



‘Now!’ Sermon Series

Sermon #40

‘Selflessness Explained... Again!’

Mark 10:32-45

Wednesday, February 12th, 2025

This Past Sunday in NOW Sermon Series:

- This past Sunday we looked at the well known story of the Rich Young Ruler. We studied Mark 10:17-31 with a sermon entitled *‘Money or Messiah?’*
 - I asked the question: *How does the story of the rich young ruler show us that the Messiah is more important than money (and any other thing for that matter)?*
 - **Truth #1: *Fearful Response.*** (vv. 17-22)
 - **Truth #2: *Fundamental Reality.*** (vv. 23-27)
 - **Truth #3: *Future Reward.*** (vv. 28-31)

- Based on Sundays sermon, have you asked yourself and reflected on: *Who or what do I worship?*
- Is it God or money or another materialistic placeholder?

‘Selflessness Explained... Again!’

Mark 10:32-45

Sermon in a Sentence:

We can see that Jesus explains and exposes the selfishness of the Disciples with the Third Prediction, the Tiring Predicament, and the Tumultuous Problem.

Intro:

- Tonight and then Sunday in our study of Mark’s Gospel are the passages leading up to Mark 11-16, which will focus on passion week. The days before Jesus went to die on the Cross for our sins.
 - *So, Jesus knows that His time with His disciples is becoming more and more limited, even if they do not see it yet.*
- In tonight’s text we will find in Mark 9:32-34, the third of Jesus’ passion prediction statements.
 - *What is so interesting that in Mark 8:31, Mark 9:31 and here tonight in Mark 10:33-34, following each of Jesus’ passion prediction statements, is a situation of the disciples fighting for position and prestige among the 12.*

- ***In each of these three cases, the Disciples were told the greatest news that can ever be told out of the mouth of the Son of Man Himself, yet they can't help but think of themselves.***
- So, for the third time in our NOW series AND the third time in Mark's Gospel, ***we get to look at how Jesus exposes their selfishness and explains what selflessness*** (our 2025 word of the year this year) ***looks like in the Kingdom of God.***

****Read Mark 10:32-45****

Question to Ask:

How does Jesus expose the disciples' selfishness, again?

Truth #1: *The Third Prediction.* (vv. 32-34)

- ***Verse 32 shows us WHERE Jesus was going, prior to now we could have suspected it, but now we know.***
 - 'And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him.'
- What's so fascinating about verse 32 are the phrases used 'they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid.'
 - ***Jesus leads the way, but because the disciples do not know the way, I'm sure they were a bit***

uncomfortable, because they weren't in control.

- They watch the Lord in amazement and in fear, because they don't know what is next.
 - Jesus knew, so yet again, He tells them of what is going to happen to Him...
- ***The Story that was still being written... (vv. 33-34)***
 - 'saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. **34** And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise."
 - ***This is the most precise and detailed prediction of His Own death that Jesus gives prior to His death in the Gospels.***
 - Jesus knows how the story is going to end, and so He decides to give His disciples more details as to what is going to happen with the Story of Salvation that for the disciples at this time, is still being written...
 - ***They don't understand it now, but they will...***
 - ****Illustration****
 - Randy Travis, the great country music star, wrote a song called 'the box'.
 - This song looks at how he thought he knew his dad, but

didn't really know Him until He was gone.

- Here are some of the Lyrics:

- On the top shelf in the closet, In the workshop where he spent his extra time Was a dust wooden box that I had never noticed till that time And we set on the table and carefully, we opened up the top And stared into the memory Daddy kept inside the box
- And the pocket knife I gave to him on Fathers day
- Years ago, I thought it had been lost
- We all thought his heart was made from solid rock
- But that was long before we found the box
- I guess we always knew it but "I love you" was hard for him to say
- Some men show it easy and some just never seem to find the way

- But that night I began to see the softer side of some I had lost
- I saw the love he kept inside the first time we opened up the box
- There was a picture that was taken, when he and Mom were dating
- Standing by his 1944, and the faded leather Bible, he got when he was baptised
- I guess no one understood him like the Lord

- **The point:** The disciples don't yet know nor understand Jesus, but once He has died on the Cross, been resurrected and then ascends to the right Hand of the Father, they will know. Just as Randy Travis didn't know his dad until He opened up His Box.

- Open up the truth of Jesus (The Word) to know who He really is!

- **Jesus gave ___ details of what was going to happen to Him...**

- #1: Jerusalem will be the place Jesus dies.

- #2: He will be delivered over to the Jewish Religious authorities.
- #3: They will sentence Him to death.
- #4: Give Him over to the gentiles (Romans).
- #5: Mock Him.
- #6: Spit on Him.
- #7: Flog/Torture Him.
- #8: Kill Him.
- #9: Then, He will rise.

Truth #2: *The Tiring Predicament.* (vv. 35-40)

- Here we are again, with the same problems of pride that keep appearing throughout Mark's Gospel.
 - *At this point, it is a tiring predicament because Jesus has to keep dealing with the disciples' own selfishness. They just don't get it! And so often, neither do we...*
 - Jesus has just finished giving His third and final passion prediction in Mark's Gospel.
 - ***One would rightfully expect for the disciples to bow down, worship, and ask more questions about exactly what Jesus means in this third passion prediction.*** (Keep in mind this passion prediction has much more details than the first two).
 - *This tiring predicament of the disciples doing the same selfish*

things over and over, may be the same spot you are in tonight.

- (How do you need to pray and ask God to reveal to you the place/predicament you are in with your relationship with Him tonight?)
- Matthew's and Luke's accounts differ. In Matthew 20:20, the mother of James and John makes the request. In Luke, he omits the reference of a request being made, and states 'a dispute arose among them'
 - ***Mark gets down to what really happened, as I'm sure, yet again, Peter wanted to make sure he got the facts straight because for once, it wasn't he who had said something quite regrettable.***
- There are **3** things to point out regarding the tiring predicament in verses 35-40.
- ***The Request. (v. 35)***
 - 'And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you."'
 - Their request was completely out of balance.
 - ***Notice their word usage, 'WE want you to do for US whatever WE ask of you.'***

a deal to become the Head Coach of the New Orleans Saints.

- *The saints play in the same building where Moore had won a super bowl just 36 hours prior.*

- The Head Coach of the Eagles wansn't happen, but he understood. "It's the way of the business", he said.
 - What's sad about this is that reaching the highest spot and greatest achievement is rarely enough for most people. We just want more, *and that's what James and John want here...*

○ **BUT WHY?**

- #1: They have a superficial understanding of what it means to follow Jesus AND to be His Disciple.
- #2: They have an inflated opinion of their own importance.
- #3: They choose not to understand how God measures greatness.
- Dr. Daniel Aiken said *'Being a servant goes against our human inclinations. It often is counter to our opinion of ourselves. Being a servant after the pattern of Jesus is a divine enablement, not a human inclination.'*
- Responses. (vv. 38-40)

- 'Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" 39 And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, 40 but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."
- James and John are trying to play the role of God (as everyone does who doesn't submit to the Lordship of Jesus).
- *Jesus responds, 'you don't know what you are asking'*
 - Jesus lets them know how the trinity works. Jesus is not in charge of the seating arraignment in Heaven neither is He of the timing of the end times.
 - "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.' Mark 13:32
- *The Metaphors Jesus uses:*
 - **Drinking a cup** with someone who speak to the sharing in that person's face and experiencing their personal destiny, with them.

- The cup was a common symbol of the wrath of God in His judgement (see Psalms 75:8, Ezekiel 23:28-34).
- Jesus' passion and death were a **Baptism**.
 - Meaning that He (Jesus) would be overwhelmed, flooded, and immersed in the destiny that God has planned for Him. For Jesus the cross was His divine appointment.
- ***The quick answer makes plain that James and John didn't understand.***
 - But Jesus does reveal that they will be down a similar road...
 - In fact, James would be the first of the apostles to be killed for the Gospel in Acts 12:1-2.
- May our answers to God in prayer not be so quick to where we are convey the message that we don't truly understand Him...
 - ***We've seen the third prediction, the Tiring Predicament...***

Truth #3: *The Tumultuous Problem.* (vv. 41-45)

- The word 'tumultuous' means loud, and here in verses 41-45, the other 10 disciples are not happy with James and John's actions.

- ***Since they weren't happy with them, I'm sure in a verbally high volume, they let them know it.***
- ***The tumultuous problem that James and John (and the disciples in general) had is that they were more concerned about position, prestige and power, than the prediction that Jesus had shared with them and how that was going to radically change their life.***
 - This is a problem not just with the disciples, but with our hearts tonight, which is why selfishness is something we must look for in our own hearts often, and carefully.
- Verse 41 says: ***'And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John.'***
 - It's human nature to automatically think that the ten disciples were mad about what the brothers (James and John), had said.
 - Sadly, like us, the disciples weren't that spiritually minded to think such a think.
 - ***They are indignant, (livid), because James and John beat them to the punch and in their minds, may have an edge over them in the power slots.***
 - David Garland said ***'The disciples would rather bear a grudge than a cross.'***

- This is the tumultuous problem in our hearts that we've gotta get out tonight. *Stop bearing grudges that you have for years, and start bearing your cross for Jesus.*

- ***Illustration***

- Several years ago, in the first year of my Pastorate here, I felt led to bring in and invite a signing group.
 - It was the day after I got engaged to Hannah. It was a great weekend.
- *Morale and spirits were high in the Church. We were excited to get married and have a singing group for the first time since COVID-19.*
 - We had really high attendance that day for back in 2021, and many different visitors that came.
- *I was so excited for what God was doing and felt such a renewed and exciting energy.*
 - (Knowing what I know now, I should've been on the lookout for satan to attack).
- That day as folks left the sanctuary, Hannah and I shook hands with the anticipation of meeting and connecting with visitors.
 - *A Church member at the time (no longer attends here or is a member here), came up to me in a loud voice and distraught manner, and wanted to*

argue with me about something another Church member had done to him.

- He wanted this individual's 'position' in the Church because he didn't feel like that person was 'nice' enough, and made a huge deal in front of the visitors. Yelling and the whole 9 yards.
- *The sweet family of visitors, appalled, handed me their visitor card that they filled out and were speechless.*
 - Later that week, I made contact with them and they informed me they wouldn't be returning. Simply because if people in the Church cared that much about position and power to yell about it in the vestibule after a Spirit moving service, they didn't want to be apart.
- *And guess what, I totally agreed with them and understood. Who wants to come and be apart of the family of God if our tumultuous problem is beating each other to the power lines?*
 - Thankfully, we aren't in that same spot as a Church in 2025, but there was a time where that was a big hurdle...

- *Just as Jesus stepped in with the disciples in this situation, I believe He wants to step in and talk to us this evening about one of the greatest lessons in the NT on servanthood.*
 - I believe there is **1** important thing to point out regarding Jesus' teaching to His disciples.
- **Reverse thinking. (vv. 42-45)**
 - 'And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. **43** But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant,^[d] **44** and whoever would be first among you must be slave^[e] of all. **45** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
 - Jesus, as He often does, is now seeking to use this entire incident as a teaching moment.
 - ***Specifically here, Jesus is wanting to get the disciples to understand humility and service in Christian leadership.***
 - ***We must keep in mind that these 12 (minus Judas), would go on to be the foundational leaders for the NT Church.***
 - They will be the ones responsible for planting Churches across the region and will be able to lead many to Christ.
- Before this happens, one last time before the events of Passion week occur, Jesus wants them to **Reverse their thinking.**
 - We must ask ourselves the question, have we done so? Have we reversed our thinking?
 - In a culture and world that more than ever pushes the idea of self promotion and the personal pursuit of happiness, how are we advancing the Gospel by promoting Jesus and not self?
- ***Jesus wants His LEADERS to have a SERVANT mindset and not a SELF-SERVING mindset.***
 - If you are or want to be a leader in this Church, you won't be one for long if you aren't a servant leader.
- In verse 42, Jesus gives them an example/illustration that the disciples would have understood. ***The lost world is motivated and driven by selfish ambition for raw power and dominance over others.***
 - The phrases in verse 42 'lord over them' and 'exercise authority over them' comes from the way that the culture ruled the people at that time.

- Jesus makes it clear in verses 43-44, that we are to serve and when we serve others instead of climb the ladders of power, we are falling in line with God's desire for servants in His Kingdom.
 - *So far tonight, Jesus has told His disciples that He will die in Jerusalem. It isn't until verse 45, that He tells them and us, **WHY**.*
- **45** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- *In Mark 10:45, Jesus makes a promise that no other religious leader in the world has made or even can make.*
 - *Jesus can make the statements that He did about servanthood because He walked the talk.*
- *Verse 45 is crucial to the portrait of Jesus that Mark has painted in his Gospel, but also in capturing Jesus' own self-consciousness.*
 - The language Jesus uses here echoes and parallels Isaiah 53:10:
- Notice, the distinctive role of the Son of Man is that He GAVE His life.
 - *This is that He willingly gave it for you and for me.*
- *We are in a HUGE tumultuous problem when our own quest for power and pleasure clouds*

our view to see what Christ has done for us on the Cross.

Conclusion:

- *Application:*
 - *What we request to God often reveals what we feel about Him.*
 - How do you need to pray and ask God to reveal to you the place/predicament you are in with your relationship with Him tonight?
 - Are you still trying to play the role of God tonight?
 - *Stop bearing grudges that you have for years, and start bearing your cross for Jesus.*
 - Reverse your thinking from the way of the culture and to the ways and mind of Christ.