

Gospel of Matthew “Greatest in the Kingdom”

Matthew 20:20-28

Nov 12, 2023

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20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. 21 And he said to her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.” 22 Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?” They said to him, “We are able.” 23 He said to them, “You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.” 24 And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, 28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

The Mother’s Request

Jesus’s question, James and John answer

- Isaiah 51:17

17 Wake yourself, wake yourself,
stand up, O Jerusalem,
you who have drunk from the hand of the Lord
the cup of his wrath,
who have drunk to the dregs
the bowl, the cup of staggering.

Jesus’s Response

- What do we hold up as “worthy” of earning us a spot on the right or left?

Jesus’s Correction

- We do not serve in order to be accepted into the kingdom of God; we serve because our lives are defined by Christ’s sacrifice and His accomplishment.

Grow Group Discussion Questions

- 1.) What did God say to you during our Sunday gathering?
- 2.) What does greatness look like to the world? What is greatness in God's kingdom?
- 3.) What do you personally hold up as "worthy" of earning a spot on the right or the left?
- 4.) Why do you think the disciples struggled to understand what it means to be great in the kingdom of heaven? Why do we struggle?
- 5.) What does it mean to serve others? Consider that we are not serving to earn favor with God, but service is an outpouring of what Jesus has already done/accomplished for us. What are practical ways for us to serve others?
- 6.) From you Grow Group time, what is an idea or two from your discussion that you can work to apply this week?