**Even The Son Of Man Did Not Come To Be Served**

Mark 10:32-45

Key Verse 10:45

“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.”

In chapter 10, what Jesus taught the rich and young ruler, was a most wonderful teaching anyone could receive; He basically taught him to *Believe in Jesus,* to *trust his mercy on his soul* and to *proclaim his faith by abandoning his own life to follow Jesus.* Simply, he could not have heard more wonderful words as these— words that could change his life and set him on a new life direction. But he walked away from Jesus! And by doing so, he walked away from eternal life. Why would he do that? Yes, he wanted eternal life! But not as much as he wanted money. He loved these things and trusted them more than he loved and trusted God, more than he loved his own soul. He did not know that on the day of decision, he chose death rather than life. But he wasn’t the only one whose assurance of salvation was shaken to the roots. As soon as the disciples heard Jesus’ words that this person would not enter the kingdom of God, then who could? So, their assurance was shaken to the roots. They were shocked at Jesus’ words and said, “Who then can be saved?” (26) What they meant was that they had left everything to follow Jesus (28), surely then they were worthy of salvation. Amazingly, they weren’t. Even if they had left everything to follow Jesus, it would not contribute an inch towards their salvation. They needed to understand that salvation cannot be earned- at all- but it is the gift of God through his Son Jesus for everyone who believes. If they left everything in order to follow Jesus, it is not for the sake of salvation, but because it was the right thing to do, the only thing worth doing in life. Jesus’ declaration to them that, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God,” (27) was referring to Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross and his resurrection which would provide the way for those who put their faith in Jesus to receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life.

Let’s read verse 32a. “They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid.” Jesus pressed on towards Jerusalem. The determination on his face was evident. His disciples must have recognized his personal agony. They must have marveled at his unwavering determination. They must have also feared the threats Jesus would be exposed to in Jerusalem. They should not have been afraid. If they had accepted even a fraction of what he had been teaching them, they would have overcome their own fears. But fear has a way of creeping into the heart where the word of God is not there, or where the word of God has not taken root. If they had accepted his teaching regarding his necessary suffering and death, they would have been prepared to participate in Jesus’ final days of agony, and even had a glimpse of eternal life and the kingdom of God. Jesus was stern as he pushed on towards Jerusalem. The disciples in turn were astonished when they should not have been astonished but full of faith. Thus, it is no surprise that all the people who followed also were filled with fear as well. Influence is a mighty instrument. Fear and anxiety, doubt and unbelief, and gloom and misery are all channels or influences for harm. But when a Christian is determined to hold on to the word of God, they become an influence of faith and hope and peace to others. We must remember this. We must remember that our influence is great. And we must use our faith to influence others to trust God and to depend on him in all situations.

Let’s read verses 32b-34. “Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. ‘We are going up to Jerusalem,’ he said, ‘and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.’” It was the third time Jesus gives them this exact teaching about the way of cross. It was his mission given to him by God to surrender his life on the cross for the salvation of the world. There was no other way for Jesus because it was plainly the will of God for him to suffer and die and to rise on the third day. Jesus had accepted his mission. It was the way he would save us and rise to his glory in heaven. It was the way of glory and there was no other. His glory would be marked by his humble submission to the will of God, passing through the painful way of suffering and the cross. And Jesus accepted that the way of true glory must by the way of the cross. It was not easy to achieve this kind of glory. But it was the way God had ordained for him. Now he must also pass it on to his disciples. Jesus helped his disciples understand that human glory is nothing, and that the glory which God gives is everything. Jesus helped them understand that they must not only accept the way of the cross for him, but also accept it for themselves as the only way to glory. It was a most difficult teaching for them who grew up in a world which identifies glory with such things as human power and authority. Still, Jesus determined to teach them again and again until this most important truth took deep root in their hearts. So, once again he told them how he would make salvation possible for all people. Once again he had to talk about his suffering and death. Once again Jesus had to show them that following him would not bring them any worldly rewards, nor any human glory, that following him would bring about a participation in his own suffering which is glory in God. Jesus knew they would not like what they hear. But he always spoke the truth to them in love.

When Jesus spoke of his suffering and death and resurrection for the third time, they should have finally resigned themselves to accepting the teaching. They should have willed to share even a little in what suffering Jesus would go through. They should have said, *“Lord, we only care to be with you and to share with you in whatever it takes to bring about the will of God, even if it will cause us pain and loss.”* It would have been noble to say such a thing. But instead let’s see what was on their minds. Let’s read verses 35-40. “Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. ‘Teacher,’ they said, ‘we want you to do for us whatever we ask.’ ‘What do you want me to do for you?” he asked. They replied, ‘Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.’ ‘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?’ ‘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, 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.’”

Jesus wanted to obey the will of God and suffer and die on the cross, so that those who put their faith in him might be forgiven, and delivered to eternal life and to heaven. But James and John only wanted to receive human glory. They did not understand that the Christ would not establish some worldly kingdom. They did not understand what it would cost Jesus to be established as the King and Savior of men. They just wanted human glory. Jesus could have rebuked them. But he decided to challenge them instead to recognize the cost of true glory and to participate in his suffering by any means. His words, “Can you drink the cup I drink” were his invitation to them to abandon the pursuit of human glory and to begin embracing the glory which comes from heaven, the glory which is tested and tried through sacrifice. Jesus wanted to help them turn their hearts away from worldly glory to heavenly glory. So Jesus promised them that they would share in his suffering. After his death and resurrection, their eyes would be opened to see the futility of human glory and the value of heavenly glory.

Let’s read verses 41-44. When the other disciples heard what James and John had done and asked for, they were terribly upset with them. It seems that they too had the same desires to receive worldly glory as James and John. So Jesus taught them the difference between worldly glory and heavenly glory. Jesus taught them that the glory of the world is power and authority and wealth and fame. On the other hand, God’s people must desire the glory that comes from God. That glory is far different from the worldly glory. The glory which God gives and recognizes in his people is the glory that is willing to humble itself to the word of God. It humbles itself to accepting and obeying the will of God, even when the will of God is painful and involves sacrifice. The glory God recognizes is the glory to serve God and others in the name of God. Jesus taught them that true glory is to be sacrificial at heart, to give instead of to receive. Many worldly rulers seem to have power and authority. But in all their worldly glory they are more like beggars than kings. When they are served, they are like beggars begging to be served. But the child of God must not be a beggar begging to be served or recognized or honored. The child of God does not need this kind of honor. What they need is to give as God has given. Giving service to others is not easy. Giving love to those who are unlovable is difficult. But this is what Jesus wants us to do, if we are truly his people and we truly seek God’s glory. To give of yourself is the next thing to imitating God Almighty.

Finally, Jesus gave us the best teaching, an example of his own life so that we might see what true glory is, so that we might learn the true meaning of glory, and how noble it is for a child of God to grow in that kind of glory. Jesus taught the way of glory. It certainly passes through the fires of suffering and sacrifice. Let us see what example Jesus gave them from his own life. Let’s read verse 45. “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.” Once there was a Prince in heaven. He cared so much for his people. But he was afraid that they would fear him if he came riding on a stallion and dressed in purple. So, the Prince took off the royal garments and put on the garments of a servant. It was unthinkable that a Prince would do so. But he did not stop to think about who he was. So he took off his authority, power and glory and put them aside. He only thought about his mission. It was to serve and to save his oppressed people. So he bowed to the will of his Father King and began to serve. He went around helping the helpless. He sat down with sinners and told them about God and his love for them. He sought out those who had no friends and became their friend. Then he looked for those with no hope, and told them about the hope of heaven. He saw the injured man whom no cared for and stopped to help him up. He served others with word of God and prayer. He washed his disciples feet. He served others with compassion. Finally the Prince stretched out his hands and was nailed to a cross. Then he gave his life and died and rose again and went back to heaven. He had served his purpose. He deserved all the glory he received in heaven. Then he called out from heaven to everyone who wanted to join him to put on a servant’s garment and to follow in his example. It was the way of glory. It was the only way of true glory. And there is no other. And there is nothing shameful about serving others as Jesus did. There is nothing shameful in sacrifice and in suffering and in giving as our Lord did. It is an honor and the way of true glory. We must learn this, accept it and practice it. May God bless us to learn to be a servant as Jesus was. May God bless us to serve someone with the gospel and share even a little of the suffering of our Lord Jesus. Let’s read the key verse. Verse 45.