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**ALL IN - “Following Jesus is a growing Experience”**

November 06, 2022

Mark 10:35-45

**WELCOME**

**OPENING**

The theme for this week is the Christian life and what it looks like to live as a Christian. To say that Following Jesus is a growing experience is to say that our conversion to faith in Christ is just the beginning; in fact, we can even talk about our conversion as a continual process; we are converted again and again every day in deeper ways.

**PRAYER**

Open your time together with a moment of prayer. Invite the Holy Spirit into your conversation, and ask God to give you wisdom and discernment as you read Scripture and discuss your faith. Trust in him to guide you.

**INTO THE WORD**

Take a few moments to read the Scripture verses. You can read these passages out loud as a group or silently to yourselves.

*“Do Us a Favor”*

**Read Mark 10:35-45**

Mark 10:35-45 NLT Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came over and spoke to Him. "Teacher," they said, "we want You to do us a favor." 36 "What is your request?" He asked. 37 They replied, "When You sit on Your glorious throne, we want to sit in places of honor next to You, one on Your right and the other on Your left." 38 But Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink? Are you able to be baptized with the baptism of suffering I must be baptized with?" 39 "Oh yes," they replied, "we are able!" Then Jesus told them, "You will indeed drink from My bitter cup and be baptized with My baptism of suffering. 40 But I have no right to say who will sit on My right or My left. God has prepared those places for the ones He has chosen." 41 When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. 42 So Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. 43 But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many."

James and John are go-getters. They think they are climbing the ladder in the kingdom of heaven, but Jesus is quick to tell them they don’t know what they are asking. What didn’t they understand, and who really gets to be at the right and left of Jesus when the Kingdom comes?

*“The Bitter Cup of Suffering”*

**Read Mark 15:16-39**

Mark 15:16-39 NLT The soldiers took Jesus into the courtyard of the governor's headquarters (called the Praetorium) and called out the entire regiment. 17 They dressed Him in a purple robe, and they wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on His head. 18 Then they saluted Him and taunted, "Hail! King of the Jews!" 19 And they struck Him on the head with a reed stick, spit on Him, and dropped to their knees in mock worship. 20 When they were finally tired of mocking Him, they took off the purple robe and put His own clothes on Him again. Then they led Him away to be crucified. 21 A passerby named Simon, who was from Cyrene, was coming in from the countryside just then, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. (Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.) 22 And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means "Place of the Skull"). 23 They offered Him wine drugged with myrrh, but He refused it. 24 Then the soldiers nailed Him to the cross. They divided His clothes and threw dice to decide who would get each piece. 25 It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified Him. 26 A sign announced the charge against Him. It read, "The King of the Jews." 27 Two revolutionaries were crucified with Him, one on His right and one on His left. 28 And the Scripture was fulfilled that said, "He was counted among those who were rebels." 29 The people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. "Ha! Look at You now!" they yelled at Him. "You said You were going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. 30 Well then, save Yourself and come down from the cross!" 31 The leading priests and teachers of religious law also mocked Jesus. "He saved others," they scoffed, "but He can't save Himself! 32 Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down from the cross so we can see it and believe Him!" Even the men who were crucified with Jesus ridiculed Him. 33 At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. 34 Then at three o'clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?" 35 Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought He was calling for the prophet Elijah. 36 One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, holding it up to Him on a reed stick so He could drink. "Wait!" he said. "Let's see whether Elijah comes to take Him down!" 37 Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed His last. 38 And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. 39 When the Roman officer who stood facing Him saw how He had died, he exclaimed, "This man truly was the Son of God!"

It can be said that the crucifixion of Christ is an ironic coronation; Jesus, who is actually the King of all kings, is called a king as mockery by his murderers. What royal symbols do you see as Christ is lifted up on the cross? What do the actions of Jesus teach us about how Christians should live? How did the cross contradict everything James and John hoped for? Are there ways that living our faith brings us suffering? What does it mean if we don’t really suffer?

*“Pressing On to the Goal”*

**Read Philippians 2:3-11, 3:13-14; Ephesians 4:12-14**

Philippians 2:3-11 NLT Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. 4 Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. 5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6 Though He was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7 Instead, He gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared in human form, 8 He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. 9 Therefore, God elevated Him to the place of highest honor and gave Him the name above all other names, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 3:13-14 NLT 13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

Ephesians 4:12-14 NLT Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do His work and build up the church, the body of Christ. 13 This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.

What does it mean that Christ became like a slave? Does that change his kingship somehow? How does it change the way we live? What are our goals as Christians, and how do they turn the goals of the world upside down?