

My Pleasure [Mark 10]
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INTRODUCTION

1. Of the many marks of American, evangelical Christianity (a Magnolia Market inspired house?)
 - a. Perhaps there is nothing greater than Chic-fil-a.
 - b. Just the fact that they're closed on Sundays (able as a privately-held company) . . .
 - c. They still attract the non-Christian crowd as well; they're impervious to boycotts.
2. Something you may know about their employees: whenever someone says "thanks..."
 - a. Employees are supposed to respond, "My Pleasure."
 - 1) This response implies that they were truly content in fulfilling a request
 - 2) I've always wondered if this were true in every situation.
 - a) It's obviously a mentality that Chic-fil-A wants to develop.
 - b) There have to be tasks that are not pleasurable.
3. This morning, we're going to look at two requests made to Jesus.
 - a. From his response, we'll learn about the way of Jesus & our own requests.

VERSES 35-40

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."³⁶ "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. ³⁷ They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." ³⁸ "You don't know what you are asking,"^(AP) Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup^(AQ) I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"^(AR) ³⁹ "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with,^(AS) ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

1. Jesus had previously given these two young men a nickname, from **Mark 3:17**

"James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means "sons of thunder")"

 - a. They come to Jesus with a request. In other gospels, their mother accompanies.
 - b. When "we want you to do whatever we ask," precedes question, beware.
 - 1) This is a point of manipulation. It's often how we choose to operate.
 - 2) If I come to you only wanting a "yes," I'm relishing my certainty.
 - 3) James and John don't care the repercussions; they want what they want
2. Jesus, however, is not phased. What can I do for you? [Basically, he says, "My Pleasure."]
 - a. They want to sit at the sides of Jesus—places of prominence in ancient world.
 - b. The request is incredibly self-centered, especially in light of previous text.

Mark 10:33,34 *"The Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, ³⁴ who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him."*
3. Jesus responds in a partial granting.
 - a. First he outlines the cost: discussing drinking the cup and being baptized.
 - 1) In the Old Testament, the image of drinking the cup represents God's judgment.
 - 2) In ancient Judaism, this is sometimes referred to as the cup of fury.

Jeremiah 25:15 "The LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: 'Take from my hand this cup filled with the wine of my wrath and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it.'" minds because of the sword that I am sending among them"
 - 3) The Greek word for *baptized* means *to be immersed*.
 - a) All in all, Jesus asked about the limits of their devotion to him.
 - b. The disciple brothers respond that they'd do it, not realizing the implications of this.
 - 1) They were consumed with the glory, and didn't fully understand the cost.
 - 2) An immersion would mean accepting the same persecution that Jesus bore.

- c. Interesting enough, the two brothers were the bookends of the apostles in death.
 - 1) James was martyred and died first; John died naturally but was persecuted.
- d. In the end, Jesus says their request was not up to him. There are bigger issues at stake.

VERSES 41-45

⁴¹ When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. ⁴² Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

1. I love the response of the other disciples when they heard about the request: anger.
 - a. Was the source of the anger incredulity of such a request? Not at all.
 - b. Their anger was actually pure jealousy: why didn't we ask for that first?
2. Jesus catches wind of their debate and wants explain the nature of his kingdom.
 - a. Understand this: in the ancient world, over 90% of society was impoverished.
 - 1) Since riches were hard to secure, what was left was glory/honor.
 - 2) When James/John asked this, they weren't thinking about riches but honor.
 - 3) This system of honor was not godly, but pagan (influenced by the Gentiles).
 - a) As Jews, they generally despised all things Gentile.
 - b) Thus, in this request, they became that which they had despised.
3. A few weeks chapters before, in Mark 8, Jesus introduced this concept.
 - a. In the kingdom of God, greatness is obtained through servanthood.
 - b. Jockeying for seat position is useless, as honor is attained via slavery.
 - 1) Slave verbiage continues here with the phrase "ransom for many"
 - 2) Term (*lytron*) Greek for \$ paid to redeem/purchase freedom of slaves
 - 3) Also ransom applied in cultic religions in relations to debt to the gods
 - a) It had a religious redemptive (expiation) connotation.
4. "For many" is sometimes troubling, but it's oft repeated in the gospels
 - a. It's not that Jesus selective chooses people, but not all accept his death

**Keep this in mind as we move on to another of Mark's stories.*

VERSES 46-48

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, ^(A) he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, ^(B) have mercy on me!" ⁴⁸ Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

1. A couple of things that makes this story significant.
 - a. First, it's the final healing story in the book of Mark.
 - b. Mark doesn't name any of the previous people healed, so this is significant.
 - c. This is an Aramaic name that doesn't necessarily reveal his background (Jew or Gentile).
2. The city where this healing takes place is in Jericho.
 - a. Jericho is located at the lowest point on the earth, (825 ft below sea level).
 - b. It is the world's oldest city, continually inhabited since 9,000BC.
 - c. The city had been rebuilt by King Herod, so it was modernized when Jesus was there.
3. The blind man must've heard of Jesus and embraces this one chance to contact him.
 - a. Although the crowd tries to silence this annoyance, Bartimaeus gets louder.
 - b. His words here offer some significance, as he called Jesus, "Son of David."
 - 1) By Jesus' day, the phrase had acquired Messianic connotations

- 2) Remember that the actually Son of David was King Solomon.
- 3) The rabbis viewed Solomon as exorcist, healer, & magician.
- 4) As a miracle worker, Jesus was just like the Son of David.

VERSES 49-52

⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." ⁵⁰ Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ **"What do you want me to do for you?"** Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, ^(AZ) I want to see." ⁵² "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." ^(BA) Immediately he received his sight and followed ^(BB) Jesus along the road.

1. The literal Greek of verse 49 is: "And Jesus stood still."
 - a. The simple words of one viewed as the lowest in society bid him to stop.
 - b. INTERESTING NOTE: a throw away comment about throwing his cloak aside.
 - 1) It wasn't just clearing a path to get to Jesus. For Bartimaeus, his cloak was everything.
 - 2) For a beggar, an outer garment may have been virtually all he had.
 - a) It was similar to the call of disciple—a call to leave all behind.
 - b) Bartemaus wanted sight, and he was willing to abandon all for it.
 - c) The risk implied here is huge: it's all or nothing.
2. Jesus asks Bartimaeus the same thing he asked James and John
 - a. Bartimaeus wants only one thing: that he might see **again**.
 - b. When he is healed, he joins Jesus on the road up to Jerusalem.
 - 1) Jesus calls Bartimaeus, similar to the calling of the disciples.
 - 2) WATCH THE END OF THE STORY: It's almost as if Bartimaeus becomes an apostle.

CONCLUSION

1. Juxtapose the two incidents, and two views of the kingdom emerge (unexpectedly)
 - a. JESUS ASKS THE SAME QUESTION, Jesus responds, "My Pleasure,"
 - b. He reacts the same to two different requests.
 - c. The disciples were blinded by the glory that Christ could bring to them.
 - d. The blind mind wanted the clarity to see the kingdom come.
2. I think of this quote by scholar James Edwards about how the blind man presents himself:

"He asks not to be superhuman, but to be simply human."
3. THE POINT: Are we merely following Jesus if he's convenient to **My Pleasure?**
 - a. The emphasis is on "MY," it's a focus on self.
 - 1) For many of us, our default mode is set on self-promotion.
 - 2) Social media has a tendency to feed this; it's space where I constantly elevate self.
 - 3) If this is you, feel encouraged: the disciples were guilty of doing it here.
4. We need to be like Jesus and be people dedicated to working toward the pleasure of others.
 - a. In serving the needs of others, we become more like Christ.