

Sunday, October 2, 2016

Pastor Don Denyes

Introduction to Mark 10:32-45

It can be easy to be so preoccupied with our own desires that we miss the big picture of what God is doing around us. How often have you found yourself dwelling on your next big project or the tyranny of the next item on your schedule and completely missed what God was doing in your midst at that very moment? When we fall into this pattern of living, we often find ourselves frustrated, confused, or even indulging sinful desires.

Thankfully, we are not unique in this struggle. In fact, this has been a problem going all the way back to Jesus' first disciples. James and John were so excited by the things they had seen and opportunity they perceived was coming, that they failed to listen to Him in the moment when He repeatedly told them *how* they must be accomplished. They became more concerned about their own ambition than the mission that Jesus was leading them on.

Context

Jesus is on the road to Jerusalem. Since Peter confessed that He is the long-awaited Messiah, Jesus has told the disciples twice that, as Messiah, He is going to be delivered over to the Jewish leaders, rejected by them, then beaten, and killed, but ultimately He will rise again (8:31, 9:31). This passage, then, marks the *third* time that Jesus predicts His death in order to prepare His disciples and yet they still do not get it. Yet Jesus patiently brings them along, teaching them at every step about the counter-intuitive nature of God...

Structure

- I. Jesus predicts His death (32-34)
- II. James and John ask Jesus to honor them (35-41)
- III. Jesus instructs His disciples about true greatness (42-45)

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Mark 10:32-45

“Mission or Ambition”

Two Ways to Live (Jay Adams)

1. Self-Centered: Doing what pleases you
2. God-Centered: Doing what pleases Him

1. Divine Mission (32-34)

- Resolve
- Produced

2. Selfish Ambition (35-41)

- Request
- Produced

Death of Christ (42-45)

- Example to them
- Ransom for them

Discuss

- 1) When you find yourself daydreaming, or distracted from your God-given task, what kinds of things dominate your thinking?
- 2) Jesus demonstrated true courage in the way He determined to go to Jerusalem to die, and the way He led others along the way. What role does courage play in our lives as Christians? How do we follow Jesus' lead by living courageously here and now?
- 3) Imagine you were one of the other ten disciples overhearing James and John asking for the most prominent roles in the kingdom of God. What would your reaction have been? How should we react today when we encounter a fellow Christian who is giving in to their own selfish ambition (whatever form that may take)?
- 4) Jesus warns us that those who don't know Him will "lord" their positions of authority over those under them. How have you seen authority exercised like this? Have you ever found yourself exercising authority in this way (whether as parents, or at work, or in some other position of leadership)?
- 5) Jesus gives us a pattern for servant leadership—seeking to serve rather than be served. What should our response to Jesus be? How can we go about serving one another more intentionally?

Go Deeper *(This section is especially for leaders to consider as they prepare for the Growth Group meeting)*

Gospel Connections: The gospel could be summed up in verse 45. The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. The only way we could be saved was through Jesus giving His life on our behalf. His body and blood are the only things that could atone for our sins before God. But because we have experienced this ransom in Christ, we have been freed from our selfish ambition and are now able to live for the glory of God and the joy of others. Once we understand all that Christ has done for us, it only makes sense that we would follow His lead in seeking to serve others and consider them as better than ourselves.

Whole Bible Connections: Much of the Bible is filled with power grabs. From the very beginning, Satan sought to usurp God's throne. Power and authority were at the heart of Adam and Eve's sin in the garden—who would make decisions in their life together? Time would fail us to consider Jacob and Esau, Aaron and Miriam, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and Absalom (David's son). A lust for power is central to the sinful desires of our flesh. James and John, therefore, were among many forerunners when they made this request of Jesus.

Theological Connections: Jesus refers to both “the cup” and “baptism” as metaphors for His experience of God's wrath on the cross. Interestingly, the two sacraments (or ordinances) that He left for us, as the church, to remember Him by and identify with Him through are baptism and the Lord's Supper (the bread and the cup). So when we are baptized into His body, we must remember all that that means—that His physical body was broken for us and ultimately resurrected. Likewise, we must remember when we take part in communion, or the Lord's Supper, we are identifying with Him both in terms of the New Covenant (of which His blood is the sign) and in terms of the suffering that He now calls us to. Just as James and John would later find out what it meant to suffer for the sake of Christ, we too, at every opportunity where we partake of these sacraments, must remember that we are identifying with Christ.