

Introduction: Jesus says, *“What do you want me to do for you?”* (10:36). James and John have just asked Jesus to give them whatever they want (10:35), and they want something very specific from Jesus: To sit *“in His glory: one at [His] right hand and one at [His] left”* (10:37).

They want glory, subordinate only to Christ Himself. It’s not a surprising request, considering that a chapter earlier, the disciples had been arguing about who was greatest (9:34). Judging by the reaction of the ten, it wasn’t a resolved contest either (10:41). Jesus’ answer now: *“Whoever would be great among you must be your servant”* (10:43), is like His answer then: *“If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all”* (9:35).

But Jesus doesn’t say this so that they would jockey to be last person in the lunch-line, nor that they would reform their lives to become servant-leaders to “spread the Gospel.” Your first job as a Christian is not to be that servant, but to be served by Him. Christ serves you the Gospel, because He Himself is the Gospel, and He Himself is the servant of all: *“For the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many”* (10:45). True glory is not set aside for who’s first across the finish line, nor for who’s willing to be last. True glory is for God alone, and it is given for this suffering servant who is Himself the ransom payment.

So when Jesus asks them whether they are able *“to drink the cup”* that He drinks (10:38), Jesus is talking about the cup of wrath (Is. 51:17), just like when He prays *“Father, remove this cup from me”* (14:36). And when Jesus asks them about *“the baptism”* with which He was baptized (10:38), he’s talking about His death (10:39, Lk 12:50). For when Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, it was the sacramental participation in His own death (*Baptism, Scaer, 39*).

James and John eagerly agree to these terms in hopes of glory, but the Son of Man’s glory is His suffering and death. He says *“You do not know what you are asking: 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”* (10:38&40). The glory to sit at Jesus’ right hand means to hang on the cross next to the stricken and smitten body of Christ. This was not set aside for the sons of Zebedee, but for the thief who suffered with Jesus at Golgatha.

“What do you want Jesus to do for you?” (10:36). When you pray, do you think God is some sort of vending machine or ATM, to which you can just say “We want you to do. . .whatever we ask of you” (10:35). God is not a servant you can order around, praying “Give us this day our daily bread” like a command, thinking that means He will grant whatever you want: a miraculous healing, a promotion at work, or a change in our government. Why? Because you also pray “Thy Will Be Done” and “For Thine is the glory.”

And if you don't pray the Lord's Prayer regularly, now is a great time to start. For *“with these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence, we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.”* God is not a servant you order around, but serves you by giving Himself up in His baptism into death (Rom 6:4).

What do you want God to do for you that He has not already done? Jesus obeyed His Father's will in the garden, and Our Father in heaven has already answered your prayer *“For thine is the glory”* by exalting Jesus to be both high priest and sacrifice (Heb 5:5). And this high priest *“offered up prayers and supplication, with loud cries and tears, to Him who was able to save Him from death”* (Heb 5:7a). For after Jesus prays *“Remove this cup from me,”* he prays to His Father in heaven *“Yet not what I [want], but what you [want]”* (14:36). And His prayer was heard when the Father raised Him from the dead (Heb 5:7b).

We ask the wrong question when praying for what is against the Father's will. And we ask wrong question when looking for the glorified position at Christ's side. It is better to receive instead the glory pouring from Christ's side, into His cup of joy. Jesus descended into hell, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and sits at His Father's right-hand side. The Father's will comes through the flesh and blood of Jesus, which suffered the cup of wrath, and now come to you on the Table. And this participation into the glory of His death still happens today, even in an infant's baptism. Jesus does indeed grant for James and John, for the ten, and for you *“to drink the cup”* and *“to be baptized”* (10:39), and so Baptism and the Lord's Supper are a participation in Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection to life.

What has Jesus done for you? By His suffering the snares of death, He has vindicated you and has delivered your soul from death (Ps 43:1; 116:3&8). **What could be greater than that? Amen.**