

Do YOU get it?

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[0 : 00] Now as we continue then with our progress through this section of Mark's account of the gospel, in verse 30 of chapter 9, we read they departed thence. This is after the Mount of Transfiguration where they've come down to the mountain and they've met the boy who's been possessed by the demon.

And the father of the child cries out and says, Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief. And Jesus healed the boy. And when he was coming to the house, his disciples asked him, saying, why couldn't we cast him out?

He said, this kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting. And then they departed thence. And now in verse 30, Jesus is seeking to avoid the crowds specifically.

Why is he seeking this privacy? He needs privacy now and he needs peace from all the distraction of the crowd and of the world because he needs time with his disciples. Not just with the crowds, not just to get the message across to the world in general, but he needs time with his disciples.

That aside from all the miracles and parables and teachings and so on, they, they of all people might be taught and enabled to grasp the core doctrine of his entire ministry.

[1 : 16] And the core doctrine of the entire kingdom of God, which we have a clue of. If we were to turn to remember the transfiguration in Luke's account of the gospel, where we read in Luke 8, verse, I beg your pardon, Luke 9, verse 31, where we read that Moses and Elijah appeared in glory and spake of his decease.

That is of Christ's death, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. What is Jesus teaching his disciples about? He is teaching them about his death, his impending death.

And he wants them to know the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men. They shall kill him. And after he is killed, he shall rise the third day. Now, this is not the first time he has brought up the subject.

But we see that as on the Mount of Transfiguration, when it's discussed in Luke's account, and here, and previously as well, in chapter 8 of Mark's account, we see that the themes are bound up there together.

The divine sonship. Remember on the Mount of Transfiguration, the voice of this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And yet, Moses and Elijah are talking about his death. And here, likewise, we have this demonstration of his power after the Mount of Transfiguration, casting out the demon, and now he wants to teach his disciples about his death.

[2 : 33] Previously, of course, when this subject came up, in chapter 8, verse 31, when was Jesus raised the subject of his death? Chapter 8, verse 31, he began to teach them, A son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed.

And after three days, rise again. What has just followed from that? That is in the immediate aftermath of Peter being convinced by the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Now that they have grasped this, that he is the Messiah, the divine sonship vested in him, is now he expounds to them again there, chapter 8, verse 31, that it is bound up with the death and resurrection.

Notice always the resurrection is in there as well, of the divine Son. And that is the case again here, that he's trying to teach them. The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men, they shall kill him, and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

This is the core doctrine of his entire ministry. And aside from the parables, the healings, the casting out of demons, the provision of the food with the 5,000 and the 4,000 and so on, this is ultimately what it is all about.

[3 : 49] You see, you can imbibe all the things, the teachings that Jesus did. You know, not many people are really anti-Jesus. Even atheists, you know, would probably say, yeah, well, sure, I believe he lived 2,000 years ago and he did a lot of good.

And if his followers were more like he was, then maybe I'd be a Christian myself. Shrug. And then other religions will say, yeah, great prophet, yeah, we respect Jesus, yeah, great guru, great teacher, we respect Jesus.

And they get the fact of the parables. They get the fact of the teaching. They get the fact of the healings. They get the fact of the miracles. But they don't get the fact of the divine sonship.

God the Son being put to death upon the cross and rising the third day. This, the core doctrine of his ministry. He knows that if this is not grasped by his own people, then it will simply all be dissipated with a lot of nice teachings and good doctrines and maxims and a lot of miracles that anybody can grasp but miss the main point.

Now, maybe we know lots of things about Jesus. And maybe we've been exposed to a lot of his teaching over the years. But if we don't grasp this, the death of the Son of God and his rising again, what it accomplished, what it is for, then we lose everything else.

[5 : 12] All the rest, it's just, you know, packaging. I don't mean to speak irreverently, but this is the main thing that Jesus wants them to know. He would not have any man should know it, for he taught his disciples.

And said unto them, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men. They shall kill him. And after that he is killed, he shall rise again the third day. Now, there is one new element here at chapter 9, verse 31, that isn't there, chapter 8, verse 31.

And that is the element of betrayal. The Son of Man is delivered. He is given up into the hands of men. It's not just, oh, they accidentally come across him.

Oh, they managed to capture him. He is delivered up. He is betrayed. And this new element is being introduced here. And it's not, you know, quite possibly it's not even known to Judas himself that he is planning to do this.

But the Lord knows it. And the devil is probably already working away in the hearts of Jesus. But it has already begun that process of the sort of planting the seed of doubt, the seed of betrayal.

[6 : 22] Why do we say this? Because Jesus is speaking in the present tense. The Son of Man is delivered. Not shall be delivered. Of course, he shall be in the fullness of time.

But the process is already begun. In the same way as when Elizabeth greets Mary when she comes in to see her and says, What is this that the mother of my Lord should come to see me?

Because Jesus is already there, embryonic, in the womb of the virgin. He is already alive in their inhuman form. Even though the world doesn't know it yet.

So even though the Son of Man did not yet fully deliver, Jesus says he is delivered. The process has already begun its present tense. And there's also, of course, the contrast and the irony of the Son of Man being delivered into the hands of men who will kill him.

Now, we've got to understand the contrast, the irony of this. He is given for mankind. He is given for humanity. And yet it is human beings themselves who take him and put him to death.

[7 : 27] We can sort of heighten this. So bring it a little closer to home. It is as though it was said, you know, a son of Scotland is betrayed into the hands of Scottish people who kill him and who put him to death.

Let's telescope it a little bit more. A son of Scalpy is betrayed into the hands of Scalpux who will kill him and put him to death. You see, it gets closer and closer to home. And it is the very people for whom he is given who are the ones who are determined to put him to death.

You see, the rejection and betrayal of Christ is far closer to home than most of us would ever dare to acknowledge. In the depths of our own identity, of our own secret hearts, we either exalt him or we betray him, one or the other.

A son of our soil, our land, our earth, who walked this earth, who was present in this world, who was a human being, born of a woman, made of a woman, made under the law.

He walked this earth as we walk this earth. He is the son of man, betrayed into the hands of men who put him to death. As though he said, a son of our own community, a son of our own island.

[8 : 46] He was a man of his own island. And put to death by them. Now Christ is given for sinners. Betrayed into the hands of sinners, put to death by sinners.

The rejection and betrayal of Christ is a lot closer to home than we would ever dare to acknowledge. and in the depths of our hearts in the secret place within your soul we either exalt him or we betray him one way or another the heart responds to Christ with reverence or with rejection bowing the knee or betraying him this is what we have to recognize because this is what the disciples had to recognize it is the core doctrine of his entire ministry the son of man is delivered into the hands of men and they shall kill him and after that he is killed he shall rise the third day that above all is what God the Father will require at the hands of every living soul yes we will answer for our sins, yes we will answer for all the things that we have done and that I have washed in his blood or were not but ultimately he wants to know where do you stand in relation to the death of my son that is what it is all about ultimately and this is what he wants his disciples to know but they understood not that sin and were afraid to ask him and he came to Capernaum and being in the house he asked them what was it that you disputed among yourselves by the way and here we have this almost astonishing in the context almost astonishing fact that they are disputing about who is the greatest and when you consider you know that both in Matthew and Mark and in Luke's account and you can check the parallels here

Matthew 18 and in Luke 9 as well and verse 46 onwards that this this dispute the disciples have about who will be the greatest when we get to the kingdom of heaven it comes after the transfiguration when Jesus has shown them something after their rebuke at the foot of the mountain for their unbelief and for their lack of spiritual power after the teaching about the hideous nature of his death how he's going to be betrayed and put to death and all his sufferings and it's as though this is all going in one ear and the other and all their concern it's all about kingdom what's he getting here so who's going to be the top dog who's going to be the greatest when we get there they just haven't heard he is pouring out his heart to them about what is going to happen you know it's just always say if a wife were to say all these terrible things have happened to me in this day and this is happening it's terrible and that's happening and I'm ill I've been to the doctor and I don't know how many months

I've got to live and I'm just yeah right okay so what's for tea you know it's just not registering here and all they're concerned about is who will be the greatest when we get there to the kingdom they're just not getting it and then we've got this question about casting out beings and we'll come to that in just a minute and Jesus notice how gentle he is with them here he doesn't even say I know what you were talking about I know how shameful you've been behaving I know exactly what you were discussing listen to me I'll put you all right no he asks them they don't answer he sat down and called the twelve and said to them if any man desire to be first the same shall be last of all now this is just a wee detail I've mentioned in the past that Mark's account is full of these little eyewitness details that the other gospel accounts don't have and when Jesus sits down and calls his disciples to him this is him acting like a standard Jewish rabbi this is how a rabbi would teach he himself would sit and then he would gather his pupils around him and begin to expand and this is him teaching because he wants them to lie from him the teacher he sat down called the twelve said if anybody wants to desire to be first the same shall be the last and the servant of all in other words he gives them a new ambition if you really want to be great this is how you do it and he took a child and set him in the midst of them and when he had taken him in his arms another little Mark detail unique to Mark he said to them in other words you see what he's doing here again he's saying it doesn't matter whether you're great or small whether you're little child or a mighty king the point is whether or not you belong to me the point is whether or not everything you do is in my name whether or not you belong to me and how you respond to those who do belong to me this is the point he is trying to make that there has to be a service a humility in their greatness why?

because this is what God is like God creates man in his image because he wants him to be like him God says to Moses in the Old Testament be ye holy for I the Lord your God am holy because he wants man to be like him he shows him what God is like with the person of Jesus Christ and he says this is how you're to achieve greatest good service because this is what I do I wash your feet I serve I'm amongst you as one that serves I don't lord it over you this is what God is like you must be like him otherwise all you're doing is showing you don't belong to him at all an interesting point here as well is that it always seems to be that discussion of his death and his coming kingdom it always seems to bring out the wrong ideas in the disciples if we're to skip ahead a little bit you know to chapter 10 we would see that when James and John make their request that they would sit on the right hand and on the left of Jesus when he comes in his kingdom and we see that from verse 35 onwards and you've got this in Matthew 20 as well in each case this comes after another prediction by Jesus about his death when Jesus makes the response about his death and teaches them again about the death he is to suffer that's when

[15 : 18] James and John say oh by the way while we're talking about your kingdom you know can we get to sit on the right hand and on the left Matthew's account makes out it's their mother or it expounds it a little more fully that it's the mother of his children that asks this for her sons but again it's in the context of Jesus suffering and death and they're just not getting it he's pulling out his soul he's explaining this is what I'm going to go through guys this is the hideous death I'm going to suffer this is all the agony I have to endure yeah while you're at it Jesus can we sit on your right hand or on your left when you come into your kingdom they're just looking at the glory they're not looking at the sacrifice it has to be made and they're certainly not getting the fact that this is what Jesus is going to go through his followers are going to be called to go through something quite similar by way of testing and trial as well but also perhaps we should notice it says you know when he says what was it that you disputed among yourselves by the way they held their peace but by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest the disciples are ashamed they are ashamed of their former discussion as one commentator has put it you know it is strange how a thing takes its proper place and acquires its true character when it is to be set before the eyes of

Jesus the disciples here have nothing to say in their defence they're happy to do this thing they're happy to have this argument and this disagreement while they thought Jesus was not listening whilst he thought he did not see he did not know but of course he knew and had heard everything and now their own consciences convict them for the unworthiness of their debate so commentator says I'll just say it's strange how a thing takes its proper place and acquires its true character when it is to be set before the eyes of Jesus see we may think oh I really want this ambition for this achievement or that achievement I want to build up a business I want to reach that position in the job I want to acquire this house or property or car I want to get my bank account bigger I just want to achieve this I want to be a success I want to be built I want everybody to look up to me and say okay set that before

Jesus and say well why exactly is it you want this oh I want to be the greatest well you know what Jesus is going to say you want to be the greatest are all these ambitions worthy in his sight are they for the furtherance of his kingdom or can we only claim to them because we think well Jesus doesn't actually see Jesus doesn't actually need to know and when he asks them they have nothing to say because they are ashamed how many of our thoughts how many of our ambitions and hopes and fears are that which before the questioning gaze of Jesus would have to fall silent remember that he is himself the word made flesh this is what Hebrews says about the word of God Hebrews chapter 4 verse 12 the word of God is quick that means living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and niles and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do now quite happy to have this argument while we thought Jesus didn't hear didn't see if we took everything and set it in the open sight of Jesus brought it before the

Lord laid it before him asked his blessing on it we'd have to give a reason why we'd have to say well why am I asking this of Jesus what interest should Jesus have in this that I'm asking for in this ambition this drive this determination lay it before Jesus every decision every question every ambition lay it out before the Lord in the open sight of Jesus because he can see it anyway he knows it anyway you know if we did that would it not indeed make all the difference in the world to life itself to our lives and undoubtedly to the lives of others now it doesn't follow that every ambition will be simple we might have a legitimate desire to build up business or to acquire certain wealth so that we can do good with it so that we can maybe be of benefit of others so we can help others or give it to missionaries or whatever the case may be it doesn't follow that everything we desire will be wrong but if we can set it before Christ and say well Lord this is why

I'm asking for it this is why I would ask for your help and your blessing with it because I want to serve you with it then fine if you can justify that to Christ if it is legitimate if it is honourable honouring to him then by all means ask for his help on it and don't let it be something about which you have to be silent and ashamed he sees it anyway he knows it anyway there's no hiding from him what was it he disputed by the way but they held their peace for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest now you've got John's question about you're casting out demons and Jesus says you know don't stop and forbid him not there is no man who shall do a miracle in my name that can likely speak evil of me now we have to get the sense the context here in those days as people understood demon possession then I'm not entering into all the facts and figures about it but as far as the contemporary culture was concerned if somebody was possessed by a demon then you could exorcise that demon by calling over it the name of a more powerful spirit so if a particular demon pretty far down the food chain could be commanded by one higher up the food chain it could be cast out in the name of the higher up spirit or the higher up power this is one reason why because there was so much occult and black magic and so on practices people dabbled in spiritualism and so on and they used one spirit to cast out another and so on and they thought they were doing good this is one reason why

[22 : 02] Jesus' opponents said that when he was casting out spirits he did it by the power of the prince of the spirits Beelzebub he was taking the highest demon of all and using his name to cast out these lesser spirits and they weren't getting the fact that Jesus is a far higher name in and of himself a far higher authority in and of himself than Beelzebub or any other devil or demon or spirit or angel for that matter his is the ultimate authority it is in his name that all demons are cast out so when John says we saw somebody casting out demons in your name is that right is he allowed to do that he's not one of us he should be with us or he shouldn't be using that name Jesus says there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me for he that is not against us is on our part and again it's back again to this question of allegiance and loyalty that belonging to Christ it's the ultimate belonging it is the ultimate allegiance and identity both for

God and for the devil this is what the Lord will ultimately want to know where do you stand in relation to my son Jesus Christ he won't say how much good did you do how much money did you give to charity how many times did you go to church how faithful you are how much did you practice this good habit or that good habit he wants to know where you stand in relation to Christ that is the ultimate allegiance the ultimate identity both for God and for the devil the devil likewise is quite happy for people to practice any kind of religion they like because religion will not save them and if they're not going to be saved they're ultimately going to descend into hell they're going to be lost it doesn't matter what you call that religion even if you paint a Christian facade on the front of it that's not going to save you the Christian religion will not save you only Christ will save you it is the ultimate identity the ultimate allegiance and Jesus says if this man is doing it in my name he's ultimately an outside he's ultimately with us and the devil will likewise know that even a small act of kindness in the name of Christ cup of cold water a little deed of Christ not great big strategic victories on the battlefield a little cup of water a little deed of kindness in the name of Christ is a big part of the back arm just ask for example a little small light can be a guide or an indication that some of these days you know some of you might be old enough to remember say in the well you're very young in the time of the last war when there's the blackout and you get these ARP wardens who say put that light out you know somebody opens the curtains and light comes up put the light out because planes or enemies potentially can see the little crack of light or the little spot of light and can own it and where there's a village or a town or whatever so complete blackout put the light out likewise the story is told of a soldier on covert operations behind enemy lines and he knew that a particular place was being staked out by snipers and as they were trying to work their way in past the guards and they had to stay concealed for hours and days sometimes and his colleague comes up and he says have you spotted where some of the snipers are and he says yes there's one over there and he says the other one there how do you know and he says well the silly fool couldn't resist taking a dragon's cigarette in the middle of the night and that means of course a little orange glow pops up in the rest of the pitch darkness a little orange glow there and the light instantly you hone in on it and so likewise a little deed of kindness in the name of Christ is like a pinprick of light in the otherwise black night and it may bring the attentions of the devil onto you and it may bring enmity and it may hone in the devil's attack on you that you do something in the name of

Christ however small whatever the little pinprick of light may be if it punctures the darkness at all then it declares whose side you are on and it declares who you ultimately belong to whose you are and whom you serve if anyone will give so much as a cup of cold water to drink in my name because you belong to Christ verily I say unto you he shall not lose his reward and then he goes back again to talk about the little ones the little children who have such humility and dependence whosoever shall offend this just means say something hurtful or whatever to them but rather cause them to sin one of these little ones that believe in me it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea now there's different sizes of millstones were used in that culture and time there was the smaller ones that women would tend to use they grind by hand the corn at the house and they would turn that and that's a small one or there's the big one in the mills that could only be turned by a donkey or by water power or whatever the case may be and this was a huge big millstone such as we would be used to seeing in old mills when they were on the island and so on this kind of size of millstone that's what's described here it doesn't come through in the english but it's there in the greek it's clear what size of millstone it is if that's hanging around your neck and you're dropped in the sea you're not coming up that's it you'd be better to have that kind of death than to cause one of these little ones to sin and if thy hand offend thee cut it off it's better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell into the fire that never shall be quenched thy fruit offend thee if thy eye offend thee and so on now Jesus is not here advocating sort of you know oh yeah it's great let's all have mutilation because that's a far greater severity and discipline and so on but rather what he is indicating is that that which we do is part of us just like the body is part of us our character our nature our habits are part of us let's say for example that a family member came home one day and they had been out doing whatever they do at school or work or whatever and they looked the same and they had the same tone of voice and everything else was the same but they were behaving in a way that was completely unusual for themselves they weren't doing the same things they didn't have the same habits they were sitting differently they were lifting up different things and taking different things and they weren't behaving in their normal way they weren't speaking in their normal way and the next morning they were just the same something's changed what's wrong with that because what we do how we live our character our nature our habits are as much a part of us as our physical appearance you know what somebody lives with who you live with in your family and your home and so on it's not just the physical person not just the bodily appearance it's all the character it's all the habit it's all the style it's the way they live the way they behave and so on that's all the person they are and if that suddenly changes you know there's something wrong with them they look perfectly healthy but something's not right here so likewise if we have a habit or a practice or a particular indulgence of our tastes or our preferences or whatever it may be or it is like it is so dear to us as a hand or a foot or an eye it is as much a part of us as our physical body and what

Jesus is saying is you are better to get rid of that thing you are better to excise to remove whatever is coming between you and the Lord and his kingdom although it may be painful although it may be the factual equivalent of mutilation of chopping off a hand or a leg or foot or gouging out an eye and it feels oh I won't be the same person at all once that has happened I couldn't possibly do that well how badly do you want to be saved how content will you be with a lost eternity now anybody who has been a surgeon or a soldier or an explorer or whatever people that push the limits of achievement in places others can't go they will know themselves that there will be times when in order to save a person's body they have to lose a limb or a hand or a foot maybe the explorer gets cross bite he has to chop off part of his foot so the rest of him doesn't die he doesn't do it all of him is going to die so likewise a soldier whose leg may be shattered by artillery or shrapnel or whatever he has to lose the leg so that he doesn't die and bleed out completely likewise an arm or an eye or whatever it may be you may have to lose part of the body to save the rest and there may be something to which we are so wedded in desire or in practice or in habit that it's a part of us and that part of us may have to go that part of us may have to be removed if the rest of us is going to be saved this is not simply a call to discipline severity

Jesus didn't you say oh be hard on yourself it's always better to be hard on yourselves than soften yourselves it's rather a recognition that the rest of you may be fine but there's maybe one thing you're still holding on to now think for example of when the rich young mother came to her and when he said Lord what must I do to inherit your final life the Lord says well you keep the commandments you do this this this and this he said all of these have I kept from my youth up what do I yet lack he knew that he still lacked something and Jesus put his finger right on and he says well I know what this man's problem is this man's problem is he loves his wealth he loves his wealth ultimately more than he loves God and Jesus says go and sell everything you've got and then come and follow me in other words here comes Jesus and your pet idol head to head and it's like they're playing chicken with each other who's going to break first and the man himself he says I'm keeping the wealth sorry he went away sad because he had great possessions but he didn't have the true wealth and what is the alternative if we are not prepared to part with that thing to which we cling onto more than we desire to cling onto

[32 : 53] Jesus well we're told it is hell now Jesus talks about hell in the New Testament more than anybody else does more than Paul more than Peter more than James or any of the other apostles who talks about hell most in the entire Bible it is Jesus and that is something that some liberal wings in parts of the church don't like they like to think that Jesus is all gentle nice Jesus meek and mild he wouldn't say boo to a ghost he just wants to tolerate everybody and include everybody in regardless Jesus talks about hell explicitly and definitely more than anybody else does and the language he is using here is to an extent reflecting that which is in the last verse of Isaiah the prophet chapter 66 verse 24 they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me for their worms shall not die neither shall their fire be quenched and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh now this is what

Jesus is saying again and again and again if there is part of your life part of your body or soul or practice or desire or habits which is coming between you and the Lord coming between you and glory then you must either remove it or else it will drag you down to hell where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched three times he said and what is the alternative to that hell he describes it of those three occasions it is life verse 45 it is like what life verse 43 the kingdom of God verse 47 the kingdom of God is bound up with life alternatively to be absent from that kingdom to be cast out from that kingdom is eternal death these are the words of Jesus not the words of Peter or Paul or the apostles or anybody else it is Jesus saying this not me not any other preacher Jesus nothing must be allowed to come between us and Christ between us and the kingdom of God between us and life in all its fullness now in what context is he teaching this he is saying this in the face of disciples quietly discreetly disciples who are busy disputing about who is going to be the greatest and in the face of this teaching about all that they are going to have to go through and all that he is going to have to go through he finally concludes with this message about salt and fire everyone shall be salted with fire and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt salt is good and if the salt have lost his salt is good and this is a reference ultimately to Leviticus chapter 2 at verse 13 where we read every oblation of thy meat offering shall thou season with salt neither shall thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy

God to be lacking from thy meat offering with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt now the same reasons which led to the prohibition of leaven recommended likewise the use of salt and as the one leaven soon sours and putrefies so the other salt possesses a strongly preservative property and hence it became an emblem of incorruption and of purity as well as of a perpetual covenant we read for example 2nd Chronicles chapter 13 verse 5 where Abijah says ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt it is a covenant of perpetual reconciliation a lasting friendship thus it is referred by Jesus to the gospel the gospel has its purifying power all who embrace it just as when plentifully applied it preserves meat from spoiling like salt preserves meat from spoiling so likewise will the gospel keep men from being corrupted by sin and as salt was indispensable to make the sacrifice acceptable to

God as we read there in Leviticus 2.13 so likewise the gospel is indispensable to our being able to offer ourselves up as a living sacrifice to God but there will be fire too fire was a symbol of testing and of purification as well and the two went hand in hand as it purged away the impurities so it refined that which was pure as Malachi chapter 2 tells us it was destructive of whatever would not stand now the preservative qualities in salt don't make sense if it's being rubbed into a meat or into an offering that's then going to be burnt yet why would you bother why would you put this preservative into something that's about to be burnt well in that sense it's not the preservative sense it's the purifying every sacrifice must be purified as a purifying first it makes sense and so

Jesus refers this back to the unseemly behaviour of the disciples who is the greatest that's what they want to know he says you know you've just acquired your salt you've just been given this gospel you've got this time with me this teaching for me you've got your seasoning you've got your salt but if you lose it if you end up being dazzled by the greatness of this world and you lose your saltiness how would you put it back how will you ever change it Hebrews 6 remember tells us it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance seeing they crucify to themselves the son of God afresh and put him to an open shame having acquired your salt actions you can Grison Globus you can't Florida have that salt in yourselves have that purifying power of the gospel

[39 : 17] Jesus is saying to his disciples he knows what they have been arguing about he knows about their personal past life and ambitions have salt in yourselves and have peace he says one with another don't seek to be greater than each other don't seek to lord it over each other have salt in yourselves, have this purifying have this covenant relationship, have this preservative from corruption and likewise have peace with one another, no more unseemly arguments, no more pride no more exalting yourself you're going to need each other because this is going to be the ultimate test the ultimate allegiance who you belong to and it's not going to be like the Corinthians where Paul says oh I'm of Cephas and I'm of Paul and I'm of Christ you know, it doesn't matter about the lesser disciples, it doesn't matter about the congregation we belong to, it doesn't matter about the badge of our denomination it matters about Christ our relationship to him where we stand in relation to his death and resurrection have salt in yourselves and knowing that we are part of this greatest allegiance of all this greatest identity of the law have peace one with another there will be plenty of enmity from outside plenty of hostility from the world, the flesh and the devil at least have peace one with another and so will we show whose we are and who we belong to and that we are one in Christ the Lord another to know and that we have that we're the least who's especially that we in the the