

## The Real Jesus, Mark 10:32-45, The One about True Greatness, 10/23/22 Outline

### I. Intro: Pyramid Scheme

Transition- **Picture of pyramid scheme**...what is this? Pyramid Scheme. Story of friend. This is also a picture of our fallen human nature **[Me Pyramid]** seeking power, influence, prestige, we are glory hungry. True about our hearts, also our world system. The world tells us the way to get greatness is to scramble to the top and push others down along the way. Looking out for #1. We have one word in the Bible describes this sin with the term Selfish Ambition. Being concerned only for our own interest, what we want, when we want it...and selfish ambition is always self-serving- it comes at the expense of others. Now the good news is we aren't alone in this struggle. 2000 years ago, Jesus' disciples were dealing with this same heart condition.

Main Point- Jesus' disciples are interested in having positions at the top of the pyramid but Jesus. But Jesus says...what if true greatness and glory looks more like this...**Flip pyramid**.

### II. Teaching from Text Mark 10:32-45

**Mark 10: <sup>32</sup> They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid.**

**Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. <sup>33</sup> "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said,**

**"and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles,**

**<sup>34</sup> who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise."**

#### Comments:

-At least the 3<sup>rd</sup> time Jesus told his disciples clearly about his coming death and resurrection. Mark 8,9,10.

-There are some who try make the gospel fuzzy...oh the gospel just a symbol of triumph of the human spirit, or about being a good person. No... the gospel is about a historically documented, predicted event- the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

-Others do revisionist history with Jesus- a failed political revolutionary who got caught up as a victim in the Roman machinery, he never intended to become a martyr...and certainly never to be considered a savior. No. Jesus predicted explicitly many times what was going to happen to him. Jesus was no victim. It was a planned event. Revelation 13, he's "the Lamb who is slain before the foundations of the earth."

**<sup>35</sup> Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."**

**Comments:**

- What a question to ask God. Try that sometime.
- Jesus would have every reason to say, "You want to back up and try that again?"

***<sup>36</sup> "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. <sup>37</sup> They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."***

**Comments:**

-Talk about not reading the room! What a question to ask coming right off of what Jesus just said. -Asking for position of authority and power in political/governmental terms. Vice President and Chief of Staff. They still don't get why Jesus had to come, they are still thinking this is an overthrow of political power, when Jesus came to overthrow sin in the human heart. Staggering how blind selfish ambition can make us to reality. They don't even want to hear it because they are in it for themselves.

***<sup>38</sup> "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?" <sup>39</sup> "We can," they answered.***

**Comments:**

- Cup and Baptism- Cup of wrath, baptism of suffering.
- Selfish Ambition not only makes us blind but boastful.

***Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, <sup>40</sup> 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."***

**Comments:**

-You say you can, and you will. They don't understand this now, but one day they will. Both men follow in the footsteps of Jesus in his humility and suffering. For James, he's the first martyr. For John, he's the last martyr. James' martyrdom had his head cut off, came fast...soon, sudden, lightning quick. For John, his was a slow agonizing, isolated death, eventually boiled to death.

***<sup>41</sup> When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.***

**Comments:**

-No surprise. They were trying to jockey for position and they were probably mad that they got to Jesus first. Selfish ambition makes us blind, boastful, and bitter when others get what we want. This is human nature we tend to want to step on other people to get to the top. They don't deserve it like I do, I worked harder.

OK here comes the very clear lesson from Jesus.

***<sup>42</sup> 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.***

***<sup>43</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.***

**Comments:**

-Roman style of leadership in Jerusalem- **Romans Pyramid**. Lord over, Built on Selfish Ambition. Use their power to get best of everything, keep the wealth for themselves, make laws that had their own interests and self-preservation of power and position in mind, they viewed themselves as being at the top of the food chain, dominate and keep everyone down.

-The way the disciples were acting is that if they did get in power, if Jesus was a political revolutionary, they would have been just like the Romans! Why? Because unless we have the Selfish Ambition in the human heart overthrow by Christ, we all will be inclined to do the very same thing with power.

- Today there are those in our culture that are all about overthrowing power structures and hierarchies, now I'm all for reforms, but the Problem with overthrowing authorities is that what gets put in place will be equally if not more abusive of authority. See the Soviet Union or modern-day China.

-Jesus isn't anti-authority. The problem isn't authority. The problem is selfish ambition in the human heart that corrupts these things.

-Jesus says- You want authority? You want true greatness? Invert the pyramid **[Me Pyramid]**. Servant of all, slave of all. The antidote to selfish ambition is selfless service- and this is what it means to be great...the greatest leaders, teachers, coaches, military leaders, politicians, pastors are those that aren't thinking about themselves... the think up not down, they serve up not shove down, they don't care about their reputation or success but about the reputation and success of the team, community.

-Richard Lenski "Great men don't sit on top of lesser men; great men bear lesser men on their backs."

-Jesus isn't saying something he wasn't willing to do.

***<sup>45</sup> 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."***

**Comments:**

-Jesus did something no founder of any other religion was willing to do, and what makes Christianity utterly unique. Their purpose was to live and be an example, enlighten, lead a revolution, but Jesus's purpose was to flip the pyramid. **[Jesus Pyramid]** be a servant of humanity, die and be a sacrifice and because he was willing to go all the way down to slave he becomes exalted as pre-eminent- the greatest.

-As great and true as this is...Jesus is doing more than just giving us leadership coaching and setting a good example. There's something more going on here.

-Word **Ransom**- Lutron: Powerful word picture. The Ransomer would make a huge payment equal to the value of the prisoner or debtor to procure his/her freedom.

-The sin of humanity and every one of us isn't monetary, earthly. It's not just some heavenly traffic ticket...God isn't a benevolence police officer who just says...well I'll let you go this time.

Our sin is cosmic treason against our creator. God cannot just shrug off evil. The debt has to be paid, our sin is costly. A cosmic, personal debt requires a cosmic, personal payment. This is why we can't pay it off through our good works or giving lots of money to good causes, through meditation... these are earthly payments. It would be like a little boy trying to pay the national debt by emptying out his piggy bank. Only a cosmic, personal God can be the ransom. This is why Jesus came- he was so incredibly loving that he was willing to die in order to do pay it himself.

-This is why the gospel isn't, Jesus came to show us a better way to live and serve people. That's true, that's not the gospel. Jesus came to be an example of loving others and making the world a better place. Also true, but not the gospel. He came to be a ransom FOR you and me- Personally.

### **[Blank Slide] Application:**

-Talk to the person who is a disciple of Jesus. Truly understanding this much change us, it must flip the pyramid upside down in our lives as well, believing the gospel should increasingly melt the selfish ambition from our hearts. Friends this is not an optional part of discipleship, selfless service is essential to what it means.

-Paul-Philippians 2: <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. <sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage. <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—  
even death on a cross!

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

-Where the church will get all its credibility in the world is not through telling everyone what they are doing wrong, seeking positions of power and privilege, getting everyone to do what you want them to do... but by looking like our selfless savior who served us and the whole world.

-Is your core identity servant?

-Does this describe your relationship in marriage, kids, on your soccer team, neighborhood, church involvement?

**-Has the selfish ambition in your heart been overthrown by the servant-savior, Jesus Christ?**

For those who have only looked at Jesus as an example but not a savior...Gospel Invitation.

