

Psalm 100

Opening Prayer

Welcome:

Welcome to the Germantown Church of God. I am Pastor Mark Hosler. I want to thank you for joining me today for this time of Worship, Prayer and the Study of Scripture.

Announcements

- Worship opportunities
- Thursday evening Telephone Prayer gathering

Mission Moment:

Our Church has been providing ministry to the people of this mountain top community for nearly 150 years. In addition to our ministry here in this community, we have supported missionaries who are taking the gospel to other nations and cultures. Each month we highlight the ministry of one of the missions or missionaries that we support. This month we are highlighting the ministry of Doug and Anna-Karin Molgaard. The Molgaards are serving in Sweden with an organization called *Communitas International*. In their ministry they are building relationships with the people in their community, in order to share the gospel of Christ with them. Please pray for their ministry.



Prayer Time

Scripture

Mark 10:32-45

Message **Becoming Like Christ – Greatness Through Service**

For the past few weeks, our sermon studies have been on the topic of **Becoming the Image of Christ**. The verse on which we have based this series is found in Romans 8:29 - **29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. (NIV)**. The experience of becoming a Christian does not END when we “get saved”, when pray that prayer of repentance and accept Jesus into our lives as our Savior. At that moment, we believe that God forgives our sin and adopts us as His beloved Sons and Daughters. But the work of salvation continues throughout our life in this world, as God, through the work of His Holy Spirit works in our lives to change us or transform us so that our character conforms with the character of Christ. God wants those of us who are saved, who identify ourselves as Christians to look more and more like Jesus.

So, we have been talking about this work of God, this process of being changed into the image of Jesus. Becoming more and more like Christ is not an impossible journey. As we follow Jesus, as we learn about Him by reading the Gospels, by studying, by fellowshiping with other believers, we will learn more and more what Jesus was like – How he behaved, how He thought, how He interacted with God, how He interacted with others. And as we become more and more aware of what Jesus was like, we will see areas of our lives where we are not like Jesus. We have inherited what we refer to as a sinful nature. Because of the presence of sin in our lives, our lives have been corrupted. We are not perfect. And there are places in our lives where we discover we are not like Jesus who was perfect, who was the sinless Son of God. It is at those places where we are “un-like” Christ, that God works to change us.

For this study, we have been looking at the first followers of Jesus, his first disciples – Andrew, Peter, James, John, Philip, Nathaniel, and others. As we look at their stories, we see times when who they were and what they were like clashed with who Jesus was and what He was like. As we have looked at those “Clash

Moments” we have seen how they changed and began to be more like Jesus. And as we have looked at those change moments in their lives, I hope that we have seen how we can be changed so that we will look more and more like Jesus.

Today I want to look at a story about James and John and a request that they made of Jesus. This story presents us with a very clear “Clash Moment” when what the disciples were like and what Jesus was like.

The Setup: I want to begin this study by setting up the context in which James and John made this request. Understanding what comes before their request helps us to see more clearly the significance of their request. In the verses immediately preceding James and John coming to Jesus with their request, we hear Jesus talking with his disciples about what was ahead for him. We read that this discussion between Jesus and his disciples takes place while they are walking toward Jerusalem. The text tells us that “**Jesus was leading the way and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid.**” Jesus and his followers have been to Jerusalem before and he was not received very warmly by the religious leaders. He was questioned by the leaders and they began to plot how to get rid of him. So as Jesus’ followers observed, they were surprised that Jesus was so anxious to get back there. They were afraid of what might happen there and perhaps fearful for their own safety as well as Christ’s. While they are on this journey to Jerusalem, Jesus informs them about what will happen when they get there. He refers to Himself as the Son of Man, and says that he would be delivered to the religious leaders, he would be condemned to death, handed over to the Romans and crucified. But three days later he would rise again. Now even though he talks about being raised after he would be killed, it was not a pretty scenario that he depicted for his followers. This was the 3rd time that Jesus gave this warning to his followers. So, as Jesus talks about his impending suffering and death, we would expect that his followers would be a little sympathetic, trying to support him and comfort him. But instead we see these two – James and John – unashamedly asking for a personal favor. To be recognized as Jesus favorite and most important followers.

Their Request: Their request is that Jesus would let one of them sit on his right and the other on his left when He became the King, that they expected Him to be. **What’s in this for me???** Now, this wasn’t the only time we find the disciples jockeying for position among his followers. There were several incidents when they were arguing about which one was the best. We understand that the disciples had a different idea about what kind of Messiah Jesus was going to be. They expected a political and military victory over their enemies, over the hypocritical religious establishment. They expected an earthly kingdom. But Jesus’ kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, other worldly.

Jesus’ response is to let them know that there is a cost for those who are his followers. It wasn’t going to be a life of ease, and luxury. Rather than expecting comfort, Jesus warns that there is a “cup” that Jesus’ followers must drink and a “baptism” that they must be baptized with. The cup symbolizes trouble and suffering. The baptism symbolized a deluge of trouble. Both are images that are used in the Old Testament. Jesus asks if they are prepared to drink from that cup of suffering and to be baptized with that baptism of trouble. Their quick response is We Can! **“Sure, if that is what it will take for us to be rewarded as the most important and influential disciples.”** Jesus’ responds by letting them know that they would in fact experience suffering and trouble. James was the first of the twelve to be put to death for his faith in Jesus. John spent a lot of his life in exile on the island of Patmos.

Well, as we can imagine, when the other disciples find out about James and John’s request they were indignant – angry. And now we have a teaching moment. Jesus says the pagans – ungodly – who are identified as rulers of the Gentiles rule by intimidation. They are always grasping for positions of power, so they can exercise authority over others. But Jesus says” **NOT SO WITH YOU!** Instead of being **Rulers**, you must be **Servants**. Instead of looking for How can I gain for **myself**, you must live like a **SLAVE**. A slave is someone who lives for the pleasure of his or her master.

Then we have the CLASH MOMENT – **“For the Son of Man (Jesus) did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.”** The character of the disciples, specifically in this instance is to LOOK OUT FOR MYSELF. But the character of Jesus is: GIVE MY LIFE FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS. Follow my example. This is what becoming like Christ will look like. If you want to be considered great in the kingdom you don’t find greatness in the most important seats. You find greatness by serving. You

don't take charge so you can rule OVER people. Instead you assume a position BENEATH or UNDER. Where can you put this into practice today, this week. Who are they people that you can serve? Do they live in your home? Are they your neighbors? Is it a boss at work, a co-worker? Where will you live like Jesus as a servant?

As we conclude this study, I want us to spend a moment looking more closely at Jesus' statement in verse 45. **Jesus said that He will give his life as a ransom for many.** The word that is translated "Ransom" was sometimes used to refer to the price paid for the release of slaves. But in the New Testament it refers to the idea of redemption or release as a theological concept. As Jesus uses it, he is referring to our redemption or release from the penalty of sin. Because of the presence of sin in our lives, we are alienated from God, we are the objects of wrath. But because Jesus gave Himself to death on the cross He has received the wrath of God against sin on our behalf. We are now released from the penalty for sin. The price for our freedom from God's wrath has been paid by Jesus.

That is the message of the gospel. Jesus took our place on the cross, received the wrath that we deserve so that we could be forgiven and released from its penalty. If you do not live with a sense of certainty that your sins have been paid for by Jesus, I invite you to trust Him today as your Savior.

Prayer

Blessing -