



Oct. 21, 2018 Mark 10: 35-45 & Is. 53: 10-11

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Link to [Beck](#) (paywall) other [Beck](#)

Stone, Naomi. [Our Greatest Surrender](#)

Rolheiser, Fr. Ron. [Different Kinds of Glory](#)

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ENTERING THE SCENE:

We live in troubled times. Times where we want to fix our problems by using force. The force of our wealth, military, privileged position gained by the accident of birth. All these things were operative in Jesus' day and the disciples, like we, are unable to rise above using force to find our real source of power. That is what Jesus taught when he 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."

It will take the Pentecost experience before this will finally "click in" and Jesus knows this, but he also knows with the Spirit's help they and we will get there.

Mark 10:35-45

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."

DISCUSSION QUESTION: If Jesus were to ask me what I would want him to do for me, what would be my answer?

PRAYER: Teacher Jesus, you are so patient with me as I like those disciples am stumbling along wanting to do the right thing, but at times using all the failed methods of the past. You invite me to consider a new method, which is of serving others real needs, not using their need to serve my need to be needed. Help me to get in touch with how cherished I have felt when someone did for me what was truly needed simply because they cared for me. Then I will glimpse what you are trying to teach. Amen.

WORD STUDY AND QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

JAMES / JOHN: When Jesus first announced his coming death, Peter was rebuked for his misunderstanding and called the satan. Now at this third prediction, James and John first called still do not understand. William James said: "There is no worse lie than a truth misunderstood by those who hear it."

What do you think makes it so hard for those who have been with Jesus from the start to understand what he is about?

TEACHER: Of all of the titles Jesus accepted for himself, teacher was one most often used by those around Jesus.

What does this tell you about their understanding of Jesus?

DO FOR US / YOU: The disciples want Jesus to do something for them. Jesus asks what that is.

Do you, like the disciples, only follow Jesus for what he can do for you?

RIGHT / LEFT: The right and left places aside the host at a banquet are the places of honor. It signified the importance of those in those places.

What are the disciples really asking of Jesus? How does this reveal their misunderstanding?

GLORY: The disciples anticipate glory. They effectively filter out any mention of suffering or service.

What distinguishes authentic glory from inauthentic glory? Can you think of examples of each? Have you ever achieved any authentic glory without suffering or service?

DRINK: To drink something is to take it into yourself and let it become a part of you.

What makes this image a good one for helping the disciples understand? What is being drunk?



CUP: Jesus now talks about drinking the cup, and later on in the garden he will ask to be spared from drinking this very cup.

Have you ever known what will be required of you and accepted it at the intellectual level, only to beg to be spared at the experiential level?

(“Those Who Love Me Will Keep My Word” By Paul Gerhardt Trost, Sonoma, CA.

What I’ve tried to convey...is that God meets us every day, particularly in the anguish of those who endure suffering, and that the divine presence is revealed in the humblest act of kindness.)

BAPTIZE /ED: To be baptized is to die to one level of existence in order to enter another level of existence.

How have you died to the entry level of faith in order to enter a more mature faith? Would you use the word baptism to describe this process?

GRANT: To be able to grant something is to have the power to bestow it. Jesus tells the disciples he does not have that power, only God does.

What is Jesus saying about himself here? What is he saying about God?

PLACES: Jesus always points to the Father as the one from whom all creation and power come. It is the Father who decides what is to be, and Jesus’ role is to reveal what the Father’s will is.

How does this confidence enable Jesus to trust in God’s providence? How does Jesus’ understanding of God frustrate the disciple’s hopes?

PREPARED: Jesus is content to let the final outcome of God’s plan rest in the wisdom of God. He trusts that God has prepared an appropriate outcome for all people, and he himself, need not be occupied with those details.

Do you think this answer satisfied the disciples? If so, what makes you think so? If not, why not? Do you believe that God has an appropriate outcome for your life?

TEN: The other disciples now get into the act. Mark wants us to know that everyone was involved in this discussion.

Why is it important that everyone be included in this situation? How would it change things if the other ten knew nothing about this episode?

INDIGNANT: To become indignant is to arouse strong negative feelings about someone or something.

Do you think the disciples were angry about the misunderstanding of James and John, or do you think they were angry with them trying to one up them? What helps you answer this question in the text?

RULERS / OFFICIALS: Over and over, Jesus is attempting to show the difference between how the “world” does something, and how God does something. The “world” wants power *over* people, God wants power *with* people.

Why do you think it is so hard to make this distinction? Can you think of situations where it was thought you had to have power over, in order to achieve power with? Why does this method always fail in the long run? Do you think the time has come when people might try God’s method?

GENTILES: Gentiles for Mark are all those who are not Jews. In other words, those who do not have the advantage of knowing God’s will that was being given the Jews through the prophets and the law. By necessity they would be ignorant of the truth of God’s ways.

Who are the ignorant of God’s truth today? Where are people misusing power because of their ignorance of God’s ways revealed in Jesus? Have you ever found yourself among them?

LORD IT OVER / AUTHORITY: Jesus tells us that the way we can tell that someone is using power in a “worldly” way is that they ‘lord it over’ someone when exercising authority.

How can you help Jesus teach God's way of authentic authority? How did Jesus do it?

GREAT: To be great is to witness to God's ways revealed in Jesus.

How does Jesus do this in this piece of scripture?

SERVANT / SLAVE: A servant may or may not also be a slave. In any event, the roles imply service to another.

How does this help the disciples (and you) to understand Jesus' words? What does this reveal about God's plan for God's creation?

FIRST / LAST: Once again, Jesus apparently reverses the natural order of things with another first/last saying. In effect, he reveals that God's plan is for all to be included, and God loves all equally.

Do you think James and John flinch when they hear this? How do you think the other disciple's feel when they hear this? How do you feel when you hear this? Do you find this comforting or disappointing?

GIVE HIS LIFE: To gain all, one must be open to giving all. God will reveal this in Jesus' resurrection. Understandably, the disciples fail to get it at this point in their faith walk with Jesus.

How does the resurrection help you to get it? Is your prayer; "I believe, but help my unbelief"? Can you empathize with the poor disciple's confusion and dismay?

RANSOM: A ransom is the price paid for the retrieval of someone or something.

What is being ransomed in this scripture? What is it being ransomed from? For?

PARALLEL TEXTS: Mk.10: 35-45 // Mt. 20:20-28; Mk. 10:39 // Lk. 12:50; Mk. 10: 41f // Lk. 22:24-27; Mk. 10:44 // Mk. 9:35; Lk. 9:48; Mt. 23:11;

OTHER TEXTS OF THE WEEK: Is. 53:10-11; [Ps. 33: 4-5, 18-22](#); Heb. 4:14-16; Mk. 10:35-45;

Revised Common Lectionary: Job 38:1-7, 34-41; [Ps. 104:1-9, 24, 35](#); Heb. 5:1-10; Mk. 10: 35-45;

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION:

Nathan Mitchell once said "We forget, often, that the powerful want something from the weak. And what they want isn't power (which they already possess in spades), but legitimacy – the right to power. Ironically, the weak have power over the one thing the mighty value most – namely, *the right to confer or withhold legitimacy.*"

Jesus clearly taught the twelve disciples about surrender, the necessity of suffering, humility, servant leadership, and nonviolence. They resisted him every time, and so he finally had to make the journey himself and tell them, "Follow me!" But Christians have preferred to hear something Jesus never said: "Worship me." Worship of Jesus is rather harmless and risk-free; following Jesus changes everything. Richard Rohr

"Until you practice surrender, the spiritual dimension is something you read about, talk about, get excited about, write books about, think about, believe in — or don't, as the case may be. It makes no difference. Not until you surrender does it become a living reality in your life." Eckhart Tolle

There are always two worlds. The world as it operates is largely about power; the world as it should be, or "the Reign of God," is always about love. How can you live in both worlds at the same time? As you allow yourself to loosen your grip on the first, you will gradually see the inadequacy and weakness of power as domination or control. You will then tighten your grip around the second, which is the ever purer motivation of love for others instead of yourself. Any exercise of power apart from love leads to brutality and evil; but love that does not lead people to a whole new kind of power is mere sentimentality and emotion. I must admit, it is rare to find people who hold both together in perfect balance—who have found their inner divine power and use it for others. Richard Rohr

The "benefactors" of society actually wield authority over others. We have already seen that some early Christians found it difficult to break that pattern. Yet, this tradition makes it clear that Jesus challenged the finely tuned balance of hierarchy and privilege on which ancient society was constructed. Further the identification with the slave, the most despised of humanity, suggests that there are no limits to that service, no point at which a disciple might pull back and say "No further." Pg. 75.

Perkins, Pheme. [Ministering in the Pauline Churches](#) NY. Paulist Press. 1982

Unilateral power also blocks the quality of the gift that others would give us out of their freedom. Bernard M. Loomer

Those who are fearful of committing themselves to something they cannot control enhance the strength of the forces involved in the practice of unilateral power. Bernard M. Loomer

The Gospels are often haunted by a Davidic messianic expectation that there will be one who will free Israel and sit as king. The two disciples are looking for privileged power positions in such a kingdom. It is a clear power play. Somehow the other ten hear what James and John are up to and are irritated with them. Jesus sits them all down and speaks about power, through a contrast. Secular rulers dominate those whom they rule, and they make certain that their power is felt. Among the followers of Jesus Christ there is a new and different kind of order, a stunning reversal of normal cultural expectations. The leader is to play the role of servant – there to respond the need within the community. The community’s agenda is the leader’s agenda. Pg. 78.

Lee. Bernard. [The Future Church of 140 BCE](#).NY. Crossroad Pub. 1995.

I think that as people of faith we need to prioritize and not demonize the least of these. We cannot “[conform to the pattern of this world](#)” (Romans 12:2), which is to disregard the poor. As people of faith we should weigh every theory or political statement against the word of God; which speaks up for the poor and states that they will be leaders in the rebuilding of our society, (Isaiah 61: 1-4).

The day comes, usually occasioned by deep pain and loss, where the bottom falls out and we go into a free-fall where, no matter what we try to grasp onto will not hold us until eventually we land on something solid, bedrock, God himself.” Fr. Ron Rolheiser

Remembering suffering awakens us from the slumber of indifference and goads us to fight against the suffering and oppression around us. Miroslav Volf

What is it to live with suffering? Suffering is the necessary feeling of evil. If we don’t feel evil we stand antiseptically apart from it, numb. We can’t understand evil by thinking about it. The sin of much of our world is that we stand apart from pain; we buy our way out of the pain of being human. Jesus did not numb himself or withhold from pain. Suffering is the necessary pain so that we know evil, so that we can name evil and confront it. Otherwise we somehow dance through this world and never really feel what is happening. Brothers and sisters, the irony is not that God should feel so fiercely; it’s that his creatures feel so feebly. If there is nothing in your life to cry about, if there is nothing in your life to complain about, if there is nothing in your life to yell about, you must be out of touch. We must all feel and know the pain of humanity. The free space that God leads us into is to feel the full spectrum, from great exaltation and joy, to the pain of mourning and dying and suffering. It’s called the Paschal Mystery. The totally free person is one who can feel all of it and not be afraid of any of it. Richard Rohr

Why does Jesus associate the "cup" with death? The answer comes from the Hebrew Scriptures, and its many references to the wicked (sometimes Israel, sometimes Israel's enemies) drinking from the cup of God's wrath. For example, Ps. 75: 8: "In the hand of the Lord is a cup of foaming wine mixed with spices; he pours it out and all the wicked of the earth drink it down to its very dregs." Or Is. 51:17: "Awake, awake! Rise up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the Lord, the cup of his wrath, you who have drained it to its dregs. Lamentations 4: 21 reads, "Rejoice and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, you who live in the land of Uz. But to you also the cup will be passed; you will be drunk and stripped naked ... But, O Daughter of Edom, he will punish your sin and expose your wickedness." In each case, the cup represents the death that God's wrath or judgment will bring upon sinners. Note that it is always God who offers the cup. Witherington, Ben III. [Let this Cup Pass](#). Bible Review. 8/04



(Carved from white chalk (soft limestone), this type of cup was extremely common throughout Israel from the mid-first century BCE to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70CE. It was a period when ritual purity was particularly important for Jews of all social classes; according to Jewish law, stone was not subject to impurity like glass or ceramics, so vessels made of chalk could be continually reused rather than destroyed.)

The church is a corresponding community, a fellowship of freedom within which each is loving servant to the other and all together form a circle of co-responsibility - so illogical to human axioms of authority and control - wherein each is subordinated to and empowered by the others, in a boundless interchange of dependence and autonomy. On this model, ministry is essentially shared, not individualized; power is the expression, not the opposite, of service; and authority emerges horizontally through the exercise of love within the fellowship, rather than bestowed vertically upon the few for the hierarchic governing of the many. With this reinterpretation and reform of the concept of ministry comes repentant recognition that the church has done precisely what its Lord demanded that it should not do: that is, model its internal relations upon worldly structures of power, status, and domination instead of imitating the example of servanthood and self-abasement he himself provided. "Like the Gentiles, whose rulers lord it over the people and whose great ones act as tyrants" (Mk. 10:42) is precisely how the church's ministry has been shaped and exercised, rather than like Christ, the Lord who serves, whose kingship is not of this world nor like the world's, and whose power and authority are grounded in a love which to the earthly powers seems impotent and foolish. Pg. 365. Lewis, Alan E. [Between Cross and Resurrection](#). Grand Rapids, MI. Eerdmans. 2001.

God never promises to remove us from our struggles. He does promise, however, to change the way we look at them.
Max Lucado

The Sufi mystic Rumi says of suffering: "Your defects are the ways that glory is manifested. Don't turn your head. Keep looking at the bandaged place. That is where the light enters you."

Gospel of the Naassenes in Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies*, V.8.11—

"But" he says, "even if you drink the cup which I drink, you will not be able to enter where I go."

Throckmorton, Burton, Jr. Ed. [Gospel Parallels](#). NY. Thomas Nelson Pub. 1949.

Jesus said that there was a baptism he had to undergo, and he felt extreme anguish until it was accomplished. I know the feeling, Jesus. I feel that anguish, too. There is someone I must become. There is someone I must be grafted onto, and how lonely I am until it is accomplished. Wiederkehr, Macrina, OSB. [A Tree Full of Angels](#). San Francisco. Harper & Row. 1988. Pg. 32.

"If you are trying to transform a brutalized society into one where people can live in dignity and hope, you begin with the empowering of the most powerless." -Adrienne Rich

Remember when the bible said "strength went out of him: (Mark 5:30). I have long experienced whenever I can trust enough and let my love be a channel for God's love, it is like electricity flowing from God, through Jesus, through me, to the one needing the strength.

The power of love calls into being what did not exist. The power of love brings hope where there is despair. The power of love brings new life where there was only death. Force is not power. Fear is not power. Death is not power. Only love is power. Only love will prevail. Dr. David Hirstius

Triggered by your most recent thought, did you know that suddenly, your pancreas and your adrenal glands are already busy secreting a few new hormones? Like a sudden lightning storm, different areas of your brain just surged with increased electrical current, releasing a mob of neurochemicals that are too numerous to name. Your spleen and your thymus gland sent out a mass e-mail to your immune system to make a few modifications. Several different gastric juices started flowing. Your liver began processing enzymes that were not present moments before. Your heart rate fluctuated, our lungs altered their stroke volume, and blood flow to the capillaries in your hands and feet changes. All from just thinking one thought. You are that powerful.

Dispenza, Joe. [Evolve Your Brain](#) Pg. 1-2

10.32–45: Third Passion prediction (Mt 20.17–28; Lk 18.31–34; 22.24–27). 38: Cup, a metaphor for consequences that must be accepted (Ps 75.8; cf. Isa 51.17,22), usually merited suffering resulting from one's wrongdoing; Jesus' use of the metaphor indicates that he is accepting the cup in place of others; see 14.36. Baptism, John had predicted (1.8) that Jesus would baptize "with the Holy Spirit"; Jesus here accepts the consequences of that baptism. 42–45: Mark provides a concise description of the Roman aristocratic political system. As the previous two chapters indicate, the followers of Jesus are to create an alternative community. 42: Great ones, 9.33–37. 45: The climax of this middle section: even James and John expect the Son of Man to come in glory, but he will serve and die as a ransom, Gk "lytron," Heb "asham." Though there has been lengthy discussion among Christian thinkers about how such ransom is deemed to work, and what it accomplishes, there is no settled agreement about the meaning of this phrase, give his life a ransom for many. Theories have included the idea that the payment was made to satisfy a penalty for human wrongdoing, to avert divine retribution (see above on "cup," v. 38n.), or as a sacrifice (like the Temple sacrifices) to cleanse the followers of Jesus from their sins. The phrase for many may indicate an expiatory sacrifice (see 14.24n.; Isa 53.12), but only in the eleventh century did this notion come to dominate western Christian theology. Pg. 82. [The Jewish Annotated New Testament](#)

Spiritual surrender is not giving up, which is the way we usually understand the term. Surrender is entering the present moment, and what is right in front of you, fully and without resistance or attempts at control. In that sense, surrender is almost the exact opposite of giving up. In fact, it is a being given to! Richard Rohr

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

Links to all the books mentioned in this guide are on The Ark web site: www.theark1.com

Beck, Robert. Sunday Homilies: Cycle B 2015. Pgs.149-153. To order contact Carol.Oberfoell@loras.edu

Beck, Robert. Sunday Homilies: Cycle B 2005. Pgs. 158-161.

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Mitchell, Stephen. [The Enlightened Heart](#). Harper & Row, NY. 1989. IT'S ALL GOOD: Page 85; IN EVERY SIP: Page 105; THE DEEPEST WORDS: Page 129.

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benShea, Noah. [Jacob the Baker](#). Villard Books, NY.1989. HUMILITY IS THE INTEGRITY OF WISDOM: Page 59.

ARRIVING AT OUR EXPECTATIONS: Page 103.

Aurelio, John R. [Fables for God's People](#). Crossroad, NY. 1988. THE ARTISAN'S APPRENTICE: Page 1 f. THE WAITER AND THE CAPTAIN Page 8.

Greeley, Andrew. [When Life Hurts](#). Chicago. Thomas More Press. 1988. TEENAGERS VS. PARENTS. Pages 83f

