

Mark 10:35-45

³⁵James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." ³⁶And he said to them, "What is it you want me to do for you?" ³⁷And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." ³⁸But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" ³⁹They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; ⁴⁰but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

⁴¹When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. ⁴²So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. ⁴³But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Hebrews 5:1-10

¹Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ²He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; ³and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. ⁴And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

⁵So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

"You are my Son,
today I have begotten you";

⁶as he says also in another place,

"You are a priest forever,
according to the order of Melchizedek."

⁷In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; ⁹and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, ¹⁰having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Mark Questions:

- What are you hearing in this text?
- Where do you think this question is coming from? *Meaning, what do you think they were thinking?*
- What kind of “glory” do they envision Jesus entering into?
- What do you think about their question?
 - What does it say about them?
 - Are they ambitious? Is that it?
 - Or is it something else?
 - What does it say about our understanding of power?
- How do we hold on to power when power could and should be released?
- What is the place for ambition in the Church?
 - Can ambition be pointed in the right direction?
 - Is mediocrity a recipe for disaster?
- How important are motives in our ambitions?
- Take a look at the verses before this, 31-34. Jesus just predicted his death. . . again. What does this question say about James and John?
- Why do the other 10 disciples get angry at James and John’s request?
- It’s clear that the brothers Zebedee didn’t know what they were truly asking for. We have an idea about what they hoped for in this “glory” but what were they really asking for even if they didn’t want it?
- How does Jesus’ understanding of greatness, power and authority differ from that of the Gentile rulers?

Hebrew’s questions:

- What sticks out to you in this?
- What role did suffering and submission play in the life of Jesus?
- What role could they play in your life?
- What would be necessary for that to happen?
- For whom did a high priest offer sacrifices?
- How do we make sacrifices?
- In American churches, we may need to be reminded that Jesus suffered. We seem to get the triumphant Jesus easily - because triumph is all we have known. But the suffering Jesus is much more difficult to stomach. How can a suffering Jesus actually be a source of strength to a culture that values nothing more than winning?
- What other thoughts do you have rumbling around this?