

Series: **Gospel of Mark**

Today's Title: "***The Mission and Values of Jesus***" part 2

December 27, 2020 – *Mark 10:32-45* (Also: Matthew 20:17-28; Luke 18:31-34)

Objective: To help people see God's mission and values have not changed – and Christmas is no different.

Opening prayer

In our passage today – once again Jesus unfolds and explains to His disciples His primary mission and His kingdom values...

and I also hope to show you how this reveals the consistency of God.

The consistency of God's mission and values is seen throughout all of the Scriptures.

We even see the mission and values of God in the birth narratives of Jesus.

Turn to Mark 10:32-45

Today, we will look at our text...

- Then, we will consider the work of God through history...
- Then an overview of the Christmas account – which all reveal what Jesus says in this passage – about His mission and the primary values in His kingdom – *consistency of God*.

This is the third time Jesus has told His disciples about His death and resurrection at the hands of the religious establishment (*Mark 8:31; 9:31*).

Today's passage is easily organized into 2 categories:

- 1) Jesus' mission was the cross.** *vs. 32-34*

And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, He began to tell them what was to happen to Him,

They are east of the Jordan river, and they are starting the uphill journey to Jerusalem. Jesus is leading them – He knows what awaits Him in Jerusalem, but His death was His mission.

“amazed” and “afraid” – the opposite emotions of the 12 – and the larger group of disciples. It’s difficult to know what these emotions are connected to. Is it what Jesus has said before about the difficulty of a rich person to enter the kingdom of God (vs. 26) – or is it the determination of Jesus to go to Jerusalem where He has told them He will suffer and die?

33 “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him over to the Gentiles.

34 And they will mock Him and spit on Him, and flog Him and kill Him. And after three days He will rise.”

For the 3rd time Jesus gives His disciples insight as to what will happen to Him.

He is the Messiah – they knew and believed that, but they didn’t understand the mission of Jesus.

They were stuck in their false view of the Messiah – that He would be a political and military force – restoring Israel to power and prominence.

But in His 1st advent Jesus had a different mission.
His mission was “to give His life as a ransom for many.” (vs. 45)
Luke tells us the disciples didn’t understand what Jesus was telling them.

“But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.” Luke 18:34

Failure to understand and grasp the mission of Jesus – the mission of the Church – is still a problem for many who follow Christ.

We allow so many other things to get in the way of the mission. Programs, Preferences, Loyalties, Liturgy, Comfort, Safety.

Are we as determined as Jesus to accomplish the mission of His Church – the mission He’s given us?

Are we distracted from the mission?

Are we passionate for the mission?

2) His kingdom value of servicing others. vs. 35-45

In this next section we see a stark contrast between the world’s values and the values in God’s kingdom.

Once again, this is not the 1st time Jesus has taught this to His disciples, but they are struggling to shift from their personal view of Messiah to the truth that Jesus is telling them.

The world’s values:

Self-promotion vs. 35-40

One of the world's primary values is looking out for #1 – taking care of yourself – then thinking about others.

This is what we see James and John doing – looking out for their place in Jesus' kingdom. Jesus just told them in graphic detail what was going to happen when they arrived in Jerusalem – but as Luke said – it didn't sink in.

Instead, they're jockeying for the best position in Jesus' kingdom – in the 'cabinet'.

35 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."

36 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

37 And they said to Him, "Grant us to sit, one at Your right hand and one at Your left, in Your glory."

38 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?"

39 And they said to Him, "We are able." 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, 40 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."

Their request isn't necessarily evil – it's the normal way the world operates.

'Try and get the best seat at the table.'

'Make sure you're in the front of the line.'

Jesus makes it clear – they don't know what they're asking for.

They don't understand the magnitude of suffering that Jesus is about to endure.

They answer Jesus with the confidence and brashness of a teenage boy – "We are able." (vs. 39)

The "cup" and "baptism" Jesus refers to are metaphors for suffering.

Matthew tells us that their mother is the one who brought up the topic – asking this honor for her boys.

To understand this fully, you need to realize the family connection at play here.

The "Sons of Zebedee" (vs. 35) – we know from the other Gospels their mother is Mary's sister, Jesus' aunt – which makes James and John His cousins. James and John were 2/3 of the inner circle (Peter being the other).

Inner circle - and cousins – blood relatives.

There's a lot at play here in their request – family preference (nepotism), taking advantage of their elevated status and asking for more.

This is the world's way – another way of the world is:

Jealousy vs. 41-42

Ugly competitiveness

The other 10 disciples were mad.

And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John.

They weren't mad at their desire to be at the right and left of Jesus.

They were mad that they didn't ask Him first!

James and John beat them to it!

From our American mindset we might like this – we might see this and say, *'I like their drive – they're driven, ambitious, motivated to make something of themselves!'*

But that's not a Kingdom value – because it's self-promotion instead of Gospel promotion.

It's about personal success, not the success of the mission.

It puts the person first, not the Gospel.

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."

The world's way is power – authority – position – superiority – control.

But Jesus' ways – the values of the Kingdom are different.

The kingdom values of Jesus: Serving and Humility vs. 43-45

43 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, (table waiter)

44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.

45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

In the Kingdom of God, the values of the world are turned upside down.

- You want to be first? Get at the end of the line.
- You want to be great? Serve others – be their slave.
- You want to find your life? Lose it for the sake of the Gospel.

As followers of Christ – we are not to live according to the way of the world – the values of the world.

vs. 43 - “But it shall not be so among you...”

John 18:36 – *Jesus, talking to Pilate*

“My kingdom is not of this world.”

Our greatest reward is not in this life – it’s in the next.

Our mission is the Gospel – not self-promotion.

Our example is Jesus.

Philippians 2:7-9

(Jesus) “made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name...”

So, we see in our passage today: ***the mission of Jesus was the cross*** – the Gospel – His redemption of humanity.

The values of Jesus' kingdom are serving and humility.

I also want you to see that Jesus wasn't a new movement of God – He was a continuation of God's work throughout history.

The mission of God and values of His kingdom have always been there.

This pattern and practice of humility – of turning the world's values and systems of rank and power upside-down begins in **Genesis 3**. It's in this chapter that we find the first promise of the coming Messiah. As God is judging the Devil for bringing sin into humanity, God tells the Devil of his eventual ruin – a fatal blow that he will suffer.

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel.”

The battle between good and evil – God and the demonic forces is described – but from the beginning God is going to do something different.

Even before human cultures and societies set-up protocols and formalities, God says *it's the seed of the woman* (“her seed”) that would deliver a fatal blow to the devil's head.

The surprising reality is that biologically speaking - women don't have “seed”.

Only men have “seed”. (preview of the virgin birth)

Paul tells us in **Ephesians 1:4**

“He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.”

God decided to turn the world’s ways upside down – even before the world had any ways!!!!

In His grace God chooses Abraham – to bless him – to make him the father of a great nation – not because Abraham deserved it, but simply because He wanted to. The mission of God is seen in His promise to Abraham. “you will be a blessing...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12:2-3)

A few chapters later we see God choosing the younger son, Jacob, over the firstborn son, Esau.

One of Jacob’s sons, Joseph, # 11 out of 12 – at the bottom of the pecking order - is elevated to a position of power over all the others. Even his father, Jacob, years later bows down to him.

Jacob gives the firstborn blessing – to Joseph’s 2nd born son.

400 years later, God chooses to use an fugitive Hebrew named Moses – to lead and represent the Hebrew people before Pharaoh – to liberate the Hebrew people from their bondage in Egypt.

In the first year of their exodus from Egypt, God chooses the Hebrew people to be a nation – specially chosen by God to be His people – to represent Him and His ways to the nations of the world. He chooses former slaves and farmers to be the model nation for all nations.

Years later, as this nation, Israel, is struggling with their identity and purpose – wanting to be like the other nations around them and choosing to have a king, God chooses their 2nd king from the small town of Bethlehem.

The grandson of Boaz and Ruth, Jesse, who had 8 sons – the youngest of which was David. Ruth was a foreign woman whose blood became part of the royal line of King David – and eventually of Jesus. Once again, God is not limited to the ways of the world – as those in the kingly lineage of David include Gentile blood.

Now, let's look at that 1st Christmas – and see how it aligns with the mission and values of God throughout history.

Christmas is often presented by pastors as a new dawning of God – a new chapter in the way that God works and interacts with humanity.

I have referred to Christmas as “*the hinge of history*”, a clear point in history which divides everything to 1 of 2

categories: BC – Before Christ and AD – (Anno Domini) In the year of our Lord.

A new chapter...but the same plot and story:

While the incarnation was indeed a new chapter in God's plan of redemption – the long-awaited Messiah was born – God took on human flesh in order to become the once-for-all sacrifice for human sin (Hebrews 10:10-14).

When the 2nd member of the Triune God took on flesh, gave Himself as a sacrifice for sin, was buried, rose, and ascended – this led to the birth of the Church.

Both human and Divine history would put the Church age in a separate category – a different category than all the years of previous human history.

The Spirit of God now indwelling those who believe in Jesus – something the Old Testament prophets talked and prophesied about – but never experienced before the Church Age.

All of this is true...However...

I want you to see Christmas as yet another great work of God – by which He followed the same path – the same pattern as He did so many times before. ***Consistent.***

The pattern and practice of redeeming humanity and elevating humility and serving.

The pattern and practice of elevating the least to the greatest.

The pattern and practice of humbling the proud and powerful.

I want you to see that the 1st Christmas was not a radical departure by God – but the same ***pattern and practice*** He had been doing throughout all of history.

God’s promise to David – the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:1-17) leads us to Joseph and Mary, where once again, God uses the normal – the ordinary – to do something extraordinary.

Joseph was a descendent of King David.

He was a common man, living in a common place – a small, unspectacular town called Nazareth – in Galilee - the norther region of Israel.

Joseph was a man with royal blood, but there was nothing royal or impressive about his appearance or his life.

He was a humble man – a simple man.

His betrothed, Mary, was a humble, simple woman.

Both were faithful to God – but they weren’t from the elite class – the wealthy or educated class.

Their trip to Bethlehem ended with a night in a stable – a cave - because there was “no place for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7b).

Mary’s Magnificat – Luke 1:51-53

“...He (God) has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.”

Paul spoke of God’s way of doing things in **1 Corinthians 1:27-29**

“But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.”

We see the same ***pattern and practice*** of God throughout history in the birth of Jesus – and we also see the mission of God - the redemption of the nations – in full force.

Matthew 1:21 – *the angel speaking to Joseph in a dream...*

“...for He (Jesus) will save His people from their sins.”

Luke 2:10-11 – *the angel speaking to the shepherds*

And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:30-31 – *Simeon’s prayer & prophecy about Jesus at Jesus’ circumcision*

“...for my eyes have seen Your salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel.”

Apply it...

Examine your life to see if it aligns with the mission and values of Jesus.

How do you line-up against the mission and values of Jesus?

Do you think – and operate – according to the world's system and values?

Are *you* the focus of your life mission – or is Christ / the Gospel / others?

Trust God with your life – He never changes!

He is perfect – no need to change!

He is faithful – His promises are certain.

He loves you and wants to use you to redeem others.

Close in prayer