

SERMON | STRENGTH THROUGH HUMILITY

SERIES | BOOK OF MARK

STUDY GUIDE | RYAN ROMEO | SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2024

SERMON SUMMARY

In Mark 10:32-34, we see Jesus foretelling His death and resurrection for the third time. This is the last prediction Jesus gave to His disciples about His death and resurrection. This is also the most detailed of the three predictions, specifically mentioning that Jesus would be mocked, scourged, and spat upon.

In Mark 10:35-45, we read the story of James and John requesting to be at the right- and left-hand side of Jesus' reign. They ignored the Lord's repeated instruction that He was going to Jerusalem to die, because they still thought the physical manifestation of the kingdom was about to appear. Their minds were occupied with their place of prominence in it all. This incident reveals the disciples' failure to grasp Jesus' teaching on humility.

The mashup of these two stories gives us a message on the importance of humility. Everyone's expectations and self-seeking ambitions hindered them from hearing what Jesus was actually saying. The disciples believed that they would be at the top of a political revolution. They were imagining the overthrow of tyranny that they would be a part of. In the back of their mind, they wondered about the money, power, and prestige that would come with it.

James and John would suffer like their Master but that in itself would not earn them the honors they desired (Mark 10:39). Honors in the kingdom are bestowed not on the basis of selfish ambition, but of divine sovereign will (Mark 10:40).

The other disciples were filled with indignance. This was not righteous indignation, as they had also been guilty of self-serving conduct (Mark 9:33-34) and would again in the future (Luke 22:24). The rest of the disciples resented James and John for their attempt to gain an advantage over the others in pursuing the honor they all wanted (Mark 10:41).

Jesus reminds them of how the rulers over the Gentiles lord their authority over them (Mark 10:42). Jesus tells them it will not be this way among them, for there is no place in the church for domineering leaders (Mark 10:43). The disciples eventually understood what Jesus was talking about and gave their life for this new kingdom. They turned from disappointment in Jesus, to dying for Him, as their hearts heeded Jesus' teaching on servant leadership.

For a follower of Jesus, humility is our source of strength. It isn't a strength gained through great effort or cunning. It isn't a strength gained by network posturing with those who are rich and powerful. This kind of power is earthly and fleeting. This kind of humility is only gained with faith in Jesus and faith that there is far more to life than what meets the eye. Humility is the power to overcome the world and humble honesty is the safest place to be.

The world wants you to be tough and powerful on your own, "manifest your future," grab control of your life, and force it to go where you want. This is exhausting! Jesus invites us to surrender to Him, to surrender our entire lives to Him (Matthew 16:24-26).

Jesus was the supreme example of servant leadership. The King of kings, and Lord of lords relinquished His privileges and gave His life as a selfless sacrifice in serving others. The term "ransom" refers to the price paid to free a slave or prisoner and "for" means in place of (Mark 10:45). Christ's substitutionary death on behalf of those who would put their faith in Him is the most glorious, blessed truth in all of Scripture.

SCRIPTURE READING

READ THIS WEEKS BIBLE PASSAGE: Mark 10:32-45 and Matthew 16:24-26 (ESV)

Jesus Foretells His Death a Third Time

³² And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, ³³ saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴ And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.”

The Request of James and John

³⁵ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” ³⁶ And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” ³⁷ And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” ³⁸ Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” ³⁹ And they said to him, “We are able.” And 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, ⁴⁰ but 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.” ⁴¹ And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. ⁴² And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” – Mark 10:32-45

Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus

²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? – Matthew 16:24-26

BIBLE PASSAGE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

What stood out to you in these passages? Did the Lord highlight anything to you? What do these passages teach you about the character of God? What do these passages teach you about mankind? What do these passages teach you about how mankind should respond to God? What do these passages teach you about how to respond to others?

Read these passages again (use a different translation if helpful). How did these passages help to convict, correct, or encourage you?

GROUP DISCUSSION

DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS WITH YOUR GROUP

1. What area in your life are you struggling to pursue humility?
2. Where are you exhausting yourself to grab control?
3. As followers of Christ, what kind of perspective change do we need to walk in humility?
4. How can you humble yourself and trust God?

PRAYER

Take some time for prayer requests and pray over one another before wrapping up.

