

**SERIES: GETTING TO KNOW JESUS**

**SUBJECT: GETTING WHAT YOU WANT**

**SCRIPTURE: MARK 10:35-45**

**SERMON NO. 23**

### **Introduction**

Donald Grey Barnhouse, one of the first great radio preachers and former pastor of the 10th Avenue Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, was called to the hospital by a doctor friend.

An atheist, whom the doctor knew, was dying. Barnhouse told him that he would come right over to see him. Then the doctor shared that the atheist did not like Barnhouse. He said he'd come anyway.

He entered the patient's room, grabbed a chair, sat down and folded his arms and said nothing. After several minutes, the atheist was curious and irritated. "All right Barnhouse, what do you want?"

Barnhouse answered, "I've come to see what it's like when an atheist goes to hell." This so shocked the atheist, that Barnhouse was able to lead him to faith in Christ.

Imagine Jesus asking that question. What do you want? Would you have a list ready? And would you be willing to do what it took in order to receive what was on your list? That's the subject of the passage we'll be looking at in Mark, chapter 10.

Jesus and His disciples are walking a road in Palestine, heading for Jerusalem, where Jesus knew He was going to be betrayed, condemned to death, mocked, crucified and after three days...rise from the dead.

**I. THE REQUEST OF THE DISCIPLES. Mark 10:35-37** Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire. 36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? 37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in they glory.

**In Matthew's account (19:28)** Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus promised that when He came in His glory, the disciples would sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. This was on their minds as they walked toward Jerusalem, they had thrones waiting for them. That's why James and John asked the question they did in these verses of our text. *They wanted two things...*

**1. James and John wanted to be close to Jesus.** They had devoted the better part of three years to following Him. They had been present at the Transfiguration. So, it was natural to want to find out if one of them could be on Jesus' left and the other on Jesus' right, when the thrones were arranged.

They knew they were going to be sitting with Him and judging Israel, so why not be close?

As followers of Jesus don't you want to be close to him? That's what James and John wanted. *But that's not all they wanted...*

**2. They wanted to know how much power they would have.** For common fishermen to be given thrones from which they would rule was pretty heady stuff. James and John wanted to know just

how much power they were going to have. I believe they were asking for clarification and elaboration on how much power they would exercise when they ruled with Jesus. His response was that they *did not understand what they are asking for...*

**II. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THEIR REQUEST (MARK 10:38-40).** But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I will drink of? And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? 39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized.

Jesus says, "You don't realize the cost of being close to God, and power from God has a price." He wants to know if James and John are willing to pay the price that He will pay.

**1. The cup (38) can ye drink of the cup that I will drink of?** He's talking about what lies ahead in Jerusalem, and Gethsemane, and Calvary. The mocking, the beating, the agony, the pain, the suffering and the death. Jesus' cup was to do whatever it took to rescue people from Hell. It wasn't going to be an easy thing. In fact, when He was in the Garden of Gethsemane, just before He was arrested, He prayed...

**Mark 14:36** Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. The "cup" wasn't going to be an easy thing. But since lost people mattered to His father, then they mattered to Him. And He was willing to do whatever it took to save them from Hell.

So, Jesus is telling the disciples, "If you want to experience closeness to God and the power of God in your lives, then you

have to give yourself 100% to what matters most to God, People! And doing whatever you can to be a link in the chain of events that will rescue them from Hell." *Now observe..*

**2. Jesus also uses the term, baptism.(38). And be batized with the baptism that I am baptized with?** The word "baptism" means to be immersed. Jesus is referring to something that completely affects a person's life. For our Lord, he was immersed in the fact that people were going to Hell, unless they had a Savior. Every level of His life was affected by that one single thought.

Without a Savior, every person you make eye contact with is going to spend eternity separated from God, in a place called Hell, where there is eternal sorrow, never ending pain and constant regret. You've got to care enough to do something about that fact, if you want to have a close relationship with God and experience His power in your life. *But there's something else that's necessary to experience closeness to God and the power of God.*

**3. One must be servant of all (Mark 10:41-45). And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John. 42 But Jesus called them to him, and saith to them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. 43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: 45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.**

The other disciples want to experience closeness and power, too. So they are unhappy with James and John and began to build themselves up trying to get these positions of closeness and power.

Jesus says, it's not a matter of positions, or playing politics, or criticizing someone else to build yourself up, to get you close to God, or allow you to experience the power of God in your life. That's how the secular world might do things, but that's not how the fellows of Christ should do things.

**III. THE REQUIREMENT OF THEIR REQUEST IS SERVICE. (45).... For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.**

**1. Jesus, His entire life and ministry, was devoted to ministry.**

And He says this should be important to His disciples, and it should be important to us. As followers of Jesus Christ, God calls us to give our lives in order to help others. This is what ministry is all about. We are not here to be served, we are here to serve.

If we are really going to be a church that experiences a closeness to God and the power of God in our midst, then we must direct our thinking and our lives to reflect the principles of service and sacrifice.

The disciples were selfish at this point in their lives. They almost always thought about themselves, first. And folks, so often we do the same.

**2. To experience a closeness to God and power from God, we must focused on others, not ourselves.** Instead of looking at what we want, we should be asking what God wants. Instead of looking at what we need, we should be asking ourselves what others need.

**Conclusion**

If I were to survey every person in the audience this morning and ask you, What would you like to experience most as a Christian?...I can guarantee you that feeling close to God and experiencing God's power would be right up there as two of the top choices.

If that's what you want, then Jesus says two things to you...

**1. People matter to God, so they had better matter to you.** Do whatever you can to rescue them from Hell.

**2. Serve people.** Put your wants, your needs, your desires, your preferences on the back burner, and start focusing on what others need.

We have to Open our eyes to what is really important to God, people, especially lost people. And we must stop thinking of ourselves. We are number two. Others are number one.

The facts from scripture this morning tell us that we will never draw close to God or experience His power on any other terms than these.