

So You Want to be Great?

Mark 10:35-45

SO YOU WANT TO BE GREAT?

Mark 10:35-45

SO YOU WANT TO BE GREAT?

- **I. The Selfish Pursuit of Human Greatness (35-40)**
- **A. A Longing for Position and Authority (35-37)**
 - Matt. 20:20 - Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him.
 - Matt. 19:28 - Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne.

WHERE DID THIS REQUEST COME FROM?

- **1)** They believed that Jesus would soon establish an earthly kingdom.
 - Cf. [Is. 9:6-7](#); [Luke 1:31-33](#)
 - [Luke 19:11](#) - While they were listening to these things, Jesus went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.
- **2)** They were reacting to the 12 thrones prophecy that Jesus had just made that morning.
 - [Matt. 19:28](#) - Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

WHERE DID THIS REQUEST COME FROM?

- **3)** They were overplaying their own personal credentials and privileged position.
 - a) They had been with Jesus from the very beginning of His ministry.
 - b) Jesus had chosen them to be part of the 12 ([3:17](#)).
 - c) They were two of the first who were called to accompany Him ([1:19-20](#)).
 - d) They were not merely part of the 12, but part of the inner circle of 3.
 - e) They apparently were seated near Jesus at meals.
 - E.g., [John 13:23-25](#) - John on Jesus' right hand.
 - f) They were the most politically well-connected.
 - Although their family lived in Galilee, it was well-known to the High Priest ([John 18:15](#)).

WHERE DID THIS REQUEST COME FROM?

- **4)** They were borrowing on their physical relation to Jesus.
 - Their mother was probably Salome, the sister of Mary, Jesus' mother.
 - Cf. [Mark 15:40](#)
 - Cf. [Matt. 27:55-56](#) with [John 19:25](#)
 - If their mother was Mary's sister, then Jesus was their cousin.
 - And their mother was Jesus' aunt.

SO YOU WANT TO BE GREAT?

- **I. The Selfish Pursuit of Human Greatness (35-40)**
- **A. A Longing for Position and Authority (35-37)**
- **B. A Lesson In Personal Qualification (38-39)**

So You Want to be Great?

Mark 10:35-45

"THE CUP"

- A common OT image of something given you by God.
 - 1) Joy (Is. 51:17; Ps. 23:5)
 - 2) God's Judgment & wrath
- Ps. 75:8 - For a cup is in the hand of the LORD, and the wine foams; It is well mixed, and He pours out of this; Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain *and* drink down its dregs.
- Is. 51:17 - Rouse yourself! Rouse yourself! Arise, O Jerusalem, You who have drunk from the LORD'S hand the cup of His anger; The chalice of reeling you have drained to the dregs.
- Jer. 49:12 - For thus says the LORD, "Behold, those who were not sentenced to drink the cup will certainly drink *it*, and are you the one who will be completely acquitted? You will not be acquitted, but you will certainly drink *it*."
- [Mark 14:36](#)

THE BAPTISM

- This metaphor is new, created here by Jesus.
- It refers to being immersed or flooded or overwhelmed with suffering or sorrow.
 - E.g., Ps. 42:7 - All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me.

SO YOU WANT TO BE GREAT?

- **I. The Selfish Pursuit of Human Greatness (35-40)**
 - **A. A Longing for Position and Authority (35-37)**
 - **B. A Lesson In Personal Qualification (38-39)**
 - Acts 12:2 - And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword.
 - Rev. 1:9 - I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

SO YOU WANT TO BE GREAT?

- **I. The Selfish Pursuit of Human Greatness (35-40)**
 - **A. A Longing for Position and Authority (35-37)**
 - **B. A Lesson In Personal Qualification (38-39)**
 - **C. A Lesson In Sovereign Appointment (40)**
 - Matthew adds, "for those for whom it has been prepared [by My Father](#)" (Matt. 20:23).

SO YOU WANT TO BE GREAT?

- **I. The Selfish Pursuit of Human Greatness (35-40)**
- **II. The Selfless Pursuit of Kingdom Greatness (41-45)**
 - **A. Normal Greatness Defined (41-42)**
 - **B. True Greatness Redefined (43-44)**
 - **C. True Greatness Demonstrated (45)**

THE LESSONS

- **1)** We should be patient with the slow progress of people around us, as Jesus was with James and John.
- **2)** We should have complete confidence that Jesus will one day establish a literal, geo-political kingdom on this earth.
 - Acts 1:6 - So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"
 - Acts 1:7 - He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority."

So You Want to be Great?

Mark 10:35-45

THE LESSONS

- **3)** This account should be a serious rebuke to our selfish ambition for status and position.
- **4)** Seeing ourselves in this story should remind us why we needed Jesus to come and to serve us by giving His life a ransom for many.