

MARK

READ ALOUD: MARK 10:32-52

Pursue

- **Opening Question: In your prayer life, what do you find you ask God for most often?**

In our text this week the author again uses contrasting stories to help us better understand and respond to who Jesus is, what He is doing, and why. Today the contrast is between two disciples, James and John primarily, and a blind man. Each has their own desires and each is asked by Jesus, “What do you want me to do for you?”

James and John come to Jesus and ask to be seated on his right and left when he is glorified. They desire to have greater significance in and for Jesus's kingdom. But Jesus responds, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink from the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” The two disciples respond, “We are able.”

- **What do you think Jesus is referring to when he speaks of the “cup” and “baptism” that he will experience? What are some examples of the disciples experiencing similar things?**
- **In what ways do you long for and pursue “greater” significance in or for Jesus’s kingdom? In what ways do you long for and pursue significance in the world?**

In contrast, we meet the blind man, Bartimaeus, who pleads for the mercy of Jesus, the Son of David despite being rebuked by others to be silent. Using this title (the Son of David) the blind man is acknowledging who Jesus is, the promised Messiah! Jesus calls the man to come to him and asks him the same question he had asked James and John. The man asks Jesus for sight, Jesus heals him and the man follows him.

- **The blind man is not concerned with status, significance, or greatness but rather, he knows he is in desperate need of the mercy of God. In these two stories who is more “blind”, the disciples or this man?**
- **In what ways are you tempted to forget your greatest need for the mercy of God not just for salvation but for his ongoing work of salvation and sanctification?**
- **Read Isaiah 35:3-6a. How is this good news for those who are spiritually blind, the disciples, and you and me?**

Practice

Pray with One Another

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16)

Jesus turns the disciple’s understanding of significance, power, and “greatness” in his kingdom upside down saying, “But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

- **A ransom is a payment given for someone enslaved or kidnapped to be set free. Jesus has paid our ransom and we have been set from the penalty and power of sin while we wait with hope for the day that we will be freed from the presence of sin. Read Revelation 21:1-5 out loud.**
 - **Pray prayers of thanksgiving for Jesus’s sacrifice to pay your ransom.**
 - **Pray for Jesus’s return!**
 - **Pray for the Spirit’s help to resist temptation and sin and for hearts to serve all like Him as we wait for him to make all things new!**

Proclaim

All around us, there are men and women who are blind in their sin and in need of the mercy of Jesus. We are instruments of God's mercy placed in the neighborhoods, coffee shops, gyms, etc. we find ourselves in. Take time to pray and consider how you might extend the mercy of God to someone in your life this week. This could be praying for them or sharing the gospel, or it might look like remembering a circumstance in someone's life and reaching out to check in, bringing them a meal, asking them to coffee/basketball/a walk, mowing the lawn of an elderly neighbor, etc.