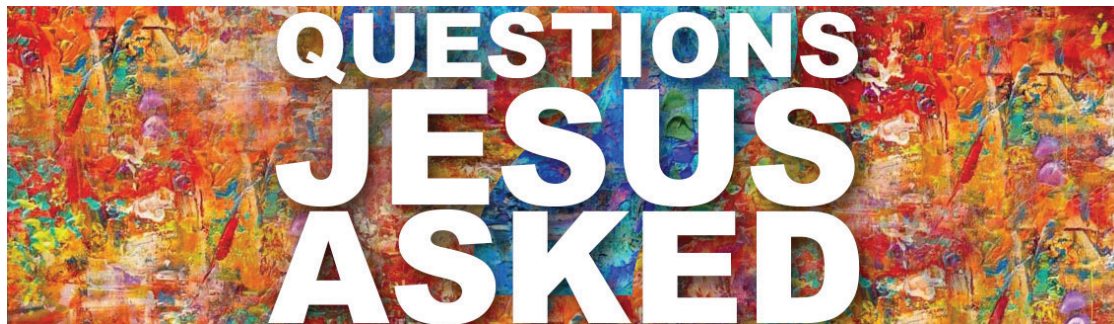


GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 5
WEEK OF MARCH 29



Growth Group Lent 2020

What Do You Want Me To Do For You?

Week 5 – March 29, 2020 - Mark 10:35-52

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at a church. In this time of Corona19 and “social distancing” please don’t meet in person, but do continue to check in with each other. If your growth group would like to meet online or if you are aware of needs that the church can help fill, please let us know at connect@ljpres.org. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

Setting the Context

Jesus is making his way through Judea. As he gets closer to Jerusalem he spends a lot of his time teaching about mission and discipleship. In Mark 10:32-34, Jesus foretells of his death for the third time. In response to this, James and John make a very brazen statement that is completely out of line. Jesus responds with a question. “What do you want me to do for you?” It is a question that is asked twice in our text for today.

The brothers are hopeful that they can sit with Jesus in his glory. More than likely they are thinking that once they all arrive in Jerusalem, Jesus will show his true power as the Messiah. He will be the conquering hero, will restore Israel and bring freedom. The only problem is that they don’t fully understand how Jesus plans on bringing freedom, and the type of freedom that he plans on bringing.

He reminds the disciples that if they want to truly follow him, they must learn to serve. It is not about fame, it is about faith. It is not about making your way to the top, but about serving those on the bottom. Jesus reminds them that he did not come to be served, but to serve. Jesus will drink the cup of God’s wrath. By using the image of baptism, Jesus is expressing his solidarity with sinners and his willingness to bear their judgment before God.

As Jesus passes through Jericho, a man by the name of Bartimaeus cries out to him. Along with Damascus, Jericho is one of the oldest inhabited communities in the world. The language “son of David” connects back to 2 Samuel 7:11-14 because Israel expected a Messiah to come from the family line of David.

Once again, the crowd gets in the way. They want Bartimaeus to be quiet. They assume that Jesus has more important things to deal with, but instead Jesus stops. He wants to ask Bartimaeus a question. It is the same question he asked James and John, but Bartimaeus’s response is quite different. Notice the simplicity of his response. He doesn’t make things difficult. He just wants to see.

Bartimaeus teaches us what discipleship is all about. James and John wanted fame and the opportunity to sit with Jesus in his glory. Bartimaeus chooses faith over fame. He doesn’t want to sit with Jesus, but instead wants to be on the road with Jesus as he makes his way to Jerusalem.



Exploring the Text

Read Mark 10:35-52

³⁵ Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask." ³⁶ "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. ³⁷ They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." ³⁸ "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?" ³⁹ "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, ⁴⁰ 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." ⁴¹ When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. ⁴² 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. ⁴³ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 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." ⁴⁶ Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means "son of Timaeus"), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁸ Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." ⁵⁰ Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see." ⁵² "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) How are you holding up this week?
- 2) Jesus has already demonstrated his divine nature, and He knows what we are thinking before we speak. Why does he ask what it is that we want? What's the divine purpose in having us articulate our needs and wants?
- 3) James & John are looking for status, Bartimaeus is looking to meet basic needs. These two stories sandwich Jesus' teaching on the first and the last. Who do you think "got it" and why?
- 4) Bartimaeus cried out for Jesus, who heard him and stopped to listen. Jesus asked essentially the same question he asked James and John. Jesus is willing to listen to friends and strangers alike. What does this tell us about the nature of God?
- 5) Bartimaeus was also persistent. Continuing to cry out when the crowd told him to stop. What is the role of persistence in prayer?
- 6) Jesus asks both James & John and Bartimaeus the same question, "What do you want me to do for you?". How do you answer this question? What would you like Jesus to do for you?
- 7) In response to Bartimaeus' request, Jesus states that the man's faith had healed him. What distinction is made here - did the act of asking in faith or the answer from the divine effect the miracle?
- 8) In telling Bartimaeus that he was healed, Jesus also says, Go. (the Message adds, "on your way.") As we receive blessing or answer to our prayers, what does this passage tell us we should do in response? When blessed by God, how does/should that change us?