



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Jesus : The Servant Leader

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Matthew 20:17-28

Death, Resurrection Foretold

- 17 As Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve *disciples* aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them,
- 18 “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death,
- 19 and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify *Him*, and on the third day He will be raised up.”

Preferment Asked

- 20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him.
- 21 And He said to her, “What do you wish?” She said to Him, “Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left.”
- 22 But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” They said to Him, “We are able.”
- 23 He said to them, “My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father.”
- 24 And hearing *this*, the ten became indignant with the two brothers.
- 25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and *their* great men exercise authority over them.
- 26 “It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,
- 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;
- 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (NASB)

The Announcement (Vs.17-19)

Jesus knows that His time is near and gathers those closest to Him, the twelve disciples, and makes His third announcement of the crucifixion to His disciples (Mt. 16:21; 17:22–23). While he was trying to prepare them for the difficult time that was near, those twelve closest to Him didn’t understand the significance of the event that was going to take place. How often are we like the disciples who hear or read God’s message but ignore the significance of the message? Like the disciples, how often do we not understand and/or appreciate the significance of Christ’s sacrifice for us on the cross?

The Request (Vs. 20–21)

The mother of James and John (sons of Zebedee) makes a request to Jesus for her sons to receive the highest places of honor, to the right and left of Jesus in His kingdom. While she appeared to be faithful, the motive behind the request was for her glory and not God’s glory.

The Response (Vs. 22–23)

Jesus responds to His disciples James and John and not to the mother, suggesting that James and John were behind the request. The brothers were ignorant of what Christ meant by the “cup”; the mocking, whipping, suffering and death on the cross (Mt. 26:39–42 and Luke 12:50). While they responded that they were able to drink from the cup, Jesus knew that they would ultimately drink from the ‘cup’; James would be the first disciple martyred and John would also suffer for his faith. James and John would be two of the three disciples Jesus asked to ‘keep watch with me’ (Mt. 26:38) in the Garden of Gethsemane. How often do we boast of our faithfulness; yet have trouble doing what we may consider easy like ‘keep watch with me’ (staying alert and being with Christ).

The Example (Vs. 24–28)

The reaction of the other ten disciples is one of indignation and jealousy. They all would like the highest places of honor next to Christ. Jesus takes the opportunity to teach the disciples a lesson in greatness and leadership. Jesus said that the truly great person is one who serves others. Christ uses Himself as the example; Christ did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many.

For Your Consideration:

- Do you find yourself more often asking what can God and others do for me, rather than looking for ways to better serve God and others?
- Are you willing to take up ‘the cross’ and follow Christ? To drink from ‘the cup’ and give all for Him? Service? Sacrifice?

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS (SESSION OR HEARING DAYS) AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44

STAFF: WEDNESDAYS AT 12:10PM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44