



WEEK 6

STUDY GUIDE

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Monday May 30, 2022

Read: Mark 10:32–45

Scripture Verse: *“So again taking the Twelve along with him, he began telling them what was about to happen to him.”*

Mark 10:32b

Today's Thought:

Have you ever tried to predict the future? The birth of a child? The weather? The Final Four? We have all done it and most likely got it wrong. Maybe on occasion, we guess correctly but making predictions that come true is tough to do. We all pick on the weatherman the most, so let's look at how well they predict the weather. Someone is always saying, "it must be nice to be wrong all the time and still get paid." I think we would all agree that predicting the weather can be like herding cats, very unpredictable. Did you know that meteorologists are a lot more accurate than given credit? There are many variables in predicting weather that can change at a second's notice that can significantly affect the forecast. Airspeed, wind direction, amount of moisture in the air, air temperature, and air pressure can change or shift, causing the weather to change. So, how accurate are meteorologists at predicting the weather?

Let's do a quick comparison using weather and sports to get a better perspective. In 2020, the best hitter in MLB batted .364 or hit safely 36 percent of the time he batted. During the first two months of the NFL season that year, Russell Wilson of the Seahawks had the best completion percentage at 75.2 percent, meaning he was completing 3 out of 4 passes. Meanwhile, the best 3-point shooter in the NBA made 47 percent of his shots, still missing more than half the time. Let's look at one more comparison before getting back to the weatherman. Have you ever filled out an NCAA Basketball tournament bracket trying to predict the winner of every game for a 64-team field? As you fill it out, you know each team's ranking and how they have played in the past, telling you who should win. But, one mistake, one injury, one bad call, etc., can cause a team that should win to lose. It has a ripple effect down the line when it happens, and your predictions are all off. We have all had that bracket destroyed by a couple of early upsets by lower-seeded teams.

Alright, so how do our sport's predictions add up with that of the weatherman? In their defense, they must predict the future for a small area on a giant rock that extends 25,000 miles across while whirling around

the sun and spinning on its axis at 1,000 mph. When it comes to weather, generally speaking, weather people tend to predict their 24-hour forecasts at about a 95 percent clip, while their 3-day predictions are correct at 86 percent. Their 5-day forecasts come in at approximately a 75 percent accuracy. We'll have to swallow those words for the weatherman with his much higher accuracy rate than our sports superstars!

Mark tells us on this day, Jesus and his disciples are on their way to Jerusalem in preparation for the Passover celebration. The disciples are amazed at the focus and determination expressed by Jesus' eagerness to get to the holy city. What was so different about this visit? They had been there before, but now they know that Jesus has many enemies there who want to kill Him. Knowing this has the disciples concerned not just about Jesus but also about them.

Nevertheless, we see the intense focus Jesus has on His mission. As a part of that focus, He is about to make several predictions concerning that mission to the disciples. Mark tells us Jesus stopped and took the disciples, His students, off to the side for a moment to make these predictions about what was going to happen to Him. Jesus knew that His disciples and other followers were timid and a bit faint-hearted about the visit to Jerusalem and wanted to calm their fears with His predictions. Earlier I mentioned human predictions and how unreliable they can be, but here is what we know when it comes to what Jesus predicts, He is always 100 percent accurate! He never misses; he is never off or wrong! Jesus used the accuracy of His predictions to help silence the fears of the disciples and all who had been following Him.

We have the advantage of looking back in time at all the predictions of the prophets that came true and how the Words of Jesus were accurate and true concerning His mission to come and provide for our salvation! This truth should bring us peace and comfort! Because of the accuracy of God's Word and Jesus' predictions about Himself, we can be at peace in our own lives.

- When have you ever made a prediction that was right? Wrong?
- What percentage of your predictions have been accurate?
- What is it about Jesus' predictions that should give us confidence and hope?
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- Why were the disciples so nervous or afraid of returning to Jerusalem?
- What was at least one purpose for Jesus pulling the disciples aside to tell them what was about to happen?

Further Reading: Matthew 20:17-19

Tuesday May 31, 2022

Read: Mark 10:32-45

Scripture Verse: *"We are going up to Jerusalem," he said. "The Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will sentence him to death."*
Mark 10:33a

Today's Thought:

Yesterday we talked about predictions and the difference between human predictions and those made by Jesus. Jesus has an incredible track record of being 100 percent accurate. He used the accuracy of His predictions about Himself to calm the fears of His disciples as He marched headlong into the heart of His mission in Jerusalem. As Jesus pulled the guys aside as they were walking to the city, He told them that when they got there at a specific moment, someone would hand Him over to the chief priests and the scribes. Once handed over, they would sentence Him to death.

Did you notice Jesus' opening statement in verse 33? As Jesus begins to lay out the predictions concerning His mission, He begins his words to the disciples with a very bold statement. He states to them, "We are going up to Jerusalem." Jesus wasn't about sugar coating what He was about to go through and wanted the guys to know it. He knew the worst of what was to happen, yet He boldly pressed on with His mission. There was no remedy for what was to happen; the matter was determined and could not be avoided. It was time for His suffering to begin, and He would still provide for their safety.

Jesus, through His suffering, made a way to reconcile us to the Father, and by that suffering, brought glory to himself and us. With the same boldness of Christ, we can now approach God. As part of our spiritual journey through this world, we will face suffering, trials, and tribulations, and for those who persevere, eternal glory will be their reward.

- What are your thoughts on Jesus' statement, "we are going up to Jerusalem?"
- What does the statement tell us about Jesus? About us?

- What can we expect as a part of our choice to follow Jesus?
- What is the reward for those who stay the course and persevere?

Further Reading: Matthew 20:28

Wednesday June 1, 2022

Read: Mark 10:32-45

Scripture Verse: *"Then they will hand him over to people who are not Jews. The people will make fun of him and spit on him. They will whip him and kill him. Three days later he will rise from the dead!" Mark 10:33b-34*

Today's Thought:

Before they arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus made his predictions known to his disciples. He told them that someone would turn him into the Sanhedrin, and the priests and scribes would condemn him to death. Because the Sanhedrin did not have the authority to put Jesus to death, they had to send him to the Gentiles, the Romans, to confirm and carry out the sentence. Once in the hand of the Romans, Jesus further predicted how they would treat him. He told them the Gentiles will mock, scourge, spit on, and kill me. Jesus was three for three on his predictions to his disciples. Even knowing all this was about to happen, Jesus still went to Jerusalem to meet those who carried out the Father's plan.

It does us well to remember that this is the third time Jesus has told the disciples of His coming death. The disciples are perplexed and frightened by Jesus' resolve to enter the holy city, knowing the people hate Him and want Him dead. Even though Jesus has informed the disciples of the happenings, fear has clouded their understanding that throughout this entire episode, Jesus not only knew what was happening, but He was always in complete control of His death.

It is encouraging to know that our Master and Lord, Jesus Christ was willing to go before us all to the suffering and humiliation of the cross. His courage and steadfastness of mind under duress for salvation are the wonder of all who call themselves disciples. He had just told them for the fourth time that He would be with them after being raised from the dead. Although Jesus' first three predictions caused them gloom, His fourth would bring silence to their fears and joy to their hearts. Suffering always comes before the glory, and Jesus was the perfect example for us of what it means to pick up His cross and follow Him. Sometimes we will have to walk through the storms of life before the glory comes. Aren't you glad Jesus walks through them with us?

- Why do you think the disciples were struggling to understand what Jesus was telling them?
- How was Jesus in complete control of His death?
- What do we learn about Jesus and His predictions?
- What do you think is causing the disciples to be perplexed and afraid?
- What has been a constant theme in Mark when it comes to following Jesus?
- What will it mean for us to pick up His cross and follow?

Further Reading: Luke 18:32-34

Thursday June 2, 2022

Read: Mark 10:32-45

Scripture Verse: *"On the contrary, whoever among you wants to be a leader must be your servant; and whoever wants to be first among you must become everyone's slave!" Mark 10:43b-44*

Today's Thought:

In this next section of Mark, Jesus again teaches the disciples a hard lesson. James, John, and Salome, their mother, ask Jesus for a favor. They want the seats to the right and left of His throne in heaven. Before we get too upset, think about this. Jesus had promised them they would sit on thrones in heaven, and the scriptures taught that if you come together in agreement before the Father, He will answer your request. In a sense, they made their request in the right way but with the wrong heart. Their motives were selfish, and God did not answer such prayers. Jesus has been presented with an excellent opportunity to teach not only his disciples a vital truth but also us.

James and John's request upset the others, causing an argument about who was the greatest among them. In the Roman world, people fought each other for power and position, but that is not how it will be in God's kingdom. The disciples made the mistake of following the Roman example rather than following Jesus' example. There is nothing wrong with us aspiring to achieve our best, but we must be careful how we define "our best" and why we want to achieve it. Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be first among you must become everyone's slave!" Think about God's pattern of leadership in Scripture. Before God ever places a person in a place of leadership or power, they must be a servant of His first. That was how it happened for many of our biblical ancestors, like Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Timothy, and even Jesus was first a Servant to the Father. Until we first learn to follow orders, we will not be given the right to give them. We must understand what it means to be under authority before exercising it. Jesus is the perfect example of following this pattern, and He followed it to the cross for our redemption. If it is the pattern Christ followed, it must be the pattern we follow.

- Did your mom or dad ever ask a teacher or coach to do you a favor? Were you embarrassed?
- What was wrong with what they asked Jesus for? Do you think Sa-

Some put them up to this or was it the other way around?

- What example were the disciples following in making their request? Why?
- What lesson does Jesus teach them and us as a result?
- What is the pattern we should follow in our lives?

Further Reading: Matthew 20:26-27

Friday June 3, 2022

Read: Mark 10:32–45

Scripture Verse: *“Even the Son of Man did not come to be served. Instead, he came to serve others. He came to give his life as the price for setting many people free.” Mark 10:45*

Today’s Thought:

“On February 3, 1943, the troopship Dorchester went down in the icy Atlantic off the tip of Greenland with heavy loss of life. It was not the worst disaster of a long war, but we have good reason to remember it.

There were four men aboard, chaplains dedicated to the services of God and their fellow men. George L. Fox and Clark V. Poling were Protestant ministers, Alexander D. Goode was a Jewish rabbi, and John P. Washington was a Catholic priest.

When the torpedoes struck around one o’clock in the morning, many inexperienced GIs were caught sleeping without their lifejackets, although that was contrary to orders. In the fright and confusion, some were still without them even after all the surplus stocks had been distributed.

Each of the four chaplains wore a lifejacket when he began working among the men to comfort the wounded, calm the shocked, help distribute lifejackets, and to guide men toward the lifeboats. The chaplains declined places in the boats. When last seen in the light of flares just before the ship went down, not one of the chaplains still wore a life-jacket. Theirs had been forced on unwilling soldiers taught to obey the orders of their superiors. These four dedicated men, symbolic of religious freedom in America, stood together arm-in-arm praying for those young men of America for whom now only prayers were left.” —Selected

Our function as followers of Christ is to serve. Leading up to teaching the disciples this concept, Jesus has repeatedly told them of his impending death. After spending nearly three years with Jesus, they expected that He would institute His Kingdom on earth, and so were jockeying for the positions they would hold. We see this evidenced by the request of James and John. Although they believed what Jesus told them, they found it hard to understand His mission and struggled with why He decided to return to Jerusalem.

Jesus has been baptized by water and the Spirit and operates under the

Spirit's influence. It was by this power He had taught them these past three years. In verse 39, using the metaphor of the Lord's Supper and the sacrament of baptism, Jesus informs them of their future ministry. His statement let them know the same Spirit would soon baptize them. Yet, they remained blinded by the material aspects of this world, their eyes overshadowed and blinded to the spiritual ideals Jesus was teaching. Jesus used the "cup" to represent their "service," which would be the basis of their reward, but that service would not begin until after the resurrection and their baptism in the Spirit.

I started today's thought with this statement, "our only function as followers of Christ is to serve." Our eternal reward as believers is not found or measured by our worldly possessions but in status and glory. Status in God's eternal Kingdom is a big part of our reward but related to His glory! We must be baptized in the Holy Spirit and drink the cup of serving others to receive our prize of an elevated position in God's Kingdom, the same as Christ. Jesus assures us that those who serve on earth will be "great" in the eternal Kingdom, but the slave on earth will be even "greater," making the formula for Kingdom success self-denying service on earth.

- What is our primary function as followers of Christ?
- What becomes the power that function?
- What were the metaphors Jesus used to teach the disciples this principle?
- What is our reward for serving on earth?
- What becomes the formula for servant success?
- How are you doing in fulfilling your role as a follower?

Further Reading: John 13:4-5

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