

I. The Testimony of John

A. An _____ to the Truth (1 John 5:13)

John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

John 20:31 "but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name"

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

B. A _____ From the Lord (John 1:35-40; Mark 1:19-20)

C. A "Son of Thunder" (Mark 3:17)

D. A Close _____ With Jesus (John 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20)

E. A Witness of Miracles

1. Jairus' Daughter Raised from the Dead

Luke 8:51-55 "And when he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child... But taking her by the hand he called, saying, 'Child, arise.' And her spirit returned, and she got up at once."

2. At the Mount of Transfiguration

Matthew 17:1-2 "And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light."

3. At the Garden of Gethsemane

Mark 14:33 "And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled"

4. At _____ at the Last Supper (John 13:23)

5. At the _____

John 19:26-27 "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold, your son!' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home."

6. One of the First to the Tomb

John 20:3-4 "So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first."

II. The Lessons We Can Learn From John

A. The _____ (Luke 9:54-55)

B. The _____ (Mark 9:38-41)

C. The _____ (Mark 9:33-37; 10:35-45; Matthew 20:20-21)

III. The _____ of John

A. From Anger to _____

John 13:35 "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

1 John 3:11 "For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."

B. From Attitude to _____

1 John 5:1 "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him."

C. From Ambition to _____

John 13:23 "One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side,"

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."



January 28, 2024

1. Familiarize Yourself With the Passage and the Gospels

- a. Read Matthew 20:20-28
- b. Read and study the context around the narrative
- c. Look for words that connect one story to another
- d. Take note of repeated words or phrases within stories
- e. Take notice of the places where there is direct discourse (Sometimes the characters words in the story give clues to help us see the main point)

2. Introduction to the Passage (Feel free to use this as a reference guide as you discuss the passage)

- a. Literary Context: : As we walk the road of discipleship, spiritual deafness is a legitimate concern for every believer. Prior to Matthew 20:20-28, Jesus warned them about His future. His future held condemnation, flogging, crucifixion, and mockery. Immediately after that intimate moment in Matthew 20:17-19, John and James seek out glory, power, prestige, and honor for themselves (Matthew 20:21). They were unaware of what was to follow in chapter 21 and beyond, where Jesus enters Jerusalem as some kind of hero only to be crucified at the end of the week. They were deaf to the teaching back in Matthew 18:3-4 where Jesus ascribes greatness to being a child. In ancient times, children were not seen as powerful, nor would you ever see a child have a place of honor. Children were seen as weak and helpless creatures in constant need of adults. Spiritual deafness happens when we fail to accurately apply God's truths to our present situation as John and James did.
- b. Historical/Cultural Context: The request from James and John's mother seems to modern readers quite bold and maybe out of place. How can she request such positions over the other 10 disciples? We know from Matthew 27:55, Mark 15:40, and John 19:25, that the mother was the sister to Jesus' mother, which means she was Jesus' aunt who was named Salome. Clearly, there is an expectation of familial privileges. In fact, there are overlapping similarities of this scene with Bathsheba coming to David on behalf of Solomon (1 Kings 1:15-21).¹ The word for "kneeling" is the same word often translated as "worship" (Matthew 14:33). This act of kneeling is typically how one would approach a king.² She thinks her kinship to Jesus and her attitude of reverence will be what it takes to move Jesus' heart in favor of the request.

3. Questions About the Passage

- a. Why do you think James and John's mother asked Jesus for this special privilege? What was the motive?
- b. What is significant about this request, happening after Jesus had told them three times that he would suffer intensely and die?
- c. Why is greatness linked to being a servant or child (Matthew 20:26)? What is the connection between the two?

4. From the Passage to Life

- a. The practical nature of the Christian life seems to be bound up in this idea of serving (Matthew 20:26-28). What is your attitude towards serving others?
- b. The issue of pride and privilege in heaven came up several times in Jesus' ministry among the disciples (Mark 10:41-45; Luke 22:24-30). Do you often look for good things in the Christian life before accepting bad things (i.e. suffering)? How do you feel about the cost to suffer in this life when choosing to follow Jesus?
- c. What do you think of Matthew 20: 26-27's explanation about becoming a slave toward people? To see oneself as a slave means that you view others as more important than yourself. Is this a struggle?
- d. How has Jesus been serving you in your life and how can you serve another person (Matthew 20:28)?

¹John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 819. Some scholars think that older women in ancient Israelite society had a special privilege to ask difficult and awkward requests that men did not have, as this situation may be an example of.

²R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 757.