



### 6.13.10 – Mark 10:35-52

#### Opening Activity

- Find time and an activity within your community group in which the kids can help serve. (I.e. Serve dinner or dessert, help clean up after dinner or dessert, pass out discussion questions, etc.)
- Ask the kids to be a part of this 'servant' activity and when they are finished, ask them what it felt like to serve others in the group.
- Explain that being a servant is something that Jesus calls us to do and that we're going to learn more about that tonight.

#### Read Mark 10:35-45

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." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." 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?" 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, 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." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. 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. But it shall not be so among you. 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."

#### Discussion

In this passage, we see that the disciples are still confused, especially James and John, about the 'kingdom' (both here on earth and in heaven) that Jesus continues to speak about. They still think that He will rule an earthly, political kingdom instead of God's heavenly kingdom that is so much greater. Here, we see that James and John request to have high seats of honor beside Jesus' political throne, but in light of Jesus' heavenly throne, they have no idea what they're really asking for (even though Jesus had told them over and over again)! But despite their request, Jesus lovingly corrects the disciples' misunderstanding (as He always does) and explains what true greatness in the kingdom of God really looks like. (We've seen Him do this before in Mark 9:33-37.)

**Question One:** According to verse 43, what does it mean to be great in the kingdom of God? *It means that you must first be a servant, not the one who rules, and to be a slave to all.*

If we look back in history, we see that servants and slaves have generally not been treated very well. They have been mistreated and abused. But in light of Jesus' kingdom, it makes a lot of sense. He knows that if we try to be first and exalt ourselves over others, we'll always be *me*-centered and selfish; characteristics that are not like Jesus. Instead, Jesus tells the disciples, and us, to be last and servants to all, because He's calling us to be like Himself: To be humble and love others over ourselves. And when he calls us to be a slave, he does so knowing that He will ultimately be the one who frees us and offers us redemption. So, in a way, by asking us to be slaves, Jesus is calling us back to Himself, what a beautiful plan!

**Question Two:** Whose example do we have to follow as we learn what it means to be a servant? *Jesus!* In verse 45, we see that even the "Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."



Being a servant is not an easy job. It can be much easier to tell others what to do so that we can have our way. But we see through Jesus' example that being a servant and having a servant's heart is not only something that Jesus commands us to do, but that it's also something that brings us much life! Philippians 2:3-11 gives us a good idea of what being a servant really looks like:

"Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name . . ."

How cool is it that Jesus showed us how this can be done! Jesus demonstrates perfect humility and obedience: He sacrificed Himself for us so that we could have new life and be made right in God's eyes. And God in turn exalted Jesus and gave Him a name above any other. Jesus is worthy of all of our praise!

**Question Three:** Looking at Philippians 2:3-11 above, what characteristics do we see that a servant possesses? *Humility, looks to the interests of others over him/herself, practices obedience.*

These are all characteristics that we see in Jesus and that He demonstrated for us. Therefore, when Jesus asks us to serve others and be last, He asks us to do it with a humble heart, just like His. We obviously can't do it on our own, but as we see in Philippians 2:5, as followers of Jesus, God grants us the ability to think and act in humility as Jesus did (1 Corinthians 2:16). When we believe in Jesus, we have His Spirit and mind, and that's what give us the ability to do things like He does them.

**Question Four:** What are some tangible ways that we can begin to serve others instead of exalting ourselves? *Allow the kids to answer on their own. Then, talk through each example and explain how the examples do or don't demonstrate biblical servanthood.*

While it might feel nice to think that we're great and to be recognized for the good things we do, we know that Jesus' instructions for us lead to a greater reward: The joy of knowing Jesus, following His example, and allowing Him to use us so that others will come to know Him as well! What a wonderful blessing to be a part of!

Being a servant is not just about doing things for people out of our own strength. While part of following Jesus is doing what He does, Jesus thankfully does not leave us alone to do it of our own strength. When we believe in Jesus, the Father sends His Spirit to live inside of us, and this Spirit is what changes us from the inside out, making us more like Jesus. Without His Spirit, we are not able to serve others like Jesus does.

### Wrapping Up

Let's close our time thanking God for providing a way for us to know Him through Jesus Christ. Thank God for giving those who believe in Jesus the very Spirit of God. Ask God to be made more like Jesus and for the courage to serve the people God has placed around us in our families, schools, sports teams, neighborhoods, etc.