

## THE PRICE FOR A CLOSE PLACE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

TEXT: **Mark 10:35-40:**

***35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto Him, saying, Master, we would that Thou shouldest 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 Thy glory***

***38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I 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 I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:***

***40 But to sit on My right hand and on My left hand is not Mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.***

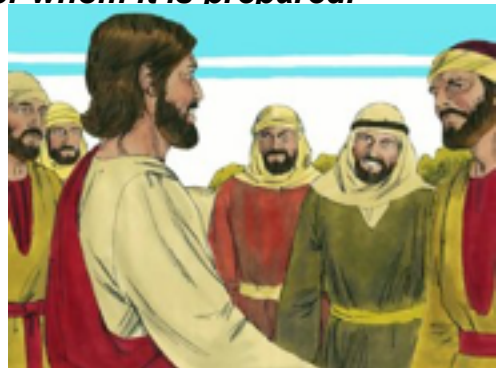
This text reveals the true heart of love in the disciples. Jesus let them know it will cost something to be near to Him. Although expensive, He did not discourage their request. He knew they did not comprehend the full meaning of their petition, for He accused them of ignorance and said unto them in **Matthew 20:22:**

***Ye know not what ye ask.***

But even then He did not dampen their ardor, but very wisely probed their hearts with a test as to their qualification for the desired positions.

***Matthew 20:23: Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?***

They said, ***“We are able.”***



Now Jesus lets them in on the whole secret by saying in **Matthew 20:23b**:

***it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father.***

You may have just as much as you are willing to pay for, and no more.

After the Children of Israel had taken possession of their inheritance in the Land of Canaan, the Tribe of Ephraim came to Joshua and complained about their inheritance. They said, *'We are a great people and our inheritance is too small for us. Give us a larger one.'* Then that man of God gave this response: *'See yonder mountains of the Anakims, with their cities walled, chariots of war. If you be a great people, go up and take the mountains and possess them.'* In other words – pay the price and you shall have more.

**The longing of these disciples was not for treasures of this world -- fame or popularity — but to be near the Lord Jesus Christ in His Kingdom. So, in the hearts of all who live a life of close communion with Christ, love Him and have deep soul-longing for Him and high aspirations.**

The patriarch Job, in the world's historic morning, cries out this deep soul longing:

***Job 23:3: Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat!***

Enoch walked with God for over 300 years, and kept step with God until he saw his reward of faith and communion.

Abraham shows his unbroken communion and love to the Lord in the great sacrifice he was willing to make in order to maintain it.

It may cost you something to walk in the midst of the inner glories of Heaven, but you will feel like Abraham — it is worth the sacrifice, rather than break communion with God.



Jacob cries out, as recorded in:

***Genesis 32:26: I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.***

He got blessed.

Moses had this soul longing when he cried in **Exodus 33:18**:

***Exodus 33:18: I beseech Thee, shew me Thy Glory.***

And God covered Moses with His Hand while He made His Glory to pass by. David cries out, as recorded in **Psalms 42:**

***Psalms 42:1-2:***

***<sup>1</sup> As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.***

***<sup>2</sup> My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God: when shall I come and appear before God?***



Do you love His Presence like that? There is but one infallible rule to follow: you will know where you are in Him if you want, above all else, to be near Him. It is recorded in the Gospel of **John 21:20a** where Peter refers to John the disciple,

***John 21:20a: seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved.***

John loved Jesus and leaned on His bosom.

**What is the price of a close place in the Kingdom of God?**

It must be more than desire. The desire must be so intense that it will suffer and sacrifice for its sake, and count all things but dross for Christ. Jesus said in **Matthew 16:24:**

***Matthew 16:24: If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.***

He does NOT say, 'Let him be a pillar in the church and then come after Me; or - 'he who is a great Bible teacher', or – 'he is a generous giver come after Me.' 'Not he who is a capable speaker or an energetic worker comes after Me'.

If we are to sit on His right and left in the Kingdom, we will have to drink of His cup and be baptized with His baptism. We must have the Cross experience to have the crowned glory.

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You may have any one of these things, and you may have all the best privileges in store, but this position means you have taken the cup of His sorrow and the baptism of His Cross as the price to be paid for this close place.

This is not something that can be discovered by the mere acquaintance, but by a life of close communion and fellowship with Him down here on earth. If we walk with Him right here, we shall so do with Him up there. This desire is the crowning blessing of a Christian's desire, and the right fruition of our hope and loyalty as we follow Him.

At the entrance of this glorious place with Christ are the words:

**Self-denial**

**Self-surrender**

**Forsaking all to follow Him.**

You cannot get close to Christ until you love and prefer Him above father, mother, houses, lands, brothers, sisters, children, and your own self.

The marks of close communion are seen in PRAYER. You can never know Him unless you talk to Him.

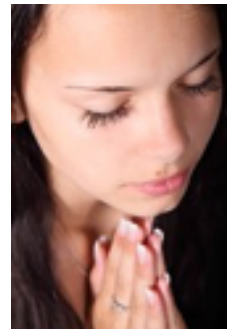
**Humility:**

***Matthew 20:27: And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:***

***James 4:6b: Wherefore He saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.***

**Love** – for those whom Christ died.

To enter into the glory of which Christ spoke, we must be '*good and faithful servants*'.



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