

Seasoned With Fire

Mark 9:49-50
Charlie Brackett

Verses 49 and 50 have presented difficulties to all Bible commentators. Listen to verse 49. "For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt."

Some maintain that "everyone" refers back to the previous verses to those who are cast into hell, and the "fire" of this verse is hell fire. In other words, verse 49 is explained in the immediate context of verses 47 and 48. Others have contended that "everyone" is better explained in the broader context. Jesus began this discourse back in verse 38. He explained that those who work in His name are not to be hindered. He warned against causing anyone who is a believer in Jesus Christ to stumble. He made it plain that any sacrifice to eliminate sin is a worthwhile sacrifice. As one writer put it, "It is better to make any sacrifice than to retain any sin." In light of Jesus' overall teaching in this passage, perhaps verses 49 and 50 are by way of summary.

If so, verse 49 is saying that every believer in Jesus Christ will be seasoned with the fire of trial. Fire is used in the Bible to describe eternal punishment, but it is also used in another, good sense. Fire purifies. As you and I face temptations and suffering, our faith is tested and purified as by fire. Peter said, "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy." (1 Peter 4:12,13) James spoke of it this way. "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience." James 1:2,3

So we are being seasoned with fire as we face life's trials.