

Of Which Cup Will We Drink? Matthew 20:20-28

“Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say, ‘It is well with my soul.’”

We just sang these words together. We have been taught this response. But can we truly, honestly, say these words today - *“It is well with my soul?”*

- During this quarantine, in the loss of a job, feeling alone, being sick, fighting cancer, losing a loved one, struggling in a marriage, feeling stuck in..., etc.

Whatever our position in life is right now, have we learned the secret of contentment? **Not because life is where we want it to be, but because we know, and trust, that God has us right where He wants us to be!**

To often we feel trapped by our circumstances, our lot in life, instead of feeling empowered by our God to be used by Him right where we are.

If our focus is on ourselves, & our situation, then we will never be content & our focus will never be on loving/serving God & others, as it should be!

The disciples, James & John, were good examples of this in **Matthew 20:20-28**

James & John were stuck focused on their own position/promotion. They wanted a place of prominence in the Kingdom next to Jesus on the throne.

Being just 2 of the 12 disciples of Jesus was not enough. They wanted more. **Vs. 20 – So they brought their mother to plead their case before Jesus!**

I wish that the text would reveal more of the nonverbal communication! How did Jesus really respond to her/them? **Vs. 21 - “What do you want?”**

James & John did not realize how out of place their inquiry really was! God’s Kingdom does not function like the kingdoms of this world.

Earthly kingdoms are ruled from the top-down. **“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.”** Prominence is based upon power/greatness in these kingdoms

But Jesus, the One who is on the throne of God’s Kingdom, flips this on its head in His incarnation & death! **“Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” – Vs. 28**

The measure of greatness is not position, power, or prestige; it is service!

In the Kingdom of God, when authority is given, it is not for the sake of lifting oneself up, but to make oneself low & give of yourself for the sake of others.

In the Kingdom of God, greatness is realized by becoming more like Jesus in His death. We may not have to die His death, but we do need to die to ourselves!

“But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave.” – Vs. 26-27

It is a privilege, & a joy, to be identified with Christ in servitude.

Self-centeredness is one of the greatest weapons of the evil one! **The best way to protect against falling into this temptation is to be others-centered.**

It doesn’t matter who you are, your position, or your lot in life, to live for the sake of serving and lifting others up is available to all of us.

Today we celebrate the sacrament of communion. **Together we will drink of the cup that proclaims the Lord’s death until His return (1 Corinthians 11:26).**

This meal is not only a celebration, it is also a participation in Christ. Jesus asked James & John if they were able to drink the cup that he was to drink from. They said yes, & they did drink of the sufferings of which Jesus drank.

James was beheaded as the first martyr of Christianity! John would suffer great persecution and be exiled to the island of Patmos until his death.

If we too partake of this cup, and eat of this bread, we not only receive the benefits of Christ’s sufferings, but we also willingly join Him in it until His return.

Is it well with your soul if your life is defined by suffering, serving, giving, & laying your life down for others? This is the way of Jesus & the Kingdom of God!

What does such a life look like? **Dream Small – by Josh Wilson** We are about to partake of the sacrament together. Will we also partake of this life together?

Let us not be like James & John, here in Matt. 20, but let us be like James & John after Jesus’ resurrection! We too are living in light of the resurrection of Christ, so let us be a people defined as those who serve!

“And Lord haste the day when our faith shall be sight, the clouds be rolled back as a scroll: The trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend, even so – it is well with my soul!” Of which cup will we drink?

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