

**AMBITION MATTERS | One of the core values of our church: Redeemed Ambition**

Embarrassing moments...A section you'd like to re-write | [Sound](#) | [Kiss](#) | [Scream out of head](#)  
[Friends remind you... 'I wish you wouldn't tell that story' - wedding toast](#)

- Embarrassing yourself and you don't know it | [ME](#) | [No Camera's - Online](#) | [Change History](#)

The Bible faithfully records the disciples embarrassing mistakes...posted them WORD | **Today**

Disciples have ambition, for the wrong things...bloopers reel, Jesus corrects...**READ | Pray**

As we get going today...give a plug to being ambitious | Christian Ambition bad rap...implies pride  
**Great trick evil has pulled: Get Christians held up in safety of stagnation instead of fervently in fight**

[Big Idea: We must put away selfish ambition and take up servant ambition](#)

For a disciple of Christ...ambitiously pursuing your own glory is sinful

For a disciple of Christ...ambitiously pursuing God's glory is expected

**Let's look, in the text, at two detriments to selfish ambition and two benefits to servant ambition**

**1. Selfish ambition causes us to be: Brazen before the Lord (35-40)**

**Context:** On the heels of Jesus telling the disciples, again, that He will go to Jerusalem...die!

<sup>35</sup> And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him,

"Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." - Bold Play

Worse...Matthew 20 = mom made the request! (Difference) | [Asking for a favor](#)

And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory."

The right hand was the highest position next to the king in the royal court and left was second...

- Right before this happened Matthew records that Jesus has already promised them a seat throne!

[Matt. 19:28](#) 'Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you will have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'

**What are they fighting over?** Seating arrangement! [Children fighting...line leader...drinking fountain](#)

- It is a shockingly brazen request – Jesus = Going to die | Give you a throne in Heaven

- I want more than what the Lord wants me to have is the root of pride | **I want glory**

[A heart of selfish ambition says, 'I want God to answer to me.'](#) | [Jesus responds = kindness and truth](#)

<sup>38</sup> Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?"

- *Drink the Cup* – Metaphor for God's judgment against sin (Isaiah 51)
- *Baptized* – Being under water was an OT picture of being overwhelmed by calamity (Ps. 69:2)

This is what Jesus did on the cross...drank the cup of our sin and was immersed in our calamity

[A heart of selfish ambition causes overconfidence before the Lord](#) | [They respond to Jesus](#)

<sup>39</sup> And they said to him, "We are able." | I don't need you...yes you do!

**What happened at the arrest of Jesus?** ['And they all left Him and fled'](#) (Mark 14:50)

[Airplane and I didn't like my seat...so I went to the Captain and demanded he give me his](#)

- You don't know what you're doing – Overconfidently took the controls...what happens?  
[Let the captain be the captain...our job isn't to demand the course but to submit to the path](#)  
[Do you want to trust the captain and land safely? Do you want to grab the control and crash?](#)  
And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, <sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

They are asking for acclaim. Jesus was telling them that their time to serve and suffer was coming  
**They are quick to claim the benefits of God's Kingdom...slow to hear the cost of participating in it**

- Their placement in the economy of Heaven was not Jesus' to determine...but the Fathers

[We must put away selfish ambition because it causes us to be brazen before the Lord](#)

**2. Selfish ambition causes us to be: Bitter towards fellow believers (41)**

<sup>41</sup> And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John.

Funny...The 10 were not indignant because of the pride displayed...Jealous...[we never do that!](#)

What if Jesus said, 'Yes...thank you for asking! I'll get right on it...you two get the good seats!'

[A heart of selfish ambition causes Christian Competitiveness](#) | This is a plague in churches

[How many students do you have? | Where'd you go to school?](#)

**Do biblical things expect biblical outcomes**

[Concern yourself with righteousness and let God deliver the opportunities](#)

[When the opportunity comes...seize it! | Not for your glory...but for God's = Redeemed Ambition](#)

[Gears switch in the text...and Jesus is going to call everyone together and teach...](#)

**1. Servant ambition gives us: Divine purpose (42-43a)**

<sup>42</sup> And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> But it shall not be so among you. Apostles were being influenced by the ungodly – Lording over their subjects

- Dominate | Oppressive | Exploiting people | Driven by corruption | Power at expense others  
**At no place do the ethics of the kingdom of God clash more vigorously with the ethics of the world than in the matters of power and service**

- The world is convincing us that the pursuit of power and prestige is the path to fulfillment
- The gospel is convincing us that the pursuit of service and sacrifice is the path to fulfillment

[What path are you on? Question: Whose approval are you seeking?](#)

[Company - I was so busy trying to impress my Dad that I forgot my purpose was to serve my Father](#)

- [If you want the approval of man...Lord over man and have man serve you](#)
- [If you want the approval of God...be Lorded over by God and serve God](#)

[Servant ambition gives us divine purpose...](#)

**2. Servant ambition gives us: Divine blessing (43b-44)**

**But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.**

- Oxymorons...great servant and first slave | Absurdly paradoxical
  - The road to greatness in the kingdom lies in selfless service

[Christian Competitiveness...There is too much Christian consumerism in the Church – Big 'C' Church](#)

- [What's in it for me? The divine blessing of serving each other](#)

I have had the unfortunate opportunity to see so many people miss out on blessing

Because they justify their reasons to avoid serving – **It's the ambition God is looking for!**

**God has gifted you for the:**

- Building of His Church | Advancement of His Kingdom | Service of His people.  
To stagnate that gifting is to miss the blessing!

[Let's start thinking 'where can I serve' by first answering 'who can I serve'](#)

[We must put away selfish ambition and take up servant ambition](#)

**3. Why we serve: King Jesus is our mode! (45)**

<sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The perfect example of such a humble service is the Lord Jesus Christ

- Unlike world leaders he did not come to be served, but to serve
- Not merely to be Master but to be a slave to the Father's will that paid a ransom
- Not only to be Lord but to serve sinners by sacrificing Himself for many who believe

[We do not adopt a position of serving because earns our salvation...because it is the posture of Jesus](#)

Bible records the mistakes...we make them...the disciples made them...we want to change history

- The disciples went on to change history...with redeemed ambition
  - James – First one martyred by Herod Agrippa I ([Acts 12:2](#))
  - John – Last end of the first century tortured and exiled to a slave labor camp

Ambition Matters: Put away selfish ambition...put on servant ambition – Divine purpose – blessing

[Gory of the gospel, lived with redeemed ambition](#)

[You cannot change your history...but you can change history](#)

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