

# The Greatest Servant Teaches About Serving

## Mark 10:32-45

by David Servant

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*God is looking for servants, not rulers, and He honors those who humble themselves.*

**Scripture:** Philippians 2:5

**Topics:** "Servant Leadership", "Spiritual Growth"

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### Description

David Servant preaches on the spiritual growth of James and John, highlighting their selfish request for positions of honor in Jesus' kingdom and the lessons we can learn from their journey. He emphasizes the importance of patience with young believers and God's dedication to completing the good work He starts in us. The sermon also delves into the problems with James and John's request, revealing their lack of understanding of servanthood and humility, and Jesus' role in the future kingdom as a servant and the Son of God.

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### Transcript

When we read about James' and John's selfish request to sit at Jesus' right and left hand in His kingdom, it makes us realize how much they needed to grow spiritually at that point in their lives. But praise God, they did eventually grow up, although not overnight. James and John should also serve as reminders to us that God is dedicated to our spiritual growth, and He will complete the good work He's begun in us. Additionally, we should be patient with young believers who still have a long way to grow. James and John were like we were at one time, and like some of us still are! But God is patient with us all, as demonstrated by Jesus' patience with His disciples.

There were several problems with the request made by James and John. First, God the Father would only consider granting that kind of honor to those who were equally devoted to Him as Jesus was, and who served others to the degree that Jesus did. So Jesus asked James and John if they were able to drink from the same bitter cup and be baptized with the same baptism of suffering as He was to experience. Jesus was speaking of being mocked, spit upon, beaten, flogged and crucified. Although they probably didn't understand what He was talking about, they claimed they were able. Jesus prophesied to them that they would suffer and die for His cause, although again, they probably didn't understand what He meant.

The second problem with the request of James and John is that they were asking for something that Jesus didn't have a right to grant. Jesus explained that it was not His place to decide who sits next to Him in the

future kingdom. That is a decision made only by God the Father. This also shows us that God the Father and Jesus are two distinct persons, and not the same identical person as some mistakenly think.

The third problem with the request of James and John is that it revealed their lack of understanding of what God considers the greatest virtue a person can possess. He honors servanthood and exalts those who humble themselves. Conversely, He humbles those who exalt themselves. If anything, James' and John's request got them further away from the seats of honor in which they desired to sit!

The lesson for us? God is not looking for rulers; He's looking for servants. And servants aren't seeking for honor, they are looking for opportunities to serve. Is that you?

Q. We already know who will be seated at Jesus' left hand from other Scriptures. Do you know who it will be?

A. It will be God the Father, because Jesus is now seated at His right hand.

Q. Jesus will obviously be exalted and honored by His Father in the future kingdom. Will it be only because He is the Son of God?

A. No, it will also be because Jesus is the greatest servant, giving His life for everyone, and because Jesus humbled Himself more than anyone else ever has. Paul wrote, "Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. And in human form he obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross. Because of this, God raised him up to the heights of heaven and gave him a name that is above every other name" (Philippians 2:5-9).

Application: In our reading today, Jesus revealed not only that He would die, but also why He would die. He said it was to give His life as a ransom for many (see Mark 10:45). A ransom is a payment made to release someone from captivity. Jesus' death was the payment required by God's own justice to release us from our captivity to sin and our destiny in hell. Jesus' servanthood on our behalf will bring blessing to us for eternity, so we can say that Jesus will be serving us forever, which is one reason we'll be praising Him forever!

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