

Message #37**Mark 10:32-45**

I want to begin today by telling you about one of the most demeaning and pathetic things about which I have learned. There was a mother who was in a hospital dying and a son was trying to get the mother to sign a quick claim deed so he could take her property. Just imagine that. His mom is dying and all he thinks about is himself, her money and property. It is one of the most despicable things of which I have ever heard. But as despicable and as pathetic as that is, this here is worse.

According to **verse 32**, Jesus and His disciples were going up in elevation toward Jerusalem. They were traveling by foot. Jesus was leading the pack and the disciples and others were following along.

Jesus is leading the charge. His sights are fixed on that cross. Ever since Genesis, all history has longed for this moment. Jesus is walking ahead and He is walking alone. He is focused and He is courageous. This is not a reactive courage, this is a reasoned courage. He knows what lies ahead.

The people following Him sensed there was something different. There was a change in His demeanor. In fact, **verse 32** says as they were going, they had two reactions:

(Reaction #1) - They were “amazed.”

They marveled and wondered what this was all about. Something about Jesus was different. He was moving faster and was intent on getting to Jerusalem.

(Reaction #2) - They were “afraid.”

There was something eerie and scary and quiet and reverent about this walk. Perhaps some thing we are marching to Jerusalem to get involved in some Messianic war with the Romans and some civil war with the Jewish religious leadership. They didn't know. But they followed along behind Jesus in a stone cold, quiet reverence.

Jesus knew what they were all thinking, so He decided to take His disciples aside and once again tell them what was going to happen in Jerusalem (**v. 32**). This is the third time that Jesus specifically teaches them about his specific sacrificial work (8:31-38; 9:31-50; 10:32-45). But what is so sad is that these disciples just don't seem to get it.

Instead of them focusing on what He was about to do for them, they are focused on what they can get for themselves. Jesus is about to lay down His life for their sins and our sins and the only thing they think about is their own greatness.

What we see here is this:

WHEN JESUS CHRIST SPECIFICALLY TOLD HIS DISCIPLES ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN TO HIM IN JERUSALEM, SOME OF THE DISCIPLES REQUESTED THAT HE GIVE THEM A PROMOTION.

This is one tragic passage. Jesus is focused on going to the cross and these guys want promotions. They are squabbling about who of them is the greatest. Truthfully, none of them are great.

Now there are two subjects about which Jesus decides to teach:

SUBJECT #1 – Jesus teaches His disciples about His Jerusalem sufferings. **10:33-34**

Notice again for the third time He identifies Himself as the Son of Man, which is the Daniel title that establishes He is Almighty God who will one day rule the world (Dan. 7:13-14).

Jesus says when we get to Jerusalem there are nine specific actions that will happen to me. Eight of the nine will be horrible, negative things and one will be positive. Jesus says I am the Son of Man God and I am telling you when we get to Jerusalem, these evil things will happen to Me. Jesus says I am laying out the specific list of things that will happen.

Future Negative Action #1 - Jesus will be delivered into the hands of the chief priests. **10:33a**

The chief priests were the influential highest ranked priests who came from the aristocratic priestly families. These were the religious big boys.

Future Negative Action #2 - Jesus will be delivered into the hands of the scribes. **10:33b**

The scribes were the religious scholars, who became what they considered to be “experts in the law.”

Future Negative Action #3 - Jesus will be condemned to death by the priests and scribes.
10:33c

The word “condemned” is one that refers to a condemnation given in some religious, judicial context. So Jesus would appear before the religious leaders and they would sentence Him and condemn Him to die.

Future Negative Action #4 - Jesus will be handed over to the Gentiles. **10:33d**

Now this is a reference that Pilate will be brought into this from a Roman, Gentile context. They needed the support of Rome to carry out this execution, so Jesus says I will be handed over to the Gentiles for trial.

Future Negative Action #5 - Jesus will be mocked. **10:34a**

Now we will see later that both the religious leaders and Gentiles will mock Christ (15:17-20). They would mock Him verbally and physically.

Future Negative Action #6 - Jesus will be spit-on. **10:34b**

Both the religious leaders and Gentiles will spit on Christ (14:65; 15:19). This was a very demeaning thing to do. It still is to this day.

Future Negative Action #7 - Jesus will be scourged. **10:34c**

Both the religious leaders and Gentiles will beat Christ (14:65:15:19).

Future Negative Action #8 - Jesus will be killed. **10:34d**

The condemnation to death will ultimately come from both the religious leaders and the order of Pilate (15:24). Matthew adds exactly how He would be killed; He would be crucified (Matt. 20:19).

Future Positive Action #9 - Jesus will rise again three days after being killed. **10:34e**

Jesus wants His disciples to know that after three days, he will rise from the dead. This will prove that He is the only One who can forgive sins and save.

Now having just told the disciples this for the third time, one would think that they would have been so moved by this that they would have started weeping, but not these guys. They are going to start arguing about which of them should be the most honored in the Kingdom.

SUBJECT #2 – Jesus teaches His disciples about future kingdom honor. **10:35-45**

When you put this in the context, this is one of the most thoughtless and selfish things anyone could ever do or say. Jesus has just laid out what will happen to Him and all they are thinking about is themselves.

According to **verse 35**, James and John came up to Jesus, along with their mother (Matt. 20:20) and said we would like you to do for us whatever we ask you to do. Now they apparently do believe here that Jesus can do that. They do believe He is God. They do believe He can grant anything He wants to whomever He wants.

Now James and John had been part of the trio that had been up on the mountaintop with Jesus and apparently these two brothers slipped away from Peter and decided to ask Jesus for what they would say in France, a “carte blanche” request.

Now Jesus knew what they wanted and He was not about to fall for this, so in **verse 36**, Jesus decides to play along with these guys and says, well “What do you want me to do for you?”

According the **verse 37**, they said what we want is for you to grant us the privilege of sitting next to you in all of Your glory. We would like you to grant us the right to sit at your right hand and left hand when you are seated in all of your glory in eternity reigning over the world.

Now there are only two places like this. You only have one right hand and one left hand and they want those two positions and they are leaving Peter and everyone else out of this clandestine request.

They do realize that He is the God/Savior/Messiah/King who will one day reign in all of His glory. They do realize that He will reign over a worldwide Kingdom. They want preeminence, they want proximity, they want prestige and they want power. But this is an arrogant and “appalling” request.

Here is Jesus talking about the horrible things that will happen to Him and instead of them thinking about that, they are seeking to become almost just as honored as He will be. So Jesus responds with a series of five responses:

Response #1 - You do not know what you are asking. **10:38a**

You do not understand and perceive who I am and what I am about to do. In order to share honor in My eternal Kingdom, you have to endure suffering in this world kingdom.

Response #2 - You cannot drink the cup I drink. **10:38b**

This is a metaphorical picture designed to illustrate truth about His sufferings and death. The “cup” imagery is designed to metaphorically communicate that I have to take upon myself and willingly experience the cup of the wrath of God, which includes His Divine judgment (Rev. 14:10; 16:19). You guys don’t have a clue that I am about to drink in the full wrath of God for your sins. I am about to bear your sins and experience God’s wrath for your sins and you are asking if you can sit next to Me.

Response #3 - You cannot be baptized with My baptism. **10:38c**

The metaphor of baptism describes the overwhelming deluge of suffering that He is about to experience. Just as one is immersed in water that totally surrounds them, so Jesus would be immersed in suffering that would totally surround Him. He would take our sin and God’s wrath upon Him.

Response #4 - You will share in my cup and baptism sufferings. **10:39**

So when Jesus questioned them about this, they said, “We are able.” I am certain in their minds they are thinking about going to Jerusalem to fight some Messianic war. They are prepared to do that. In other words, they are saying we can drink that same cup and we can share in your same baptism. They are thinking of gaining kingdoms and power, not suffering.

Now remember their request is to share His glory; Jesus says okay, what you will do is experience some suffering.

Although they cannot bear the sins and take God's wrath, they can share in suffering for Him. In fact, we know James was killed by Herod Agrippa I about seven years after this discussion (Acts 12:2). John ended up being banished to the prison island of Patmos and then died years later in Ephesus.

Response #5 - Your request to sit at My side is not Mine to grant. **10:40**

What did Jesus mean by this? He meant that only God the Father would determine who He would permit to get near His Son. There are different responsibilities and functions in each member of the Godhead and only God the Father will determine who will sit next to Jesus Christ in His kingdom.

Now I have no delusional thoughts of grandeur here. When I look at the gravy life I have had and the few things I have done for the Lord, I have no problem saying it won't be me given this great honor. But someone will. Perhaps it would be one of these disciples.

It is interesting that in Mark the only two that we know of who were granted permission to be on the right and left of Jesus were the two thieves who were crucified beside Him (Mark. 15:27). That is where I would deserve to be.

Now when the other disciples heard this they started to get mad at James and John (v. 41).

So in **verse 42**, Jesus called them to Himself and decided to teach them the criteria God uses for determining greatness and honor:

Honor Criteria #1 - Greatness and honor is not like the Gentile rulers. **10:42-43a**

The rulers of the world are known for one basic power principle; they lord it over the people. They live above the people and lord it over the people. Greatness in eternity won't be like that.

Honor Criteria #2 - Greatness and honor is determined by being a servant. **10:43b**

How much we serve God and others will determine how much we will have in God's eternity.

Honor Criteria #3 - Greatness and honor is determined by being a slave. **10:44**

In **verse 45**, Jesus says I am the example of these principles. Jesus was the Divine Son of Man and He came to this earth to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.

One commentator observed Mark 10:45 contain the clearest and most concise statement of Christ's reason for coming in all of the Gospels.