

<sup>35</sup> Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask." <sup>36</sup> "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. <sup>37</sup> They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." <sup>38</sup> "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" <sup>39</sup> "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, <sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

<sup>41</sup> When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.

<sup>42</sup> Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

This seemingly incredible juxtaposition of events is recorded by both Matthew (20:17-28) and Mark, reinforcing the idea that it really happened this way. What ever in the world were they thinking? Actually, there are some good excuses for them when we think about it. Obviously, the disciples didn't have the historical perspective we now have. In addition, where we think of the kingdom more in terms of the future than the present, they were living in the king's inner circle. And, of course, as Mark describes in detail, they just didn't understand what Jesus was talking about. That should be enough to take our concentration off the specific actions of the disciples.

This message is a living word to living people, so the appropriate question is not about the disciples and their ego needs, but about who we need to be. We are ever ready to fulfill our ego needs. This is a generation with an insatiable appetite for self-esteem. In the midst of our world-induced hunger, Jesus comes and says I am all you need. In the beginning you were created in my image; given the *Imago Dei*. You will only be complete when you do what you were created to do, which is to announce and demonstrate Jesus' purpose and direction in the world. The God-given manner of accomplishing that work is by living as his image. The real question of life is, "What did Jesus do?", and then go and do likewise.

**Jesus, as you came not to be served but to serve, instill in me the desire to truly follow in your way, so that through my life your truth might be made manifest to those with whom I work and live and play. Amen.**