter Beaumont, Tim Keller, Numerous Other Commentaries on Mark