

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Approaching The Cross

Christ's Purpose & Our Ambitions

Matthew 20:17-28

(20:1-16, Workers hired early & late)

Vs. 16, "So the last will be first, and the first last."

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Matthew 20:17-19, Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again."

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"BTW – I'm going to be condemned to death by our Jewish leadership, and handed over to the Romans to be tortured and crucified. But, I will rise from death two days later."

- Only the twelve heard Him say that

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What were they thinking?

- **Mark & Luke** say they were afraid and understood nothing
- They had asked Him to explain parables they didn't understand
- But **not this**

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Vs. 20-21, Then (interesting timing) the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that **these two sons of mine** may sit,

one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."

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The lessons of the workers hired in the marketplace doesn't appear to have landed.

- **Ambition is well rooted in our human nature**
- "So the last will be first, and the first last." **(Vs.16)**
- How many ask, "**Can I be last, please?**"

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Vs. 22-23, But Jesus (turning to James & John) answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father."

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They didn't know how much they didn't know...

- Once again, they didn't ask for understanding
- They responded in their fleshly presumption & ambition

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“You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

- He invited them to reevaluate, but they didn't
- They would have done well to ask what He meant

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Paul asked, **knowing what he was asking for**

- “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, **and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death”**
Philippians 3:10

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So He said to them, **“You will indeed drink My cup,** and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with;

but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give”

- “Ask, and it will be given to you” **Matthew 7:7**
- “For everyone who asks receives” **Matthew 7:8**
- **Know what you are asking for** (“You Asked For It”)
- Because He answers **on His terms,** regardless of what we meant.

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“but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father.”

- Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself,** but what He sees the Father do” **John 5:19**

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John 20:21, So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! **As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”**

- Always check with the Father
- Jesus does

Apparently they didn't remember **Matthew 5:3**

- Jesus will embrace it for Himself in **Vs. 28**
- (They will be granted what they presumptuously asked for)

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Vs. 24, And when **the ten** heard it, they **were greatly displeased** (indignant) with the two brothers.

- Self-centered pride & presumption produce contention
- Don't be offended. Their presumption doesn't concern you
- Comparison with each other never serves well

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Vs. 25-26, Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet **it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.”**

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If you want to compare yourself to others...

- **Look up,** not down (**Hebrews 12:2**)
- If you're looking from **Matthew 5:3...**
- You're not better than anyone else
- No one can belittle you

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Vs. 26-28, “whoever **desires to become great among you,** let him be your servant. And **whoever desires to be first among you,** let him be your slave— **just as the Son of Man** did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Service in His kingdom is **relational**, not positional

- **Philippians 2:3-5** will serve us well...
 - Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind **let each esteem others better than himself**. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus**
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Matthew 21:1-11...He enters the city amidst the self-deception of many,

- Then cleanses the temple (**Vs. 12-13**)
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**Be more aware of your own ambitions than those of others*

**Keep the temple cleansed of selfishness, so He doesn't have to*