

Mark Chapter 10

Verses 1-52: Jesus' ministry shifts from the north to the area of Jerusalem in the south.

Mark 10:1 "And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again."

“Farther side of Jordan”: This region was known as Perea. Jesus was to minister there until leaving for Jerusalem shortly before Passion Week (see note on Matt. 19:1).

“Jordan”: See note on 1:5.

They departed from Capernaum (9:33).

Many of the things Jesus taught, like in the last lesson, was taught to the disciples. We see here, that Jesus had come back out among the people near Judaea. It was on the other side of Jordan from where He had been at Peter's home in Capernaum. The people saw Him and came to Him to be taught.

Mark 10:2 "And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away [his] wife? tempting him."

“Pharisees”: See note on 2:16.

“Came ... tempting him”: The Pharisees hoped to publicly discredit Jesus' ministry. The resulting loss of popularity, they hoped, would make it easier for them to destroy Him.

Also, Perea (see note on verse 1) was ruled by Herod Antipas – who had imprisoned John the Baptist for his views on divorce and remarriage (6:17-18). The Pharisees no doubt hoped a similar fate would befall Jesus.

“Is it lawful”... to put away his wife?” The Pharisees attempted to entrap Jesus with a volatile issue in first-century Judaism: divorce.

There were two schools of thought, one allowing divorce for virtually any reason, the other denying divorce except on grounds of adultery (see note on Matt. 19:3). The Pharisees undoubtedly expected Jesus to take one side, in which case He would lose the support of the other faction.

The Pharisees wished to trap Jesus in His answer.

The Pharisees were always there to agitate. Their desire was to trap Him. This is a question that many are asking even today. There were provisions made in the law for divorces under certain circumstances. Many take advantage of the provision made for special cases and decide that you can divorce for any reason at all. Either way Jesus would have answered, someone would be unhappy.

Mark 10:3 "And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?"

“What did Moses command you?” Jesus set the proper ground rules for the discussion. The issue was not rabbinical interpretations, but the teaching of Scripture.

When they tried to trap Jesus, He answered their questions with a question, and that was just what He did here. They were so caught up in the law that Jesus asked them what Moses had commanded.

Mark 10:4 "And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put [her] away."

“Suffered”: The Mosaic law, as the Pharisees were forced to concede, nowhere commanded divorce. The passage in question, Deut. 24:1-4, recognized the reality of divorce and sought to protect the wife’s rights and reputation and also regulated remarriage.

“Bill of divorcement”: In this document, the husband was required to state the reason for the divorce, thus protecting the wife’s reputation (if she were, in fact, innocent of wrongdoing). It also served as her formal release from the marriage, and affirmed her right to remarry (assuming she was not guilty of immorality).

The liberal wing of the Pharisees had misconstrued Deut. 24 to be teaching that divorce was “permitted” for any cause whatsoever (citing as legitimate grounds such trivial events as the wife’s ruining dinner or the husband’s simply finding a more desirable woman), providing the proper legal paperwork was done. They thus magnified a detail, mentioned merely in passing, into the main emphasis of the passage.

In the account of this same thing in Matthew, Jesus said that marriage was God's plan for one man and one woman to marry and be one flesh. Divorce was not part of God's plan. Multiple marriages were not His way either. Moses gave them the bill of divorcement, because of their short comings. It is better not to marry in haste, and regret at leisure.

Mark 10:5 "And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept."

“For the hardness of your heart”: See notes on 3:5; 6:52. This refers to the flagrant, unrepentant pursuit of sexual immorality – divorce was to be a last resort in dealing with such hard-heartedness. The Pharisees mistook God’s gracious provision in permitting divorce (under certain circumstances) for His ordaining of it.

"Precept" means rule, injunction, or doctrine. Possibly this whole questioning came about to make Jesus look bad in Herod's sight. Herod had married Herodias, his brother's wife. If Jesus came against divorce, it would make Him look bad to Herod. Jesus put the blame quickly on them for desiring a divorce, because of their hard hearts.

Mark 10:6 "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female."

“From the beginning”: Divorce formed no part of God’s original plan for marriage, which was that one man be married to one woman for life (Gen. 2:24).

“Male and female”: Literally “a male and a female,” Adam and Eve. Mark quoted from Gen. 1:27; 5:2.

See also Genesis 2:21-25.

We see, here, that Jesus reverted back to the original plan of God when He made mankind: male and female. The plan of God, as we said before, was for these two (a man and his wife) to become one flesh. They were now a family.

Children who came from this marriage were from them both. Marriages should be made in heaven. We should pray and ask God for our mate. If God is not the center of the marriage, it will not work.

Mark 10:7-8 "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;" "And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh."

Jesus took the issue beyond mere rabbinical quibbling over the technicalities of divorce to God's design for marriage. The passage Christ quotes (Gen. 2:24) presents 3 reasons for the inviolability of marriage:

- (1) God created only two humans (see note on verse 6), not a group of males and females who could configure as they please or switch partners as it suited them;
- (2) The word translated "become one" literally means "to be joined" or "to glue," thus reflecting the strength of the marriage bond;
- (3) In God's eyes a married couple is "one flesh," forming an indivisible union, manifesting that oneness in a child.

Mark 10:9 "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

"What therefore God hath joined together": Jesus added a fourth reason for the inviolability of marriage (see notes on verses 7-8): God ordains marriages and thus they are not to be broken by man.

Each should seek the happiness of his partner before his own. There is nothing more wonderful than a marriage where two people love each other and love God, but there is nothing worse than a bad marriage.

Mark 10:10 "And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same [matter]."

The disciples, like the Pharisees, had not received a clear message on this matter, so they asked the Lord again.

Verses 11-12: Remarriage after a divorce – except for legitimate biblical grounds – proliferates adultery. The innocent party – one whose spouse has committed prolonged, hard-hearted, unrepentant adultery – may remarry without being guilty of adultery, as may a believer whose unbelieving spouse has chosen to leave the marriage (see note on 1 Cor. 7:15).

See also Matthew 5:32; 19:9.

Mark 10:11-12 "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her." "And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

These Scriptures, here, show that wives and husbands have equal rights in divorce. She is the sinner if she puts away her husband, and he is guilty if he puts away his wife.

Mark 10:13 "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and [his] disciples rebuked those that brought [them]."

"Children": See note on 9:36.

"That he should touch them": I.e., lay His hands on them and pray for them (Matt. 19:13). Jewish parents commonly sought the blessing of prominent rabbis for their children.

Whether this touch of Jesus was so that He might pray for them, or whether it was like a Patriarchal touch is not clear. At any rate, it would be a blessing to be touched by the Lord Jesus.

The disciples rebuked them, because they felt Jesus was wasting His time on these youngsters. They, probably, thought Jesus should be taking care of more weighty matters.

Mark 10:14 "But when Jesus saw [it], he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

“Forbid them not”: Jesus rebuked the disciples for their attempt to prevent the children from seeing Him (verse 13). They were not the ones to decide who had access to Jesus (Matt. 15:23).

“For such is the kingdom of God”: Most, if not all, of these children would have been too young to exercise personal faith. Jesus’ words imply that God graciously extends salvation to those too young or too mentally impaired to exercise faith (see note on Matt. 19:14).

Mark often stresses Jesus’ showing of strong feeling. (See 1:41, 43; 3:5; 7:34; 8:34; 9:19).

“Suffer” here means “allow.”

Jesus was disturbed by what the disciples said and quickly said in answer, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not". Small children, I believe, should be encouraged, not discouraged, to come to God.

If a child makes a commitment to God early, it can save him from much sin in his life. Sometimes, if a child is turned away early, it causes him to stray, and sometimes he never comes back. The Lord loves the innocence of children. A child receives the Lord humbly.

Mark 10:15 "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

“Verily I say unto you”: See note on 3:28.

“As a little child”: With humble, trusting dependence, and the recognition of having achieved nothing of value or virtue.

That is what we must do, also. We must humble ourselves and realize that we must depend entirely upon the Lord if we make it to heaven. The simplicity of children's faith is what we must have. We must not complicate our lives with things of the world, but must receive Jesus as our Lord, as well as our Savior.

Mark 10:16 "And he took them up in his arms, put [his] hands upon them, and blessed them."

“Blessed them”: See note on verse 13.

Every parent knows that no child is perfect. But Jesus sees in their refreshing openness to new things, their eagerness to learn and follow, a welcome contrast to adult self-dependence and cynicism.

This is what the Lord wants to do for all of us and especially the children. He wants to touch us and bless us.

Mark 10:17 "And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

“There came one running”: The other synoptic gospels reveal that he was young (Matt. 19:20), and a “ruler”, probably in the synagogue (Luke 18:18). He was also wealthy (verse 22).

“What shall I do”: Steeped in the legalism of his day, the young man naturally thought in terms of some religious deed that would guarantee him eternal life. His lack of understanding about the true nature of salvation, however, does not mean he was insincere.

“Eternal life”: More than just eternal existence, it is a different quality of life. Eternal life is in Christ alone (see notes on John 3:15-16; John 10:28; 17:2-3; Rom. 6:23; 1 John 3:14; Ephesians 2:1-3); they have died to sin and are alive to God (Rom. 6:11); they have the very life of Christ in them (2 Cor. 4:11; Gal. 2:20); and enjoy a relationship with Jesus Christ that will never end (John 17:3).

This man was, probably, waiting to catch Jesus as He left the house. He immediately humbled himself (kneeled).

His question was sincere. He called Jesus "good master" out of respect. His question is one that man has asked for thousands of years, "What should I do that I may inherit eternal life?" We are all aware of the temporary condition of this life.

Mark 10:18 "And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [there is] none good but one, [that is], God."

“Why callest thou me good?” Jesus challenged the ruler to think through the implications of ascribing to Him the title “good.” Since only God is intrinsically good was he prepared to acknowledge Jesus’ deity? By this query Jesus did not deny His deity; on the contrary, He affirmed it.

“Goodness of God”: Only God is completely good in His nature and actions. His goodness includes all the positive moral attributes, such as grace, patience, and kindness.

When the rich young ruler called Jesus “Good Master,” Jesus reminded him that only God could be properly referred to as “good” (verse 18). The good that exists in the world around us truly reflects or expresses the goodness of God (Gen. 1:10). There is no other source of true “good.” When God revealed His name to Moses, He described Himself as being “abundant in goodness” (Exodus 34:6).

The goodness of God is illustrated daily in our lives by the many good things that add comfort and enjoyment (James 1:17). Christians should be careful not to take these gifts for granted.

Jesus knew that the man addressed Him as only a religious teacher. He reminds him that no mere man merits the title “good,” for that term applies only to God. As the Son of God, Jesus does of course merit highest praise.

We know that Jesus was good and is good, but we also know that He is God the Son. Perhaps, Jesus was saying here, do you believe that I am God in the flesh? Jesus was trying to get him to focus on God and his need for God.

Mark 10:19 "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother."

Quoted from Exodus 20:12-16.

“Defraud not”: This was not the wording of any of the Ten Commandments, and is unique to Mark’s account. It seems to be a paraphrase for the command against coveting.

Jesus did not stop by telling him that only God was good, but went immediately into the commandments. Jesus was aware this young man knew of these laws of God.

Mark 10:20 "And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth."

“Master” is here literally “teacher.”

“All these have I observed from my youth”: His answer was no doubt sincere, but superficial and untrue. He, like Paul (Phil. 3:6), may have been blameless in terms of external actions, but not in terms of internal attitudes and motives (Matt. 5:2:21-48).

We see from this, that this young man was of good morals. Just good clean living will not get us into heaven though. There is more than just good clean living that gets us to heaven.

Mark 10:21 "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

“Jesus beholding him loved him”: I.e., felt great compassion for this sincere truth-seeker who was so hopelessly lost. God does love the unsaved (see notes on Matt. 5:43-48).

Sell whatsoever thou hast”: Jesus was not making either philanthropy or poverty a requirement for salvation, but exposing the young man’s heart. He was not blameless, as he maintained (verse 20), since he loved his possessions more than his neighbors (Lev. 19:18). More importantly, he refused to obey Christ’s direct command, choosing to serve riches instead of God (Matt. 6:24).

The issue was to determine whether he would submit to the Lordship of Christ no matter what He asked of him. So, as he would not acknowledge his sin and repent, neither would he submit to the Sovereign Savior. Such unwillingness on both counts kept him from the eternal life he sought.

“Treasure in heaven”: Salvation and all its benefits, given by the Father who dwells there, both in this life and the life to come (Matt. 13:44-46).

Jesus identifies the one area that revealed the man’s true lack of devotion to God. A clear-cut issue must be decided.

We see from this, that this young man had a god that he must lay on the altar to receive Jesus as his Savior. This statement, here, is not for everyone to do but just for those who are in love with their money. Whatever your god happens to be is what you are required to lay down. Jesus invited him to follow Him. If we follow Jesus, there is a cross to bear.

Mark 10:22 "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions."

“Went away grieved”: It was purely a worldly disappointment based on the fact that he didn’t receive the eternal life he sought because the price of sacrifice was too high. He loved his wealth (8:36-37).

Matthew 19:20 reveals that this rich man was still young. Luke 18:18 shows that he was a ruler.

You see, this man's possessions were his god. He gave up eternal life for his worldly possessions. God would not have required his money, if he had not been in love with his money.

Mark 10:23 "And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!"

“How hardly ... they that have riches”: See note on verse 27. “Hard” in this context means impossible (verse 25). “Wealth” tends to breed self-sufficiency and a false sense of security, leading those who have it to imagine they do not need divine resources (see Luke 16:13; 1 Tim. 6:9; 17-18).

Pride goes many times with riches, and love of money causes men to sin. The lust for money is of the flesh, and to love the things of this world drives heaven farther away.

Mark 10:24 "And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"

See note on verse 26.

It was assumed that whoever was rich was in God’s favor.

Notice in verse 24, exactly where the sin is. The trust in riches instead of God is the sin. Putting anything ahead of God could cause a person to miss heaven.

Mark 10:25 "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

“Camel ... eye of a needle”: The Persians expressed impossibility by saying it would be easier to put an elephant through the eye of a needle. This was a Jewish colloquial adaptation of that expression denoting impossibility (the largest animal in Palestine was a camel).

Many improbable interpretations have arisen that attempt to soften this phrase, e.g., that “needle” referred to a tiny gate in the Jerusalem city wall that camels could enter only with difficulty (but there is no evidence that such a gate ever existed).

And if it had, any sensible camel driver would have simply found a larger gate); or that a copyist’s error resulted in kamelos (camel) being substituted for kamilos (a large rope or cable) (but a large rope could no more go through the eye of a needle than a camel could, and it is extremely unlikely that the text of all three synoptic gospels would have been changed in exactly the same way).

Jesus’ use of this illustration was to explicitly say that salvation by human effort is impossible; it is wholly by God’ grace. The Jews believed that with alms a man purchased salvation (as recorded in the Talmud), so the more wealth one had, the more alms he could give, the more sacrifices and offerings he could offer, thus purchasing redemption.

The disciples’ question (verse 26) makes it clear that they understood what Jesus meant – that not even the rich could buy salvation. See note on Matt. 19:24.

God will not cause you to miss heaven because you are rich, but He will cause you to miss heaven, if you put your money ahead of God.

Mark 10:26 "And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?"

“Who then can be saved”: Jesus’ teaching ran counter to the prevailing rabbinical teaching, which gave the wealthy a clear advantage for salvation. Jesus’ emphatic teaching that even the rich could not be saved by their own efforts left the bewildered disciples wondering what chance the poor stood. See notes on Rom. 3:9-20; Gal. 3:10-13; Phil. 3:4-9).

It was thought by the Hebrews that a wealthy man was wealthy because God blessed him as He did Abraham, David, and Solomon. You can see how they would be so amazed.

Mark 10:27 "And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men [it is] impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."

“With men it is impossible, but not with God”: It is impossible for anyone to be saved by his own efforts (see note on verse 25) since salvation is entirely a gracious, sovereign work of God. See notes on Rom. 3:21-28; 8:28-30; Gal. 3:6-9; 26-29).

You see, Jesus did not say a rich man could not be saved, He said it would be hard. God looks into the heart. Rich and poor who have pure hearts and who depend on Jesus Christ as their Savior will be saved.

Mark Chapter 10 Questions

1. As soon as Jesus came to Judaea, what did the people do?
2. Why did they come to Him?
3. What question did the Pharisees ask Him?
4. Why did they ask Jesus this?
5. What question did Jesus ask them in answer?
6. What way out had Moses given to them?
7. Man and woman married are to be one _____.
8. Why did Jesus say Moses had allowed divorce?
9. A man shall leave his mother and father and _____.
10. Why did the disciples ask Jesus the same question?
11. In verses 11 & 12, we find that man and woman are equal in what?
12. Why did they bring the young children to Jesus?
13. What did the disciples do about the children?
14. How did Jesus feel about the disciples attitude?
15. Jesus said, if you are to enter the kingdom, it must be as a _____.

16. Why is it important to come to Jesus at an early age?
17. In verse 16, Jesus did what to the children?
18. The man, who ran and kneeled at Jesus' feet, asked what of Jesus?
19. What shows that he humbled himself?
20. Who is the only one good?
21. What did Jesus tell the young man at first?
22. What did the young man answer?
23. What did Jesus tell him he lacked?
24. Why was this required of him?
25. What did the young man do?
26. What did Jesus say that astonished the disciples?
27. In verse 24, what one word was added to clarify what Jesus meant?
28. What is it easier for a camel to do than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven?
29. What question did the disciples ask Jesus?
30. With God _____ things are possible.

Mark Chapter 10 Continued

Mark 10:28 "Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee."

“We have left all”: Peter noted that the 12 had done what the Lord had asked the rich young ruler to do (verse 21), and had come to Him on His terms. Would that self-abandoning faith, Peter asked, qualify them for a place in the kingdom?

This statement of Peter's was right after the rich young man had turned his back and walked away, because the Lord told him to sell what he had and give to the poor. We discussed that the wealth was not the sin. The sin was that the young man loved it more than he loved God.

We also heard Jesus say that it was difficult for someone of great wealth to be saved and then immediately say, though it might be impossible for man, all things are possible with God. Peter, in the statement above desired to know where his own position with God was. Peter was a fisherman, and he left his boat, nets, and family and followed Jesus.

Mark 10:29 "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's," "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

“Verily I say unto you” (see note on 3:28).

“In this time ... in the world to come”: Following Jesus brings rewards in this present age and when Messiah’s glorious kingdom comes.

“With persecutions”: Great trials often accompany great blessings (see notes on Rom. 8:17; Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 3:12).

“Eternal life” (see note on verse 17).

Persecutions are part of the disciples’ lot (see Romans 8:17, also the note on 9:49).

This leaves no doubt, if you give up worldly things on this earth, you will inherit eternal life. These great promises of abundance here are in the spiritual realm. If you give up family for God, God will be your family. Friends who are Christians like you, can sometimes be even closer than blood relatives.

Christians know how to love. We know if we choose the Lord over the world, we will inherit with Him. We shall be joint-heirs with Jesus and live and reign with Him. We will live for all of eternity with God.

Mark 10:31 "But many [that are] first shall be last; and the last first."

Believers will share equally in the blessings of heaven, a truth illustrated by the parable of (Matt. 19:30 – 20:16; see notes there).

God’s truth often contradicts human expectations.

We will see in this that many who were not in very high office here on the earth will be ruling over those who were kings and princes here. The Christians will rule with Jesus, and the worldly people will be ruled over. I

also believe that this Scripture means that some of the end time followers of Jesus will be held in esteem of God with the prophets and disciples of old.

Verses 32-45: Jesus sets His face toward Jerusalem.

The third and last prediction of His death and resurrection that Jesus made to the 12 is given (8:31; 9:31). This is also the most detailed of the three predictions, specifically mentioning that He would be mocked (15:17-20; Luke 23:11, 35-39), scourged (15:15), and spat upon (14:65; 15:19).

Mark 10:32 "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,"

“Going up to Jerusalem”: From Perea (see note on verse 1), via Jericho (verse 46). This is the first mention of Jerusalem as Jesus’ destination. Because of the elevation of Jerusalem (about 2,550 feet above sea level), travelers always spoke of going up to the city, regardless of where in Israel they started.

“Amazed”: At Jesus’ resolute determination to go to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), despite the cruel death that awaited Him there (verses 32-34).

“As they followed”: The Greek syntax makes it clear that this was a group distinct from the 12, probably pilgrims en route to Jerusalem for Passover. They were afraid because they realized something significant was about to happen that they did not understand.

“The twelve” (see note on 3:14).

The disciples feared what awaited Jesus, and themselves, in the city where Jesus’ enemies would be numerous.

The disciples were amazed that Jesus would go to Jerusalem. He had already told them that He would be crucified there. The disciples (not understanding), greatly feared death. Their amazement was of such a man, who knowing He would die, would go headlong to the place of death.

All the time Jesus was still giving them the details of the crucifixion, so that when it happened, they would not forget that He is Messiah.

Verses 33-34: See 8:31; 9:31; also 9:12.

Mark 10:33-34 "[Saying], Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:" "And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again."

This was the detailed information that Jesus gave to the disciples. He wanted them to realize that all of this was the part of the plan. That God was even in control of this, and that victory lies at the end. Jesus would rise on the third day.

Their eyes were so in the physical that they just saw the pain and suffering and could not see the victory. The victory of salvation for everyone is completed on the cross. The evidence of it was on resurrection day.

Verses 35-45: The disciples jockey for personal advantage even while Jesus prepares to face the Cross. They were simply incapable of visualizing, despite Jesus' hints, the vindication that lay on the other side of His death. Hence their scrambling for some measure of concrete assurance now.

This incident reveals yet again the disciples' failure to grasp Jesus' teaching on humility (see notes on 9:34; Matt. 20:21). Ignoring the Lord's repeated instruction that He was going to Jerusalem to die (see note on verses 32-34), the disciples still thought the physical manifestation of the kingdom was about to appear and were busy maneuvering for the places of prominence in it (Matt.18:1).

Mark 10:35 "And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire."

"James and John, the sons of Zebedee" (see note on 1:19). Matthew reveals that their mother accompanied them and spoke first (Matt. 20:20-21), after which James and John reiterated her request. If she was Jesus' aunt, the three undoubtedly hoped to capitalize on the family ties.

James and John had been two of the three which the Lord had set aside so many times to be with Him, as at the Mount of Transfiguration. They had heard Jesus say that they all would reign with Him and rule over the twelve tribes of Israel.

Mark 10:36 "And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?"

They perhaps thought that they and Peter were already favorites of the Lord. This request was understandable, if for no other reason than they wanted to be as near the Lord as possible. Jesus already knew what was in their hearts, but this question was asked for our learning.

Mark 10:37 "They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory."

"Sit ... on thy right ... your left": In the places of highest prominence and honor beside the throne.

"In thy glory": In the glorious majesty of His kingdom (Matt. 20:21).

They wanted the most prominent seats next to Him. In Matthew, we read that their mother wanted this position for them. We must remember in the case of Peter, James, and John that at that time, none of them had been baptized in the Holy Spirit, and they were still operating in the flesh to some extent. Their power to live victorious, unselfish lives had not come yet.

Mark 10:38 "But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

"The cup ... the baptism": Endure suffering and death as Jesus would (verses 32-34; see note on Matt. 20:22).

"Cup" refers to Jesus' coming sufferings.

Truly James and John did not at this point realize the terrible death that Jesus would go through. The prize they were asking for was also a mystery. They could not know whether this would be a blessing or a curse. Jesus would be baptized with the baptism of suffering. It is an easy thing to say that we can go through the suffering, until the time comes.

All of the disciples really felt that Jesus would set up a physical kingdom here on this earth, and He would run the Romans off. Their idea and Jesus' idea of victory were two different things entirely. To want to be Jesus' right and left hand assistants was being proud.

Jesus would be made our Savior by His suffering on the cross. Were they prepared to suffer on the cross with Him? They really had no idea what they were asking. This would indeed be a bitter cup that Jesus would fulfill.

Mark 10:39 "And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:"

James and John would suffer like their Master (Acts 12:2; Rev. 1:9), but that in itself would not earn them the honors they desired.

James was martyred (Acts 12:2). John was later exiled (Rev. 1:9).

James was martyred in the Christian movement. In the twelfth chapter of Acts, we read about James being killed by Herod.

Acts 12:1-2 "Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth [his] hands to vex certain of the church." "And he killed James the brother of John with the sword."

We know of John's exile on the Isle of Patmos where he wrote the Book of Revelation.

Mark 10:40 "But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but [it shall be given to them] for whom it is prepared."

“Not mine to give”: Honors in the kingdom are bestowed not on the basis of selfish ambition, but of divine sovereign will.

We know that the right hand blessing has always been the best. I am not so sure what this left hand would be.

Mark 10:41 "And when the ten heard [it], they began to be much displeased with James and John."

“The ten ... began to be much displeased”: Not righteous indignation, since they too had been guilty in the past of such self-serving conduct (9:33-34), and would be so in the future (Luke 22:24). The rest of the disciples resented James and John for their attempt to gain an advantage over the others in pursuing the honor they all wanted.

We see from this that even the disciples who walked with Jesus were not perfect. We see here, that they became jealous of James and John.

Mark 10:42 "But Jesus called them [to him], and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them."

“Lordship over them ... exercise authority”: These parallel phrases convey the sense of autocratic, domineering authority.

Jesus was saying the way of the world is different from God's way. In the world the great ones rule over their people, but in God's method, the great ones serve their fellow men.

Mark 10:43 "But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:"

“Not be among you”: There is no place in the church for a domineering leader (9:35; Matt. 23:8-12; 1 Pet. 5:3-6; 3 John 9:10).

Mark 10:44 "And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all."

Jesus reminded the disciples that they were not of the world and must not live like the world. Don't live like the world, this is not your home. Do it God's way, the better way. The greatest among you shall be servant to all.

Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

“Son of man” (see note on 2:10).

“Came not to be ministered unto”: Jesus was the supreme example of servant leadership (John 13:13-15). The King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev. 19:16), relinquished His privileges (Phil. 2:5-8), and gave His life as a selfless sacrifice in serving others.

“Ransom for many” (see note on Matt. 20:28). “Ransom” refers to the price paid to free a slave or a prisoner. For” means “in place of.” Christ’s substitutionary death on behalf of those who would put their faith in Him is the most glorious, blessed truth in all of Scripture (Rom. 8:1-3; 1 Cor. 6:20; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

The ransom was not paid to Satan, as some erroneous theories of the atonement teach. Satan is presented in Scripture as a foe to be defeated, not a ruler to be placated. The ransom price was paid to God to satisfy His justice and holy wrath against sin. In paying it, Christ “bore our sins in His body on the cross” (1 Pet. 2:24; see notes on 2 Cor. 5:21).

If Jesus’ sinless life was deemed by God as fit for sacrifice for sinners, how much more expendable are the lives of disciples? (See Romans 8:36).

In this we really see the understatement. Jesus (God manifest in the flesh, God the Son), humbled Himself and came to earth and ministered unto our needs. He was crucified for each individual all over the world for all times. Jesus was crucified and rose again so that whosoever will might be saved.

The word "many" would probably cover it, because not everyone accepts the salvation that Jesus paid for, for all of us with His precious blood. He ministered to so many on the earth while He was here that the Bible said there would not be enough books to write them all down in if everyone was recorded.

Verses 46-52: The second of two healings of blind men recorded in Mark (8:22-26).

Mark 10:46 "And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging."

“Jericho” was 5 miles west of the Jordan and about 18 miles’ northeast of Jerusalem. The route from Perea to Jerusalem passed through it. This is the only recorded visit of Jesus to Jericho.

“As he went out of Jericho”: Mark and Matthew state that the healing took place as Jesus was leaving Jericho, Luke as He was entering the city. Mark and Matthew may be referring to the ancient walled city, just north of the New Testament city, while Luke refers to New Testament Jericho. Or Luke’s words may simply mean Jesus was in the vicinity of Jericho when the healing took place (see note on Matt. 20:30).

“Blind Bartimaeus”: Matthew notes that there were two blind beggars, whereas Mark and Luke focus on the more vocal of them. (Matt. 8:28 with 5:2; Luke 8:27). Since they were unable to work, blind people commonly made their living by begging (John 9:8). These men had staked out a good site on the main road to Jerusalem.

“Son of Timeus”: The translation of “Bartimeus”; the Aramaic prefix “bar” means “son of.”

There was no welfare in those days, and a blind person made a living from begging. This is the same Jericho where the walls fell down for the Israelites on their way to the holy land. Giving the name of the beggar designates a particular healing.

Mark 10:47 "And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, [thou] son of David, have mercy on me."

“Of Nazareth” (see note on 1:9).

“Son of David”: A common messianic title, used as such only in the synoptic gospels (See note on Matt. 1:1).

A blind man hears so much more, because of their contact with so many people. This Bartimaeus knew the name "Jesus of Nazareth". He had heard of the miracles Jesus had done and this was why he cried out to Jesus for help.

Mark 10:48 "And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, [Thou] son of David, have mercy on me."

When you are blind and someone is near that can make you see again, there would be no way to hush you up. We can see here, from the “Son of David” that he called Jesus, that the blind man had heard that He descended from David. The blind man would not be quieted, he wanted to see again.

Mark 10:49 "And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee."

“Jesus ... commanded him to be called”: Thus, implicitly rebuking those trying to silence him (verse 48).

This was the best news this blind man had ever heard. Jesus was calling him. His friends said to him, "Rise up, Jesus is calling you". Truly you can think of this as literal and as spiritual, as well.

Jesus does call all who are spiritually blinded by this world to come to Him so that He might open their eyes that they might see, just as Bartimaeus was called here.

Mark 10:50 "And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus."

This beggar's outer robe was shed so that he might come to Jesus.

Mark 10:51 "And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight."

This word "Lord" (Greek rabbouni), occurs elsewhere only (in John 20:16). It is an intensified form of the word for teacher or master. Its use implies a high regard for Jesus. See "son of David" (in 10:47).

The Lord knew the blind man's need, but this question was asked to make a point. This man realized he had a need, asked for help, and then had enough faith to receive it. Bartimeus recognized Jesus as his Lord, and spoke faith.

Mark 10:52 "And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."

"Thy faith hath made thee whole": Literally "saved you." Bartimeus' physical and spiritual eyes were likely opened at the same time. The outward healing reflected the inner wellness of salvation.

(In verse 52), we learn a very important lesson. Faith is what activated the miracle. He received his sight because he believed. Bartimeus was so thankful that he followed Jesus.

Mark Chapter 10 Continued Questions

1. Why did Peter remind Jesus that they had left all to follow Him?
2. What had Peter's occupation been prior to going with Jesus?
3. What did Jesus promise to those who have left home and family to follow Him?
4. The first shall be _____.
5. Why were the disciples afraid in verse 32?
6. What was their amazement of Jesus?
7. What details of the crucifixion did Jesus give them? _____ .
8. What did He promise would happen on the third day after the crucifixion?
9. Why did Jesus tell this to the disciples?
10. What request did James and John make of Jesus?
11. What did the other disciples think of this?
12. What question did Jesus ask James and John?
13. What was their reply?
14. Who will sit on the right and left hand of Jesus?

15. What, in Acts chapter 12, do we find happened to James eventually?
16. In Jesus' teaching the greatest shall be the _____ .
17. In verse 45, Jesus called Himself what?
18. In this, He said that He came for what purpose?
19. Where did Jesus go where the blind man was begging?
20. What was the blind man's name?
21. When he heard it was Jesus, what did the blind man do?
22. What did the blind man call Jesus?
23. When Jesus heard his cries, what did He do?
24. Why did Jesus ask him what he wanted if He already knew his needs?
25. In verse 52, Jesus told him his _____ had made him whole.
26. What did the blind man do after he was healed?