

# MARK

## Chapter 10

*Divorce*

**And he left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to him again. And again, as was his custom, he taught them. 2 And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” 3 He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” 4 They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away.” 5 And Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. 6 But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ 7 ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. 9 What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” 10 And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. 11 And he said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, 12 and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”**

**Ch 10** The key to this chapter is that God accepts us by grace through faith in Jesus, not through obedience or status, just as children receive love they do not earn. (TLSB)

**10:1-16** At first glance it may appear that verses 1-12 have nothing in common with verses 13-16. But they have this in common that the disciples still have much to learn. Verses 1-12 are paralleled at Matthew 19:1-9. Matthew is briefer but is writing for a Jewish audience. Mark is clearly writing for a Gentile audience. Verses 13-16 are paralleled at Matthew 19:13-15 and Luke 18:15-17. A very important principle, enunciated by all three. (Buls)

**10:1** *region of Judea.* The Greek and Roman equivalent to the OT land of Judah, essentially the southern part of Palestine (now exclusive of Idumea), which formerly had been the southern kingdom.

East of the Jordan River toward the Dead Sea. (TLSB)

*Jordan.* Jesus’ journey took him south from Capernaum, over the mountains of Samaria into Judea and then east across the Jordan into Perea, where he was in the territory of Herod Antipas (see note on Mt 14:1). For Jesus’ ministry in Perea. (CSB)

At this point we are in the later Perea Ministry, the final three and a half months of Jesus’ ministry. (Buls)

Stoekhardt: This was the last province of the land of the Jews which received His gracious visitation. (Buls)

Jesus was constantly teaching the crowds and His disciples. (Buls)

At this point we are in the later Perea Ministry, the final three and half months of Jesus’ ministry. This is the last province if the land of the Jews which received his gracious visitation.

The time for longer periods of seclusion with His disciples was past, and the time for His passion was drawing near. During these months He again spent time in teaching the crowds that gathered and in healing many of their number. He did not cease the instructing of His disciples, but used every possible opportunity to do so. (PBC)

*as was his custom* – Jesus conducted a preaching ministry, interrupting it occasionally to focus on His Disciples (cf 9:30). (TLSB)

Jesus now, definitely and finally, left Galilee. He went out from Capernaum, after the last discourse to His disciples, journeyed southward along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and then crossed the Jordan into Perea, on the far side of the Jordan, on His way into Judea. But as He went along His way, probably even in Galilee, but especially in Perea, people crowded about Him, His identity being known, and they went with Him, they accompanied Him. With His usual Savior's mercy, He saw these people in their great spiritual need, and therefore He again followed His custom of teaching them the one thing needful. (Kretzmann)

**10:2-16** Man and woman, created by God to be each other's helper, companion. God blesses their union, and to some has granted the opportunity to be stewards of additional gifts. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Part of this stewardship is in the unity of the home into which these gifts are bestowed. We as his people can and ought to respect what has been made one. We ought not separate the gift. The results of the union of the man and the woman is spoken of in the second portion. Children are important in Jesus' sight. They can and do believe. Let them come, "for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (v 14). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

**10:2-5** The Pharisees attempt to entangle Jesus in a religious controversy. Some (the House of Hillel) thought that divorce was acceptable for any and every reason, even to the point of a man growing tired of his wife. Others (the House of Shammai) taught that divorce was permissible only in the case of infidelity. Jesus responded that it was a matter of hardness of heart (sinfulness) that caused Moses to concede permission for divorce. Jesus teaches that divorce was not God's plan; it was not serving God's purposes. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

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**10:2** *Pharisees*. The Pharisees sought either to justify themselves or trap Jesus. (TLSB)

Pharisees had plagued Jesus in Judea, Galilee, and now even in Perea. Their sole motive is like that of Satan in Matthew 4:1. It shows the spirit in which they asked the question. They wanted to destroy Him. (Buls)

*came...test him*. The question of the Pharisees was hostile. It was for unlawful divorce and remarriage that John the Baptist denounced Herod Antipas and Herodias (see 6:17–18), and this rebuke cost him first imprisonment and then his life. Jesus was now within Herod's jurisdiction,

and the Pharisees may have hoped that Jesus' reply would cause the tetrarch to seize him as he had John. (CSB)

*Is it lawful ... to divorce his wife?* Jews of that day generally agreed that divorce was lawful, the only debated issue being the proper grounds for it. (CSB)

The question of the Pharisees was not a sincere one. They were trying to trap Jesus into saying something they could use to discredit Him. The divorce question was made to order, since they themselves were not agreed on the proper interpretation of Moses' words (see Deuteronomy 24:1). Those who followed Rabbi Shammai said the only reason for divorce was moral indecency; those who followed Hillel said anything in a wife that did not please the husband was grounds for divorce. They expected Jesus to side with one or the other, and they would then have the opportunity to criticize Him publicly. (PBC)

**10:3** *what did Moses command you* – Jesus always appeals to the Old Testament. So did the Pharisees but their exegesis always missed the mark. By the way, Jesus clearly stresses the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and is saying: "Moses' word is God's Word." (Buls)

**10:4** *write a certificate of divorce* – Ylvisaker: This was one of the burning questions of the day between the two schools in Israel, those of Hillel and of Shammai. The latter was the more strict and conservative, while the former was liberal and tolerant to a degree. . . In spite of mutual disagreements, both schools were agreed that divorce was justified for causes other than that of adultery in the strict sense of the word. (Buls)

Deuteronomy 24:1 is from a section of Jewish POLITICAL Law, not MORAL Law.

Stoekhardt: Moses was also a civil law-giver. In Israel there were many immoral people who would not submit to God's Law. (Buls)

Hendriksen: The 'certificate of divorce' was a merciful concession made for the sake of the wife, for without this regulation a harsh man might be inclined to dismiss his wife even without giving her any written evidence that she was now no longer married. (Buls)

The Pharisees attempt to entangle Jesus in a religious controversy. Some (the House of Hillel) thought that divorce was acceptable for any and every reason, even to the point of a man growing tired of his wife. Others (the House of Shammai) taught that divorce was permissible only in the case of infidelity. Jesus responded that it was a matter of hardness of heart (sinfulness) that caused Moses to concede permission for divorce. Jesus teaches that divorce was not God's plan; it was not serving God's purposes. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

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Some husbands might divorce their wives because of bad meal. Divorce often left the wife with few if any resources to live.

The Mosaic provision was made for the contingency of divorce, but did not in itself determine whether that contingency was right or wrong. Its primary function was to provide a degree of protection for the woman who had been repudiated by her husband. (Lane)

**10:5** *because your hardness of heart* – Divorce was an accommodation to human weakness and was used to bring order in a society that had disregarded God’s will, but it was not the standard God had originally intended, as vv. 6–9 clearly indicate. The purpose of Dt 24:1 was not to make divorce acceptable, but to reduce the hardship of its consequences. (CSB)

"Hard hearts" amounts to unbelief. Look at Mark 16:14. NEB: "Because you were so unteachable." Beck: "On account of your closed minds." Note "your" not "their." Jesus includes the Pharisees and the schools of Hillel and Shammai. This arrangement was a gracious concession, not an approval of obvious sin. (Buls)

Jesus was well acquainted with this bit of Mosaic legislation, and He also knew the reasons for the adoption of this precept in the Jewish law. The form of government in the Jewish nation during the first centuries of its national existence was that of a theocracy, of a direct legislating by God. The order to which they referred was given by Moses in his capacity as Jewish lawgiver, in order to prevent worse injury and injustice. The government will sometimes find it a wise policy to leave some wrong go unpunished, lest a great many innocent people suffer with the guilty. But this dispensation of Moses, which was given on account of the hardness of their hearts, did not in any way invalidate the institution of marriage and the holiness of the tie of wedlock. (Kretzmann)

The situation that provided the occasion for the permission of divorce was one of moral perversity which consisted in a deliberate determination not to abide by the will of God. Such stubborn rebellion against the divine ordinance is the essence of hardheartedness. The calloused attitude which could be taken in regard to divorce is well illustrated by the counsel of a respected teacher, Joshua be Sira (ca. 200 BC): “If she go not as you have her go, cut her off and give her a bill of divorce” (literally “cut her off from your flesh,” a reflection on the phrase “they shall be one flesh” in Gen. 2:24) (Eccl 25:26). (Lane)

**10:6–8** God intended marriage to be lifelong. (TLSB)

**10:6** *from the beginning of creation*. Jesus goes back to the time before human sin to show God’s original intention. God instituted marriage as a great unifying blessing, bonding the male and female in his creation. (CSB)

This little "but" shows that their interpretation was contrary to Moses' word, which is God's Word. The creation principle of marriage is now stated by referring to Genesis 1:27; 2:24; 5:2. (Buls)

“But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ” Jesus viewed marriage as God’s plan. Creation is the basis for marriage. God made man, and for man (Adam) he created woman (Eve). There was no one formed as man was formed from the dust of the ground and then filled with the breath of God. So woman was also specially, fearfully, and wonderfully made from the bone of Adam. Distinctly and differently created, male and female, made for each other and no other. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Marriage is not a human arrangement. It is God who joins husband and wife together. The Greek word actually means “yoked together as a team.” God wants marriage to be “so long as you both shall live” or “till death us do part.” Marriage is not just a temporary convenience, but a lifelong commitment. (PBC)

**10:7** *therefore a man shall* – "For this reason," because of this creation principle. "Will leave" and "be united" are not mere predictions but enunciate the creation principle for all times and peoples. (Buls)

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife." The key word, *proskollēthēsetai*, translated in various ways (cleave, hold fast, be joined), means "to glue together." It is a new bond, a new family. A man shall join his wife. It is the new prime relationship for them. They've left father and mother; leaving is permanent. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

A man, having reached marriageable age, and having observed the other preliminary steps enjoined by God, will leave his father and his mother, will sever the relationship of childhood and youth, and will be joined to his wife, will enter into a new relationship which will make him and his wife one flesh. (Kretzmann)

**10:8** *no longer two, but one.* The deduction drawn by Jesus affirms the ideal of the permanence of marriage. (CSB)

"Two will become one" rules out divorce and polygamy. "One flesh" is applied only to marriage, to no other human relationship. (Buls)

" 'And the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh." We're not just talking about sex, but the unity of the family. Husband and wife become a unit. "Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth" (Mal 2:15). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

**10:9** *Therefore God has joined together.* Jesus grounds the sanctity of marriage in the authority of God himself, and his "No" to divorce safeguards against human selfishness, which always threatens to destroy marriage. (CSB)

"Therefore" this is how mankind should view it. "Man" here means "any human being." In verse 7 it means "a husband." When people marry, God thereby yokes them together. Every valid marriage must be considered such a divine yoking. The creation principle is involved. If disregarded, it proceeds from unbelief. The marriage is God's yoking, and presents a lasting principle. (Buls)

"What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." *sunezeuxen*: God has joined, yoked together, the husband and wife. Jesus declares that God has joined the husband and wife together as yokefellows, those who pull together. Only God can spiritually bind them together. It is not an activity of the state. According to Christ, it is God's act, and man better not attack what God has done. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

When people marry, God thereby yokes them together. Every marriage must be considered such a divine yoking. The creation principle is involved. (B)

Jesus' final pronouncement grounds the sanctity of marriage in the authority of God Himself. This is consistent with the biblical perspective, which never considers husband and wife alone but always in the presence of God, subject to His commands and aided by His grace. (Lane)

**10:10** *in the house* – They ask in private. The Pharisees are no longer with them. The disciples, much influenced by the lax thinking of the school of Hillel, needed further instruction. (Buls)

The disciples were still deeply imbued with the teaching of the scribes, of the rabbis, which they had heard from their youth. The statements of Christ differed so plainly from the customs with which they were familiar that they took up the matter with the Master once more in their lodging-place. (Kretzmann)

**10:11-12** They wanted to be sure that they had heard aright and that Jesus had nothing to add in further explanation to them alone. But He only summarizes once more what He said on the way: If any man divorce his wife, loose her from the marriage-bond, and marry another, he commits adultery to the prejudice of, against, the first. The loose morals in the intercourse between the sexes may have been the rule among the Jews, and constant association with these abuses may have made the disciples as callous as all the rest. But that does not affect one whit the ordinance of God. The same rule holds true in the case of a woman: If she divorces her husband, looses the marriage-bond that held him to her, as she could do according to Palestinian law in those days, she commits adultery. Cf. Matt, 5:31-32; 19:3-9. (Kretzmann)

Jesus likely shocked His disciples (cf. Mt. 19:10), since other teachers were more permissive and even the law seemed to grant this as a right. (TLSB)

**10:11** *he said* – "He went on to say." He states another principle. It is always so, no exceptions. Jesus does not mean that adultery is not committed until he marries another but rather that this marrying another aggravates the adultery. Most translations: "Commits adultery against her (his wife)." The real point is that not only is he sinning but is also offensive to another. The exception "except it be because of fornication" mentioned at Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 is not mentioned here but is implicit in the text. (Buls)

*whoever divorces his wife.* In Jewish practice divorce was effected by the husband himself, not by a judicial authority or court. (CSB)

*commits adultery against her.* A simple declaration of divorce on the part of a husband could not release him from the divine law of marriage and its moral obligations—this enduring force of the marriage bond was unrecognized in rabbinic courts. 1Co 7:15 may contain another exception (see notes on 1Co 7:12, 15). (CSB)

According to rabbinic law a man could commit adultery against another married man by seducing his wife (Deut 22:13-29) and a wife could commit adultery against her husband by infidelity, but a husband could not be said to commit adultery against his wife. The unconditional form of Jesus' statement served to reinforce the abrogation of the Mosaic permission in Deut 24:1. This sharp intensifying of the concept of adultery had the effect of elevating the status of the wife to the same dignity as her husband and placed the husband under an obligation of fidelity. (Lane)

**10:12** *she commits adultery.* In this historical and geographical context, Jesus' pronouncements confirm the bold denunciation by John the Baptist and equally condemn Herod Antipas and Herodias. (CSB)

This verse is found only in Mark who was writing for Gentiles. What is said about the husband dismissing his wife is equally true about the wife dismissing her husband. This again is a present general condition which holds true in all cases. (Buls)

The right of a wife to divorce her husband was not recognized by Jewish law and even in Roman law was a relatively recent development near the end of the Republic (ca. 50-40 BC). (Lane)

**10:1–12** Jesus teaches that God wants a man and a woman in marriage to be exclusively committed to each other for life. Attempts to alter or get around God’s good intentions bring condemnation, not greater liberty. Thoughtfully and prayerfully embrace God’s ways. What He establishes is for our good and stems from His love and grace. • “O Spirit of the Father, Breathe on them from above, So searching in Your pureness, So tender in Your love That, guarded by Your presence And kept from strife and sin, Their hearts may heed Your guidance And know You dwell within.” Amen. (LSB 858:3). (TLSB)

### *The Little Children and Jesus*

**13 And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 15 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” 16 And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.**

**10:13** ESV has “and” as the first word of the verse - Mark appears little interested in biographical details. The story is attached to what precedes by a simple *kai*, “and,” without further note of time and place; it may have been at the home where Jesus was staying (Mk 10:10). We are not told who brought the children, who the children were, or how old they were. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

People were bringing the children to Jesus that he might bestow his blessing upon them. To some, children are a problem—they take attention; they need to be clothed, fed, and bathed; they depend upon us. But these parents wanted Jesus to bless their children. They recognized that there was something special here with this miracle-working teacher. This was troubling to the disciples. They did not understand the truth about children and their faith. So they rebuked (*epetimēsan*) the parents. They turned them away in a rather negative manner. The text uses the term that is translated in a number of ways—rebuke, admonish strongly, scold, or threaten. Perhaps they said, “Don’t you know he is much too busy to be bothered with something like this!” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*little children* – *Paidion* may denote any dependent child, from an infant to the 12-year-old girl whom Jesus raised (Mk 5:39–42). The parallel to our verse in Lk 18:15 has *brephē*, “babies, infants.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

It was while Jesus was still on His way to Judea, and while He was making the journey by easy stages, that one of the most appealing incidents in His entire ministry occurred. He had probably sat down in some village to rest for a few moments, when a new idea suggested itself to the mothers of the town. They brought little children of all sizes to Him, from infants in arms up, their request to Him being that He merely touch them, that is, put his hands upon them in blessing. There is no indication of a superstitious notion connected with the action. The children probably all loved the Savior at sight for His gentleness and kindness, and the hearts of the mothers were reached through the children. (Kretzmann)

Luke clearly has "babies" and therefore Beck rightly translates: "Babies." RSV, NEB and NASB are weak: "children." There is nothing magical or mechanical in His touch. To touch is an indication of love and intimacy. Those who brought the babies very likely believed in Jesus. That is the point. (Buls)

*touch them* – This was to bless them. (TLSB)

*rebuked them* – They thought children were not important and thus limited their access to Jesus. Cf. 9:36-37. (TLSB)

NEB: "Scolded them." A strong word. The disciples had a lot to learn. "Them" does not mean they were only men, this very likely includes mothers, believing mothers. (Buls)

But here came interference from an unexpected quarter: the disciples harshly rebuked those that were bringing the children. They may have thought that the children were not worth while to bother with, and that the Lord needed the few moments rest and should not be annoyed. (Kretzmann)

Nor do we know why the disciples rebuked "them" (the male Greek pronoun suggesting fathers as well as mothers). Perhaps the disciples were annoyed because the children were members of families outside the primary circle of Jesus' followers; this was the reason the apostles rebuked the man in Mk 9:38 (see last Sunday's sermon study). Another possible factor, also present in last Sunday's Gospel, is that the disciples may have had an inflated view of their own role as Jesus' closest associates, and felt these outsiders were taking inappropriate liberties in bringing mere kids so close to Jesus. Such familiarity was reserved for the disciples alone! They had not learned that a disciple's job is to bring others to Christ, not keep them away. Moreover, they had quickly forgotten Jesus' promise that to receive a child in Jesus' name is to receive Jesus himself, and the Father who sent him (Mk 9:36-37). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Perhaps the disciples thought this was an unnecessary intrusion on Jesus' time and energy, and below the dignity of their Master. Did they consider the children too immature to make any responsible commitment to Jesus themselves? If so, we may draw a parallel to decision theology today and the "age of accountability," which some set at around 12 years old. Did the disciples fear that the adults would suppose something magic would happen when Jesus touched their children? Nevertheless, Jesus' mere touch had value (cf. v 16; *haptō*, "touch," occurs also in the healing in Mk 5:25-34). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Whatever the reason, those bringing the children met the disciples' resistance. "Rebuke" carries the idea of censure. The disciples "shooed them away" (Living Bible). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

**10:14** *he was indignant* – *aganaktasen* – Righteous anger. (TLSB)

In another part of the house, away from the action, Jesus notices what is going on. You might say that he was upset! *ēganaktēsen* is translated as "indignant"; greatly grieved was Jesus to see his disciples turning the children away. Jesus ordered them to let the children come to him. Don't hold them back. They need to be coming to Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

In this account, Jesus forms much of our Church's attitude toward children, including infant Baptism. This passage is a crucial part of our Lutheran baptismal rite. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Beck: "He didn't like it at all." Beck continues: "don't keep them away, even to these belongs the Kingdom of God." Not only to adults but even to these. The disciples, like many moderns, were denying this. The Kingdom of God is the gracious rule and reign of God in the hearts of people for Jesus' sake. (Buls)

When Jesus saw what was happening, he was deeply distressed and displeased. *Aganakteō*, "be indignant," is an intensified compound of *agan*, "very much," and "to grieve, anguish." It implies both grief and anger, with great pain. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

*let the children come and do not hinder them* – With a double command, Jesus ordered the disciples to cease their interference. The first command is aorist, implying an immediate reversal of their prior conduct: "Allow/permit the children to come to me (now)." The second is present, implying a command that continues in force: "Never again hinder them!" The disciples' Law was countered with Jesus' loving Gospel voice, which allows all of us to run to Him, trust Him, depend upon Him, and love Him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 4)

"Do not hinder them" is a continuous command. Let them come. Little children are invited to Jesus, even if they are so young as to need to be carried. We cannot prevent the children from being with Jesus. It is our responsibility as Christian parents and as his Church to make sure that they are brought to him. He gives them faith in the water and Word of Baptism. How can we Christians keep one from receiving the gift? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*kingdom of God*. The Kingdom of God is the gracious rule and reign of God in the hearts of men for Jesus' sake. (B)

Jesus said, "To such belongs the kingdom of God" (v 14). These children, the boys among them circumcised on the eighth day, were members of the covenant. They had received the promise. And there they were, with the fulfillment of the promise. We, too, who have now received the gift from God, ought to bring the children for whom Christ died. Baptism is but a natural connection. The little Jewish boys and girls were of the Kingdom. Now in Baptism, God makes the child, young and old, part of the Kingdom. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*such belongs the kingdom of God* – The kingdom of God belongs to those who, like children, are prepared to receive the kingdom as a gift of God. (CSB)

**10:15** *truly I say to you* – "I act as a child who is being taught the catechism...But I must remain a child and pupil of the catechism, and am glad to remain so" (LC, Longer Preface 7-8). (TLSB)

An emphatic truth is enunciated. What follows in this verse allows of no exceptions. "Like a little child" must mean "as a child receives it" thereby plainly indicating that babies can believe. Unless a person has a baby-like faith he cannot "enter it," be reconciled to god through faith in Christ. (Buls)

*receive the kingdom of heaven* – Though Jesus was speaking directly to his disciples, the truth is universal. Whoever you are, to enter the kingdom, you must become as a little child—not

in the sense of “innocence” (as if children were sinless) or ignorance, but in simple trust in, and dependence on, the Father’s care. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

“Receive” implies salvation is a gift, even as infants receive their parents’ love and care. No effort or merit qualifies you to enter the kingdom. You must acknowledge that you are small, weak, and helpless. Any pretense of greatness, achievement, or independence must be abandoned. Reinforcing this, the Greek verb “take in one’s arms” in v 16 occurs elsewhere in the NT only in Mk 9:36, where Jesus likewise embraces a child as the model for his disciples. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

“Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” The child is the model. We bring nothing to our relationship with God. It is solely by grace that we are saved. The children were directed to Christ by Christ. God gives membership in his kingdom as a gift, not a wage. Through Word and Sacrament, he creates and bestows faith. We must receive his Kingdom as a passive, helpless child. It is Christ who has done it all for us. We bring nothing! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*like a child.* The point of comparison is the usual openness and receptivity of children. The kingdom of God must be received as a gift; it cannot be achieved by human effort. It may be entered only by those who know they are helpless, without claim or merit. (CSB)

**10:16** *and blessed them.* Jesus visually demonstrated that the blessings of the kingdom are freely given. (CSB)

Jesus did three things; embraced them, placed His hands upon them, began blessing them. The latter surely with His Word.

Ylvisaker: The Church has justly recognized in this passage one of the important arguments for the practice of infant baptism . . . Jesus declares that little children are fit for the Kingdom of God through faith . . . And the Church has discovered even more in this passage, the actual origin, in truth, and the institution of the sacrament of Baptism. And so it is. The first ordinance was not given when Jesus commanded His apostles to go and make disciples of all nations through baptism and instruction (Matthew 28:19ff). (Buls)

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We better understand the poignant beauty of this passage by remembering that Jesus was on the way to the cross—and he knew it. Its cruel shadow never was far from his mind. It was at such a time that he took time for children. Even with such tension in his mind, our loving Lord took these children in his arms, spoke words of blessing, and applied his special touch. This tells us a great deal about Jesus. He was the kind of person who cared for children, and for whom children cared. What joy he must have beamed as he hugged those children! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

George MacDonald once said, “I do not believe in a man’s Christianity if the children are never to be found playing around his door.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Jesus' final action was as significant as His words. His genuine love of children, and the tenderness expressed in taking them into His arms and blessing them through prayer and laying on of hands, can only be properly appreciated within the context of the calloused attitudes toward children that still prevailed within Hellenistic society in the first century. A papyrus date Alexandria, June 17, 1 BC, contains a letter of instruction from a husband to his expectant wife, who he supposes may have had her child: "if it was a male, let it live; if it was a female, cast it out. (Lane)

**10:13–16** This story is the key to the chapter, showing us that salvation is a gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We trust the Lord as a child trusts a parent. We do not earn God's love and favor by keeping the Law, especially when we look for loopholes to excuse our sinful behavior (cf 10:1–12). All people, like helpless children, receive Jesus' blessing and enter the Kingdom through faith in Him. • "You have promised to receive us, Poor and sinful though we be; You have mercy to relieve us, Grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free. Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You. Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You." Amen. (LSB 711:3). (TLSB)

### *The Rich Young Man*

**17 And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 18 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.'" 20 And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth." 21 And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." 22 Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. 23 And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." 26 And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?" 27 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God." 28 Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." 29 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, 30 who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."**

**10:17** *as he was setting out – kai ekporeuomenou autou eis hodon*, "And as he was setting out on his journey." In a noteworthy manner, Mark begins this pericope with a statement about Jesus' journey, his journey to the cross. Christ had already predicted his death and resurrection two times (8:31; 9:31). Immediately after the account of the rich young man (10:17–31), Jesus foretells his death and resurrection a third time (10:32–34). Therefore, this Gospel pericope is closely couched between two death predictions. With his sacrifice so imminent, totally upon him, and devoid of sinful human contribution, one might expect Jesus' dissatisfaction with this young man's arrogant statement of "What must I do to inherit eternal life." Yet on his way to the cross, Jesus loves even this man for whom he came and for whom he would also die. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

The genitive absolute tense likely pictures Jesus emerging from the house mentioned in verse 10. Perhaps this young man was waiting for Jesus to emerge. Mark's account is more vivid than that of Matthew and Luke. Matthew 2 19:16-17 supplements are this point. He not only addressed Jesus as "good" but also asked what "good" He should do. Negative higher critics claim that Matthew rewrote Mark to tone down the harsh theology. That implies, of course, that it didn't really happen and plainly maintains that the authors of the Gospels determined the character of theology. The young man uses the word "good" in the unregenerate sense, not the Biblical sense. Just because people call Jesus "good" does not mean they are believers nor that they know what is truly good. "Inherit" in this context means "acquire." Beck: "To get." NEB: "To win." He wants to earn it. (Buls)

*a man.* Mark does not identify the man, but Luke (18:18) calls him a "ruler," meaning he was probably a member of an official council or court, and Matthew (19:20) says he was "young." (CSB)

*prosdramōn heis kai gonupetēsas,* "a man ran up and knelt." Although a wealthy man was apt to seek out the best and most popular teacher, he would typically not humble himself before the teacher. These facts make the young man's actions most remarkable. The two participles (*prosdramōn, gonupetēsas*) demonstrate this man's deep humility before Jesus, since both involve degradation for a rich man in Jesus' day. The verb *gonupeteō* indicates kneeling or falling upon one's knee in prayer and supplication (Mt 17:14; Mk 1:40; cf. Lk 22:41; Acts 7:60; 9:40; 20:36; 21:5) or in homage as in Mk 10:17. Such kneeling sometimes involves mockery as the misguided soldiers who mistreated Jesus (Mt 27:29). This young man, although not kneeling in mockery, was confused about the person and work of Christ. He saw Jesus as the perfect source of Law information rather than his Savior. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

After the incident with the young children, Jesus continued His journey, He went out and forward on His way. The inevitableness of the Passion and the end of Christ's life is always indicated in the gospels. Here one, a certain man, according to Luke, 18:18, a ruler, the chief elder of a synagogue in the neighborhood, stopped the Lord. The man came running to Him, He was much disturbed and excited; He threw Himself down upon his knees before Jesus. As an elder of the synagogue he was fully acquainted with the laws and traditions of the elders, with all the customary interpretation of the various observances in vogue among the Jews. But he derived no satisfaction from that knowledge, he found no peace for his soul in the round of works prescribed there. (Kretzmann)

The eager approach of a man while Jesus was setting out on his way, his kneeling posture, the formal address together with the weighty character of his question all suggest deep respect for Jesus and genuine earnestness on the part of the man himself. He came to consult Jesus as a distinguished rabbi and showed him the deference reserved for revered teachers of the Law. (Lane)

*good teacher* – On the OT and subsequent Judaism only God is characteristically called "good," although it was possible to speak in a derived sense of "the good man" (e.g. Prov. 12:2; 14:14; Eccl. 9:2; Mt 12:35). The designation of Jesus as "good teacher," however, is virtually without parallel in Jewish sources and should be regarded as a sincere tribute to the impression He had made upon the man, whether "good" be understood to signify "kind," "generous," or some other quality goodness. (Lane)

*poiēsō*: The aorist of the verb *poieō* can indicate a single or short-term action. Namely, having lived an “exemplary” life, the young man asks what heroic deed he must yet add to his trophies in order to inherit eternal life. Although well-intentioned in the way of the Law, he does not take the Law to its fullest extent, namely, to convict rather than confirm. He expects to find a Jesus of enlightened information to show him what he must do. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*what must I do ... ?* The rich man was thinking in terms of earning righteousness to merit eternal life, but Jesus taught that it was a gift to be received (see v. 15). (CSB)

Inheritance is not given based on merit. (TLSB)

*klēronomēsō*: The young man shows his confusion of Law and Gospel through his usage of the verb *klēronomeō*. In the Bible, the verb often connotes the reception of a gift, particularly the kingdom of God (Mt 25:34; 1 Cor 6:9–10; 15:50; Gal 5:21) and eternal life (Mt 19:29; Mk 10:17; Lk 10:25; 18:18). The verb can also refer to a gift received after a death (Gal 4:30). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

The new Teacher would probably be able to help him solve the serious problem which he was battling with, the question of how to obtain the assurance of peace with God. His cry is: Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? It is a cry which thousands of anxious souls that have been taught the way of works and self-righteousness have echoed since, not only among the Jews, but in all church bodies where salvation by man's own deeds is taught, Acts 16, 30. Note: The man speaks of doing something, of earning, if possible; and he wants to be considered an heir of eternal life, one for whom the glories will be laid up in heaven, in safe-keeping. (Kretzmann)

*eternal life*. The question concerning the inheritance of eternal life, which has formal parallels in early Jewish material, places the discussion which follows in an eschatological perspective. The form of the question (What must I do to inherit eternal life?) implies a piety of achievement which stands in contrast to Jesus' teaching that a man must receive the Kingdom (or life) as a gift from God in his helplessness (10:15). In the light of verse 20, the man evidently thought that there were conditions to be fulfilled beyond those set forth in the Law. (Lane)

**10:18** *Why do you call me good?* Jesus was not denying his own goodness but was forcing the man to recognize that his only hope was in total reliance on God, who alone can give eternal life. He may also have been encouraging the young man to consider the full identity and nature of the One he was addressing. (CSB)

Jesus changes the focus from the man's works to who God is. (TLSB)

Jesus does not say that He is not good nor does He deny that He is God.

Bengel: The young man perceived in Jesus the presence of goodness in some degree; otherwise he would not have applied to Him: but he did not perceive it in its full extent: otherwise he would not have left Him. Much less did he perceive His Godhead. Wherefore, Jesus does not accept from him the title of goodness without the title of Godhead.(Buls)

Jesus overlooks the title “teacher” and instead comments on “good,” which the man rightly employs. While many teachers exist, only one is good, namely, the one who pronounced all

things good at creation. Thus, Jesus implies his identity in his response. However, the young man does not catch the meaning or comment on it. Otherwise, he would not dare to flash his own righteousness. Indeed, the young man fails to see God hidden in the humanity of Jesus. He does not recognize his Creator and Savior in the flesh of Christ and, thus, pursues human glory (works) rather than the cross (salvation). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Jesus does not answer his question directly, but by skillful catechizing tries to lead him to the right understanding of his petition and its fulfillment. Taking up the man's address first, He asks him why he applies the attribute "good" to Him. Far from rejecting the appellation, Jesus accepts it at once, but He wants the young man to understand the full import of the word. In calling Jesus good, he attributed to Him a quality of God Himself, he placed Him on a level with God, all of which is right and good. God is good; Jesus is good : they are on the same level. (Kretzmann)

**10:19** *do not defraud*.† The prohibition of fraud may have represented the ninth and tenth commandments (against covetousness). If so, Jesus here mentions all seven commandments that prohibit wrong actions and attitudes against one's fellowman (see Ex 20:12–16; Dt 5:16–21). (CSB)

This young man needs Law to show him his sin. Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:24. Jesus quotes commandments 5 through 8. "Do no defraud" has been interpreted variously:

- a. Lenski: Sum of ninth and tenth commandments;
- b. Beck: Don't rob;
- c. Hendriksen: "Do not withhold from your neighbor the love you owe him."

The fourth commandment is quoted last. Jesus quotes only the second table of the Law, for in this way He can the more quickly show this man his sin. That becomes clear in verse 21. (Buls)

*tas entolas*: When one comes to Jesus with a Law approach, one will likely get a Law response. Jesus emphasizes the accusation of the Law by placing *tas entolas*, the object, before the subject and verb. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Now as for his question, Jesus reminds him of the fulfillment of the Law, since the perfect keeping of God's commandments, as the ruler had learned, would give him the assurance of heaven. The Lord mentions a few of the precepts of the Moral Law, those against adultery, against murder, against theft and robbery, against false witness, against fraud, and that demanding obedience to the parents. Note: The sequence of the commandments is immaterial. Jesus mentions only such as pertain to the second table, since these are of such a nature that a person ought to be able to note his transgressions of them very readily. It takes comparatively little spiritual knowledge and understanding to note the faults in thoughts, words, and deeds that are committed against one's neighbor. Jesus had noted at once that this young man was fully satisfied with an external probity before men. People of his stamp must always be referred to the total keeping of the Law of God, when they live so securely in their self-righteousness. If this method works a proper knowledge of sin, then there will also be opportunity for the knowledge of Jesus as the Savior of sinners, and for faith in Him. (Kretzmann)

**10:20** *teacher – didaskale*: The young man no longer refers to Jesus as "Good Teacher," which Jesus says is essentially confessing him as God. He does not confess nor even need a merciful God when touting his own works. The rich young man eagerly assumes the Law's obligation

upon himself, although unaware that the burden will kill him. Jesus will soon give him a taste of this burden by the accusing command in v 21. Thereby, Jesus exposes the death lurking within him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*all these I have kept.* The man spoke sincerely, because for him keeping the law was a matter of external conformity. That the law also required inner obedience, which no one can fully satisfy, apparently escaped him completely. Paul speaks of having had a similar outlook before his conversion (Php 3:6). (CSB)

He is totally Pharisaical. "I myself have kept." NEB, NIV: "Since I was a boy." Beck: "Since I was a child." (Buls)

*ephulaxamēn:* The young man has a low, superficial, external view of the Law's demands. In this limited sphere, he considers himself blameless just as Saul the Pharisee (Phil 3:6). This verb is the New Testament equivalent of the Hebrew *shamar*, the word used for the Israelites properly keeping the Law. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

In this case, the man coolly stated that he had kept all these commandments from his youth. He was still so thoroughly bound in spiritual blindness that he supposed an outward abstaining from the deeds of wickedness and darkness constituted the fulfillment of the Law. Here was true pharisaic conceit. It is the same experience which believers will have in their dealings with the self-righteous hypocrites of this World. If they live an outwardly moral life, then they believe they have fulfilled God will, and think they will be acceptable on the last day. And they have never examined their heart to see the mass of filth and transgression to be found there. (Kretzmann)

*since my youth.* Probably a reference to the age of 13, when a Jewish boy assumed personal responsibility for obeying the commandments. (CSB)

*neotētos mou*, "my youth": This expression likely refers to the age of *bar mitzvah*, approximately age thirteen, when he would have taken upon himself the obligation of keeping the Law (James A. Brooks, *Mark*, The New American Commentary, vol. 23 [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991], 163). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

**10:21** *Jesus ... loved him.* Jesus recognized the man's earnestness. His response was not intended to shame him by exposing failure to understand the spiritual depth of the commandments but was an expression of genuine love. (CSB)

Jesus did not speak harshly or out of anger, but compassionately. He sought to strip away the man's self-deception about having kept the Law. (TLSB)

*ēgapēsen auton:* In love, Jesus desires to be more than just a source of sage advice. Rather than allowing the Law to be the end of the process (as the man wanted), he uses Law to prepare the way for the young man to see Jesus as Savior, rather than merely as Lawgiver. On his way to the cross, Jesus turns the table and acts as a surgeon to cut and then to heal. Jesus wants to expose the man's delusion in order to grant him a Savior. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

In spite of the young man's foolish answer, Jesus looked upon him earnestly, affectionately, He regarded him lovingly. He loved him, not only on account of his youth, his earnestness, and his evident sincerity, but because He wanted, if possible, to save his soul. The man was so utterly

unconscious of his spiritual condition that only strong medicine would arouse him to a realization of his needs. He attacked him on his weakest side. (Kretzmann)

*One thing you lack ... Go, sell everything.* The young man's primary problem was his wealth (see v. 22), and therefore Jesus' prescription was to rid him of it. There is no indication that Jesus' command to him was meant for all Christians. It applies only to those who have the same spiritual problem. (CSB)

At this point Matthew 19:20 uses "he asked" with the question "What do I still lack?" Mark gives Jesus' answer: "One thing lacks you." (You lack one thing). The man's question plainly shows his honest dissatisfaction with himself.

Bengel states that "looked at him and loved him" denotes a hendiadys: "He lovingly beheld him." A good suggestion. (Buls)

Note the utter contrast between the words "all" in verse 20, and "one" in verse 21. The "all" was not enough. The "one" is the final test. In verse 18 Jesus practically tells the man that he does not know what "good" means. In verse 21 He tells him that he does not know what true love toward God and man is. The "treasure in heaven" is not eschatological, but present. It is a promise. And to follow Jesus means to trust Him for all needed good for soul and body. (Buls)

Bengel: This 'one thing' is a heart freed from the idolatry of creatures. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: This particular command is based on the universal requirement of unconditional self-denial and the surrender of all for Christ's sake . . . It is a moral standard Jesus presents in these words for all, not only for the few . . . The demand is spiritual . . . It is important that we cut loose from everything which serves to hinder our salvation.

Hendriksen: To the young man, supplying this lack was a matter of 'addition.' But to Jesus, taking care of this lack was a matter of 'substitution.' Look at Galatians 2:10-21; Philippians 3:7ff. (Buls)

Note that not only the young man, but also the disciples had something to learn. (Buls)

*hen*: The Greek word "one" comes first in the sentence to emphasize the one thing lacking in contrast to the many works that this young man claims to have done perfectly. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*Husterei*: From an external glance, this young man might appear to have everything. However, Jesus astounds him by stating the very opposite. The present tense of the verb *hustereō* indicates an ongoing deficiency in the man's life. Contrast this present tense with the aorist subjunctive of *poieō* in v 17, where the man apparently assumes that a temporary or single action will result in eternal life. St. Paul uses this verb *hustereō* to show how all have sinned and fall short of God's glory (Rom 3:23). The Law points us to what we cannot do and makes us despair in our own deeds. Jesus employs the Law to reveal what this particular young man cannot do. Although he humbled himself before Jesus with physical gestures, sacrificing his riches and showing deference to the poor are beyond his radar screen. Therefore, on his journey to the cross, Jesus is about to give up everything for this man and for us. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*give to the poor – hosa echeis pōlēson kai dos [tois] ptōchois*, “Sell all that you have and give to the poor.” The young man had transformed money and its acquisition into his source of identity, security, and meaning in life. Yet he claims total obedience to the Law since youth. One might expect Jesus’ anger at such an audacious claim. Instead, he takes a different approach. Jesus does not specifically deny that the man kept the external letter of the Law. Rather, he requests a drastic demonstration of the spirit of the Law. In his previous statement (v 19), Jesus alluded to the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Fourth Commandments. He saves the Ninth and Tenth, on covetousness, for now to apply the scalpel of the Law in all its sharpness. Here Jesus does not command all Christians to sell all their possessions and give to the poor. Rather, Jesus individualizes the message. Christ applies the Law personally to this young man in his specific situation. In love, he radically alters the relationship. He applies the Law so that he can apply the Gospel. He acts as judge so that he can be Savior. Namely, Jesus gives more than the man expected. There is always more with Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*treasure in heaven.* † The gift of eternal life, or salvation. This treasure is not to be earned by self-denial or giving of one’s material goods. In giving away his wealth, the young man would have removed the obstacle that kept him from trusting in Jesus. (CSB)

Should He therefore demand, for the sake of the Kingdom, that we give up all our earthly possessions, yea, life itself, for His sake, and serve our neighbor in humility, there must be no hesitation on our part. (Kretzmann)

**10:22** *He went away sorrowful.* The tragic decision to turn away reflected a greater love for his possessions than for eternal life (cf. 4:19). (CSB)

Note the utter contrast between 17 and 22. This young Pharisee did not tempt Jesus but energetically sought Him. But when he heard Jesus’ demand, a demand for all of us, he was crushed. (Buls)

Beck: He looked gloomy and went away sad.(Buls)

Mark gives us his outward appearance and his inner reaction. Both are participles of attendant circumstance. “Because” is “You see,” an explanation. (Buls)

*stugnasas*: The participle of *stugnazō* refers here to one becoming downcast. The verb is also used of the sky becoming gloomy or dark (Mt 16:3). This man feels downcast with grief and gloom, since the weight of the Law is too much for him. Christ suffered the gloomy weight of the Law for us on the cross. There he bore the Law’s full burden in darkness, since we cannot bear the full accusation of the Law. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

The price was too high for the rich young man. He forgot to look at the prize – Jesus Christ, treasure in heaven, the Kingdom of God. Did he ever return? We don’t know. (PBC)

**10:23** *Jesus looked around* – Jesus looked around to see the impression that was left on disciples. (Kretzmann)

The verb *periblepō* occurs seven times in the New Testament (Mk 3:5, 34; 5:32; 9:8; 10:23; 11:11; Lk 6:10). In all but one instance (Mk 9:8), Jesus is the subject of the verb; four of the seven examples are participles followed by a finite verb of Jesus speaking. When *periblepō* appears, it typically follows an event that invites Jesus’ intervention. The gaze of the Lord then

cuts through all human foolishness and silences the onlookers as the Messiah is about to speak. After his eyes make preparations, all is ready for the word that reveals the person and work of Christ. His gaze can precede a word of Law (Mk 3:35; Lk 6:10), Gospel (Mk 5:32), or both (Mk 10:23). His gaze can lead to a clarification about the working of his kingdom (Mk 3:34; 10:23). The gaze and the word of Christ particularly dispel human wisdom and replace it with the work of Christ. All but one (Lk 6:10) instance of *periblepō* occurs in Mark, the Gospel where we particularly come to know Jesus through his actions. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

*difficult...those who have wealth* – "He went on to say." Very often the wealthy, like this young man, cannot give up their love and trust in their wealth. (Buls)

This shows how easy it is to become attached to wealth. This aspect of personal and public concern was one of the three major pillars of Jewish piety (almsgiving, fasting and prayer). The affirmation of verse 23 was shocking precisely because it entails the rejection of the concept of merit accumulated through the good works accomplished by the rich, which was presupposed in contemporary Judaism. (Lane)

*pōs duskolōs hoi ta chrēmata echontes eis tēn basileian tou theou eiseleusontai*: In Jesus' conversation with the disciples, he slowly shifts the focus from humanity to the Savior, namely, a shift from Law to Gospel. To introduce this shift, he illustrates human shortcoming. Jesus varies his grammatical constructions as he presents this illustration. First, in v 23 he employs a substantival use of the participle *echō*, "those having wealth/the possessors of wealth." The plural of *chrēma* indicates wealth or capital. The sentences literally flows: "How difficultly will those having wealth enter into the kingdom of God." (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Those who are rich and are Christians at the same time, hold these good as though they possessed them not. (Kretzmann)

Not all the rich begin or end life this young ruler. Remember Abraham, David, Zacchaeus, Cornelius, Lydia and many others. The difference? By God's grace they did not serve their riches, but put their riches and themselves into the service of Christ and the gospel. (PBC)

**10:24** *disciples were amazed* – Staggered. (Phillips)

"They were amazed." A strong word, in the passive. Then Jesus makes another statement, an absolute statement. The Koine variant, followed by the KJV, is not found in our translations. "And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! KJV." Lenski argues vehemently for it. But the statement has more point without the variant. (Buls)

The Jews regarded wealth as a mark of God's favor. The disciples thought rich people had the best chance to enter the kingdom of God because of all the good things they could afford to do. (TLSB)

*children* – This was a term of affection. (TLSB)

Note that Jesus addresses them with "Children." (Buls)

Hendricksen: The twelve were very dear to Him; yet he knows how weak, how prone to error, they are. (Buls)

True. Since Mark 8:27, the final ten months of Jesus' ministry, Jesus spends much time instructing the disciples. That should not be overlooked here. (Buls)

*difficult...to enter kingdom of God* – Trusting in worldly goods makes it impossible for a person to enter into the kingdom of God. (Kretzmann)

This is an understatement. No people will ever enter the Kingdom based on their own reason or strength. (TLSB)

Repetition is calculated to provoke careful reflection. (Lane)

After *pōs duskolon estin*, “how difficult it is.” Some manuscripts (later ones) insert a reference to those who put their trust in riches and thereby coordinate this verse with vv 23, 25. Examples of such reliance on riches occur with Simon Magus or Felix. Simon brings the apostles money, hoping to buy the Holy Spirit and his miraculous power (Acts 8:18–20). Since Felix hopes for a bribe, he often calls Paul out of prison for conversation (Acts 24:26) (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

As the disciples encounter Jesus’ gradual shift away from humanity to the Christ, amazement and dumbfounded stupor occur. This amazement likely happens because the rich in Jesus’ day are considered pious, generous, and worthy of favor (Job 1:10; 42:10; Ps 128:1–2; Is 3:10). In contrast, the poor are sometimes viewed as less pious, being poorly educated in the Law (Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994], Mk 10:23). In v 24 (and v 26), their confusion is not just momentary, since the imperfect of *thambeō* (and of *ekplēssō*, v 26, even more intense than *thambeō*) indicates ongoing amazement at Jesus’ revelation. In contrast to the specificity of v 23, Jesus then makes a sweeping, overarching statement of how difficult it is for anybody to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again, Jesus varies grammatical constructions. Here he employs the impersonal subject, “Children, how difficult *it* is.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

**10:25** *eye of a needle*. The camel was the largest animal found in Palestine. The vivid contrast between the largest animal and the smallest opening represents what, humanly speaking, is impossible. (CSB)

Don't worry about the variant readings. All translations agree with Nestle's Greek text reading. The single point of this verse is that which is impossible for man. Who is meant by "rich man?" It is plain from verse 26 what Jesus meant. The disciples were not wealthy but realized that Jesus included them. Jesus means any and every man who trusts in his earthly possessions more than in Jesus. Or maybe we should not even say: "more than." (Buls)

A camel, proverbially the largest animal, had a better chance of slipping through the eye of a needle, proverbially the smallest opening, than the most favored human being had of entering the kingdom of God through works. (TLSB)

The camel was the largest animal in Palestine, and the eye of the needle was the smallest opening available. Jesus chooses such disparate examples to make the impossibility obvious. The disciples’ amazement about the pious rich not entering God’s kingdom demonstrates a confusion

of the two types of righteousness. Even the highest level of civil righteousness still does not merit righteousness before God. When the onus is on humanity, a camel can more easily squeeze through the eye of a needle than a rich man enter God's kingdom. Here Jesus again specifies the rich, as in v 23, in contrast to his more generic statement in v 24. Jesus once more varies the construction with a substantival adjective *plousion* as the subject followed by an infinitive. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

The disciples were not wealthy but realized that Jesus included them. (B)

**10:26** *exceedingly astonished* – The disciples understood that the manner in which Jesus spoke of the rich in fact blocks the way for any man and they were frightened by the implication. (Lane)

"Even more amazed." A very strong expression. NEB: "They were more astonished than ever." Their amazement gave evidence to itself by what they said. The translations are divided between reading "to each other" and "to Him," nor does it make any difference. Matthew and Luke are of no help at this point. "Well then!" is an exclamation in the Greek, not translated by NIV. The disciples betray their synergism and openly contradict the passive used by Jesus which denotes God as agent. (Buls)

Lenski: The sense is 'And then nobody can be saved!' i.e. what Jesus says cannot be true. (Buls)

The disciples acknowledge that in this event it would be impossible also for the poor; for if the abundance of earthly wealth in the case of the rich should make for the absolute impossibility of personal salvation, will not then earthly possessions, on the whole, where they are not so much in evidence, and even where they are wanting, but for this very reason are prized so highly, serve to render salvation difficult, and even impossible of attainment. (Ylvisaker)

*be saved – tis dunatai sōthēnai*: The disciples have it correct when they use the passive, "be saved." Jesus affirms this when he credits God alone for salvation. The words of Christ make the disciples rightly despair of humanity as the source of salvation. They are rightly led to the question of who then can be saved. Their question helps redirect the focus to the person and work of Christ. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

**10:27** *With man this is impossible, but not with God.* Salvation is totally the work of God. Every attempt to enter the kingdom on the basis of achievement or merit is futile. Apart from the grace of God, no one can be saved. (CSB)

"Looked at them" again denotes Jesus' love. "He went on to say." On the thought in this verse look at Genesis 18:14 and Luke 1:37. "Man" means "people." Note the word order. (Buls)

It is no more impossible for God to save a self-righteous rich man than to save a self-righteous poor man. (Buls)

Stoekhardt: God has the power to convert and renew sinful people so that their heart is torn loose from all earthly things and they cling to Him alone. (Buls)

Don't overlook the fact that the disciples, and all of us, have a dear lesson to learn. (Buls)

The usage of *emblemō* resembles the usage of *periblepō* (v 23). When the verb appears, a significant revelation about Christ typically follows. Of the twelve occurrences in the New

Testament, Jesus is the actor in six instances, two of which are Law (Lk 20:17; 22:61) and the remaining Gospel (Mt 19:26; Mk 10:21, 27; Jn 1:42). Jesus' intent gaze at his disciples with a subsequent word of Gospel (Mk 10:27) parallels Jesus' loving gaze at the rich young man in the previous pericope (Mk 10:21). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

When human activity has been ruled out, excluded, and dried up, the unlimited flood of Christ's mercy enters in. The words "With man it is impossible" put the final nail into the coffin of human merit. The text then redirects the focus to Christ: ". . . but not with God. For all things are possible with God." This indicates the limitlessness of God's grace, the nature of the Gospel. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

God can bring even a rich man to renounce his dependence on riches, and to trust in the living God. (Concordia Bible with Notes)

People cannot enter the kingdom of God on their own merit. Yet, God calls and gathers people into His kingdom by grace (cf. Romans 3:21-26) (TLSB)

The Gospel is God's gift to man. (Lane)

**10:28-31** Perhaps Peter accepts Jesus' statement that the rich do not merit the kingdom. Yet, presumably Peter does not understand Jesus as saying that saving oneself is impossible, but rather understands it to be just "difficult." As a result, Peter may be smugly pointing to the disciples' sacrificial acts, expecting merit before Jesus. They have forsaken everything. Jesus indicates that they indeed have a share in Jesus' blessing but also in his suffering. The Lord then further responds with these words: "But many who are first will be last, and the last first." Wanting to be first, which is Law-based, does not match with having a share in Christ. Rather, Mark directs us to the Christ who served us with his death and resurrection. Although first, he became last in order to bring great blessing to us. The gifts that Jesus articulates in v 30 do not result from the disciples' works but from Christ's favor. Although first, he humbled himself as servant of all to the point of death. Christ's statement in v 31 leads to the third and final prediction of his death and resurrection in vv 32-34. The number three emphasizes the completeness and assurance of the event, just as Jesus' three days in the tomb assure the reality of death (v 34). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

**10:28** *we have everything* – The note on Matthew 19:27 states, "Though based on a misunderstanding, Peter's anguished cry is nonetheless poignant, for he had left everything to follow Jesus. Owing to the heartfelt nature of Peter's exclamation, Jesus responds not with a rebuke but with a wonderful promise and reassurance. (TLSB)

**10:29** *truly I say to you* – Following Jesus entailed the loss of possession, even life itself. He is speaking not of those who injure wife and children, but who bear injury because of the confession of the Gospel. For the Gospel's sake we should even leave our body. (TLSB)

**10:30** *receive a hundredfold* – The life of discipleship is a combination of promise and persecution, blessing and suffering. God takes nothing from a Christian without making multiplied restoration in a new and glorious form. Paradoxically, fellowship with other believers develops most deeply in persecution. (CSB)

More than replacing what we lost to follow Him. (TLSB)

*the age to come.* These two terms take in all of time from the fall of man to the eternal state. The present age is evil (Gal 1:4), but the coming righteous age will begin with the second advent of Christ and continue forever. (CSB)

*persecutions.* Satan will always stir up opposition against God's people. (TLSB)

These are blessings a hundred-fold greater than was the sacrifice he is called to make. (Concordia Bible with Notes)

*brothers...sister...mothers and children* – Because we belong to Christ, flesh and blood relatives may spurn and ridicule us, and we may also suffer more serious persecutions. But Jesus assures us that we will have all we need in the family of our Lord Jesus Christ. His love dwelling in the hearts of believers will come to meet us. Those are bonds of love more precious than all earthly bonds of blood. They last into eternity. (PBC)

*eternal life.* Beyond the conflicts of history is the triumph assured to those who belong to God. (CSB)

The Savior has added also that he shall receive “now” in this time, houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life. He shall, then be recompensed here and in eternity for the painful severance of earthly ties. We shall have fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and house and home in the Church of God. If we forfeit the friendliness of the world, we gain the friendship of God and of the children of God; if we lose our earthly property, we receive the blessings of grace; if we are deprived of peace with men, we win that peace which passeth all understanding, and at last, the eternal peace. Truly, Jesus' words are rich in promise. But may we remember that this is a reward of grace, an inheritance! We shall inherit eternal life. But the idea of an inheritance excludes every consideration of merit. (Ylvisaker)

**10:31** *first will be last.* A warning against pride in sacrificial accomplishments such as Peter had manifested (v. 28). (CSB)

Jesus adds this word of warning and admonition. We must be faithful and persevere until the end. The reward may be easily forfeited. Peter and the other apostles should beware of any feeling of pride in the circumstance that they were the first who had left all to follow after Jesus. If they become arrogant and harp upon their legal prerogative, they shall be last and lose their reward completely. It is this concept which is unfolded in the following narrative of the laborers in the vineyard. (Ylvisaker)

The poor, sinners, and Gentiles whose confidence was in God alone would enter the Kingdom ahead of those whose spiritual confidence was in their worldly power and wealth. (TLSB)

There were men like Judas, one of the Twelve, or Caiaphas and Annas, high priest of God's people. They thought of themselves as “first.” They did not end that way. But many a simple believer, ignored and despised by the great of this world, but accepted by God, ends up “first.” (PBC)

**10:17–31** Jesus teaches His disciples that not even people with the greatest worldly means (e.g., a rich man) can enter the kingdom of God on their own merit. We cannot justify ourselves; we receive salvation (“inherit eternal life”) solely by grace through faith in Jesus, just like a little

child (10:13–16). • “My heart’s delight, My crown most bright, O Christ, my joy forever. Not wealth nor pride Nor fortune’s tide Our bonds of love shall sever.” Amen. (LSB 557:4). (TLSB)

*Jesus Again Predicts His Death*

**32 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, 33 saying, “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.”**

**10:32-34** The events of this pericope are leading up to Palm Sunday and Holy Week. Jesus will soon arrive in Jerusalem to fulfill his life’s work. The steadied focus of Jesus stands in bold contrast to the disciples and to us and our own distractions. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

Note the prominence of the phrase “going up to Jerusalem,” used twice. The phrase urges us to compare the disciples’ idea of exaltation in the city of the great king with Jesus’ humiliation in the place where Abraham was once spared from sacrificing his only beloved son. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

The disciples miss the point of what Jesus is plainly telling them, on many levels. First, how could the disciples be so perplexed, fearful, and overwhelmed both before and after the resurrection of Jesus unless they did not hear what he was saying? This seems to be the case still, as Christians often seem surprised when suffering comes, as the disciples did, even though the Bible tells us what to expect from our life in this world. Second, the disciples associate glory with temporary comfort for our human nature as opposed to hardship for a time in order to secure eternal consolation for body and soul. Third, the disciples, like most of the world, did not hear how Jesus was describing the singularly most significant event in all time and eternity, the universal atonement. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

**10:32** *going up to Jerusalem.* This last journey to Jerusalem began in a city called Ephraim (cf. Jn 11:54) and took Jesus into Galilee (Lk 17:11), south through Perea to Jericho (Lk 18:35), then to Bethany (Lk 19:29) and finally to Jerusalem (Lk 19:41). (CSB)

*Jesus walking ahead of them* – The action of Jesus’ walking ahead of the Twelve corresponds to rabbinic custom, but far more than this is involved. The description anticipates the action of the Risen Lord promise in Chs. 14:28; 16:7, and evokes the image of the powerful Savior who leads His people with purpose and direction. (Lane)

*they were amazed* – The disciples were surprised that Jesus would walk openly into the stronghold of His enemies (cf. Jn. 7:1-5); they expected a deadly confrontation (cf. Jn. 11:16). (TLSB)

The words indicate the firmness and alacrity with which He went to the sacrifice of Himself on the cross. (CB)

*those who followed.* Probably pilgrims on their way to the Passover in Jerusalem. (CSB)

*the Twelve*. Jesus' previous prophecies concerning his passion (8:31 and 9:31) and His reference to it on the way down the mountain from His Transfiguration (9:9-12) filled the hearts of the Twelve with amazement when they now saw Jesus lead the way to Jerusalem. Did He really intend to carry out what He had said? The others who followed Jesus were also filled with dread. They sensed that something momentous, mysterious and tragic was about to happen. (PBC)

What awakens amazement and terror in the disciples who follow is not the recognition that the road leads to Jerusalem not an awareness of what will be accomplished there, but Jesus Himself. The power of the Lord, who holds in His hands His own destiny as well as that of the people of God, is manifested for Mark and his readers in the awe and dread which characterize those around Him (cf. Ch. 9:32) (Lane)

**10:33–34** *Gentiles, who will ... kill him*. The word “crucify” does not occur in any of the passion predictions in Mark’s Gospel, but the statement that Jesus would be handed over to Gentiles to be killed by them suggests crucifixion, since this was the usual means of Roman execution of non-Romans. (CSB)

It was then that Jesus for the third time took The Twelve aside and again foretold His passion. This time His prediction was even more detailed. (PBC)

**10:33** *gentiles* – Romans. (TLSB)

**10:34** *will rise again* – There would be victory at the end; He would rise from the grave to life again. (PBC)

Jesus prophesied details of His Passion (cf. 15:1-16:8). (TLSB)

Even this time, as Luke reports, the disciples simply could not comprehend. But would you and I have understood all this before the fact, especially if your religious teachers had spoken of the Messiah as setting up an earthly kingdom? (PBC)

**10:32–34** Jesus predicts His trial, execution, and resurrection for the third time in Mk (cf 8:31–32; 9:30–32) while walking boldly to His death. Jesus goes to die the sinner’s death, accepting the Law’s penalty in our place. Faith looks to Christ crucified and risen and says “for me.” Luth: “Who is this ‘me’? It is I, an accursed and damned sinner, who was so beloved by the Son of God that He gave Himself for me” (AE 26:176). • “Your grace alone, dear Lord, I plead, Your death is now my life indeed, For You have paid my ransom.” Amen. (LSB 555:6). (TLSB)

*The Request of James and John*

**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.” **41** And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. **42** 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. 43 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 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.”**

**10:35–45** Parallel to 9:33–37. Both passages deal with true greatness and both follow a prediction of Jesus’ suffering and death. Both also show how spiritually undiscerning the disciples were. (CSB)

This passage is paralleled at Matthew 20:20-28. In Matthew the mother approaches Jesus with the request. The differences between the two accounts are very minor. There are no conflicts or disagreements. Form criticism plays real havoc with this section. They speak of primary and secondary narratives, the theology of the early church and early Christology. John as author of the fourth Gospel is subtly denied. This opinion is found in the *Interpreter's Bible*. (Buls)

Lessons in humility, after Caesarea Philippi, are intertwined with the three passion narratives. See Mark 9:33-37; 10:13-16 and this one at 10:35-45. Furthermore, read John 13:4-17 and Luke 22:24-30. Sinful pride was constantly evident in the disciples. Furthermore, the disciples were blind as to the true meaning of Jesus' suffering and death and the nature of His Kingdom. See Acts 1:6. The disciples were a strange mixture of faith and selfish pride. But Jesus always gently leads them back to the truth. Compare John 15:2-3. Jesus constantly purifies the pure. (Buls)

The preceding context provides the basis of the misguided question of James and John as recorded in Mk 10:35. A ministry of glory attracts those who only heard Jesus say, “No one who has left home. . . . for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age . . . and in the age to come” (vv 29–30). The self-aggrandizing question of James and John (v 37) shows that they also overlooked the theology of the cross in Jesus’ third passion prediction (vv. 33–34). The material following the text illustrates the final verse (v 45). In giving sight to Bartimaeus, entering Jerusalem on a colt, cursing hypocrisy and cleansing the misused temple area, Jesus served God and was giving his life to ransom people from evil. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

After Peter’s confession identifying Jesus as the Messiah (8:27–30), Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be killed, and after three days rise again. He made three such predictions. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The issue of greatness first emerged in 9:33–37, just after the second prediction, when Jesus and the disciples were on the road to Capernaum. The third prediction took place when they were on their way to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way for astonished disciples (usually the teacher was in the middle with disciples in front and behind). Then James and John decided to ask Jesus a question. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

#### Parallel Passages

1. Mark 9:33–37 deals with true greatness. Both this passage and our text follow a prediction of Jesus’ suffering. Both show how spiritually undiscerning the disciples were. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

2. Matthew 20:20–28 is a direct parallel. The request, in this case, is made by the mother of James and John, yet there is no contradiction. She came to Jesus with her sons. Jesus’ response was directed at James and John, who were really asking through their mother, and who were present. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

3. Luke 22:24–30 reports a third dispute about greatness. This takes place after the Passover meal while the disciples were still in the upper room. Jesus’ response reflects his foot washing (John 13) as a servant. He confers a kingdom on the disciples and promises them great places at the table in his kingdom. Jesus then addresses Peter, who boasts of his great commitment to serve the Lord. Jesus predicts Peter’s three denials, and also his restoration in faith. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

4. Philippians 2:1–11 describes the kenosis or self-emptying (2:7) of Jesus while taking on the very nature of a servant. Being united with Christ (2:1) makes it possible for us to deny self, take up our cross, and follow Jesus in servanthood. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

5. Luke 14:7–11 records Jesus’ parable about taking places of honor at the table and ends with the oft-repeated principle, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

**10:35–36** *want ... want.* James’s and John’s desire for position and power would be realized only if they willingly submitted to servanthood (see “wants ... wants” in vv. 43–44). (CSB)

**10:35** Here is the root of the trouble. The disciples are consumed with their desires, in contrast to what Jesus taught them in the simple prayer, “Thy will be done.” Similarly, the disciples want “whatever we ask” instead of praying in Jesus’ name (cf. Jn 14:14). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

Using a concordance, review biblical references to James. In Greek, his name is that of the Old Testament patriarch Jacob. Some scholars think that Jesus and James were cousins (Mt 27:56; Jn 19:25). Note that in Matthew’s and Mark’s Gospels, the earlier accounts, James is always mentioned before his brother John. Three times, Luke (Lk 8:51; 9:28; Acts 1:13) places the name of John before that of his brother, suggesting that John became more prominent only as the memory of his brother receded. James’ memory and leadership may have had more meaning in the Markan community because he is mentioned nine times in the Gospel of Mark, while in Matthew he is mentioned only three times and in Luke—Acts only seven times. James is not only one of the Twelve, he is one of the privileged few to be with Jesus at special times. The preacher should consider reviewing the events of Mk 5:37–43; 9:2–13; 13:3–37; and 14:33–42 in the sermon. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

It was surprising that James and John brought this request to Jesus. As part of the inner circle they should have known better. But the human heart is by nature sinful. According to Matthew it was their ambitious mother who actually brought the request to Jesus. Mark put the words into the mouths of James and John and showed that they went along with her in their ambition. (PBC)

*we want you to do for us whatever we ask* – More shocking was their preliminary request with which they sought to bind Jesus without His knowing what they were going to ask. Their request showed they believed Jesus could give them anything they might ask. That they first

asked Jesus to assure them hints that they suspected Jesus might not approve. How right they were! (PBC)

James and John asked for a decision before they made known the nature of the request. (TLSB)

They practically ask Jesus to sign a blank check. Likely they had misunderstood Matthew 19:28. (Buls)

**10:35b-37** Ponder the incredible requests the two brothers ask of Jesus. They seek privilege and power in the messianic kingdom, perhaps sitting beside Jesus as messianic judge or beside him at the messianic banquet (Daniel J. Harrington, “The Gospel according to Mark,” *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* [Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990] 618). Speculate on their motives and reflect on how we as disciples today make analogous demands of God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

In the parallel story in Matthew (20:20–28), the mother of James and John makes the request. The difference can be easily explained. A request can be identified by asker or instigator. Did the sons have the idea but have their mother actually ask Jesus or vice versa? Some scholars see Matthew protecting the reputation of James and John. Perhaps Luke was inspired to omit the story for a similar reason. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

The brothers show how they would use power in Lk 9:52–56. The brothers who ask Jesus for permission to have lightning destroy a village are aptly called “Sons of Thunder” (Mk 3:17). Scholars speculate that Herod Agrippa I first killed James either because of his prominence or because he was especially feared and hated. His thundering reputation may have stayed with him even after Jesus’ resurrection. Speculation on his character and reputation as a “Son of Thunder” could add human questions to the sermon. Do we use “thunder” to seek power and influence in God’s service? Is thunder and lightning the glory of Christ we want to share? Do we as Christians expect special rewards for service to God, e.g., less suffering or more prosperity? The brothers’ question can also hold comfort for pastors and congregations. Thank God for bad questions! The two brothers asked an unworthy question, but all disciples received a blessing in Jesus’ response. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

To sit at the right and left hand would be to hold the two most important royal court positions. Although a democracy is completely different from the royal court image in James’ mind, for the sake of comparison, it might be similar to asking a presidential candidate for the positions of vice president and secretary of state in the new administration. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**10:36** WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME – Jesus asks that of you and me today. What is it that you seek regarding greatness—success in business, power in the church, status before others, or a sincere desire to serve God to the best of your ability? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Jesus does not sign a blank check. (Buls)

Notice how Jesus is so consistently matter-of-fact rather than being exasperated, condescending, or cynical. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

**10:37** *sit at your right and the other at your left.* Positions of prestige and power. (CSB)

First and second positions of power. James and John are referring to an earthly kingdom. (TLSB)

The disciples are sincere and forthright but much mistaken in their understanding. "In your glory" is equivalent to "in your Kingdom." (Buls)

James and John want to sit at the right and left hand of Jesus when he comes into his glory. Why? Attention? Power? How meaningful is it to sit with someone when you have no real part in their glory? Since humanity has thrown away the glory that God gave us as the climax of his creation made in his image, man has had an insatiable appetite for glory. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

IN YOUR GLORY - *Glory, hē doxa*, in the proper sense of the word, means "to do what no one else can or would do." From a human perspective, *glory* has to do with a person's ability to take more than they give and to protect themselves, absolutely. What kind of people have their pictures on the covers of magazines? Athletes, who win at the expense of others; actors, who are paid to pretend to be what we are not; business people who are the most effective at turning a profit. People want to be associated with the great, by proximity, imitation, or just by a ball cap or T-shirt. At the same time, many such people have no interest whatsoever in pursuing the discipline or study that would make them like the person they admire. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

From God's perspective, *glory* means to lose everything so that others might gain, to live a real life that will make a real life possible for others, and to give only and never take from others, except to take their condemnation upon himself. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

**10:38** *you don't what you are asking* – Jesus' answer was blunt. He told them right out that they did not know what they were asking. (PBC)

By "you don't know what you're asking" Jesus is signaling them to stop pursuing this course. He is gentle. (Buls)

*drink the cup I drink*. A Jewish expression that meant to share someone's fate. In the OT the cup of wine was a common metaphor for God's wrath against human sin and rebellion (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17–23; Jer 25:15–28; 49:12; 51:7). Accordingly, the cup Jesus had to drink refers to divine punishment of sins that he bore in place of sinful mankind (see 10:45; 14:36). (CSB)

Figures of speech for intense experiences associated with suffering and death. Early Christians referred to martyrdom as baptism with blood. (TLSB)

"Drink" is present active, denoting His active obedience, and "baptized" is present passive, denoting His passive obedience. He is implying that the way to glory is the way of suffering. (Buls)

Jesus is the truth and consistently exposes it. He says that James and John do not know what they are asking. "To drink the cup" is a metaphor, describing the content of one's life. "Baptism" means "to wash" or "to be awash." This, too, refers to the whole content or context of a person's life. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

“Cup” can be a semitic expression for either blessings (Pss 16:5; 23:5; 116:13) or woes. Here it symbolizes Jesus’ suffering and is to be interpreted in light of passages like Is 49:6; 51:17–23; Ps 75:8; Jer 25:15–28; 49:12; and Ezek 27:31–34. Baptism or burial in water can symbolize purity (Mk 1:9) or death (Ps 69:2–3, 15; Mk 14:36). Here Baptism is obviously parallel to the cup of suffering. There are a variety of extra-biblical references to Baptism as martyrdom (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., edited by Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker [Chicago: U. of Chicago, 1979] 132). The Baptism imagery, for some reason not reported in the Matthean version of this incident, can be explained and illustrated well by reference to Romans 6. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

Note the present tense is used to describe Jesus’ drinking and being baptized while aorist infinitives are used for the two disciples’ fate. Jesus asks if they can completely participate in his ministry of suffering and death, which is already in process. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

They did not understand that the way to the throne is one of suffering and death, His suffering and death He had just spoken about. (PBC)

The cup and baptism signify that Jesus in His passion will be the voluntary sacrifice for the sins of men. (Lane)

**10:39 WE CAN** - “‘We can,’ they answered.” Paul reminds us, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you . . . we have different gifts, according to the grace given us” (Rom 12:3–7). Has God graced you with mature faith and the right spiritual gifts for the big job you want to do? Or is there another job for which you are better equipped by God? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

How typical it is of human nature to say easily and quickly what we are loath to accomplish faithfully. “Talk is cheap.” Yet once again, Jesus’ response is very matter-of-fact and to the point. In spite of the disciples’ vanity and failings, they are his chosen vessels and, once filled with the Holy Spirit (at Pentecost), they will indeed follow in the way of their Master. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

The confident reply of the two disciples, together with Jesus’ corrective remarks, suggest that James and John understood Jesus’ fate and their own to be that of heroic martyrs, perhaps in the manner of the Maccabee brothers (C. E. B. Cranfield, *Gospel according to Saint Mark* [Cambridge, University Press, 1959] 338). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

Their single-word (in Greek) answer is astounding. Look at 14:50. Their self-confidence did not proceed from faith. Jesus’ answer to them is a prophecy fulfilled at Acts 12:2 and Revelation 1:9. To drink the cup and to be baptized are obvious metaphors for suffering. (Buls)

*you will drink the cup* – Jesus told them that they would indeed share in that suffering. (PBC)

Jesus predicted a life of suffering for the sake of the Gospel. (TLSB)

“Jesus said to them, ‘You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with.’” It is highly significant that Jesus uses sacramental language. The cup of God’s

wrath is described in the Old Testament (Is 51:17, 22; Lam 4:21; Ps 75:8; etc.). Jesus drank the cup of God's wrath while on the cross (Mark 14:36; John 18:11). By doing this for us, Jesus turned the cup of God's wrath at our sins into the cup of God's blessing for us. In fact, one of the first names for the Lord's Supper was "the cup of blessing" (1 Cor 10:16; unfortunately, the NIV translates it "cup of thanksgiving"). We who drink the Lord's cup receive his grace together with his blood. We also pledge ourselves to be faithful to him who shed his blood for us, even to death. The early church called the martyrdom of a Christian "to share in the cup of Christ" (Martyrdom of Polycarp 14:2). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Jesus was baptized into his role as the suffering Servant. The words the Father spoke at his Baptism (Mark 1:11) draw in part on Isaiah 42:1, the first of the four Suffering Servant Songs in Isaiah. Isaiah 53 is the fourth Song and the best known, since it prophesies his death and resurrection so clearly. We too are baptized into suffering in that we are baptized into the death of Christ, so that we might die to sin and live in newness of life (Rom 6:1-4). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

In his omniscience, Jesus knew that James would be martyred (Acts 12:2), and John would be exiled to Patmos. All Christians will share in the sufferings of the Lord. We carry in our bodies the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our bodies (2 Cor 4:10). We participate in the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet 4:13). The sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives (2 Cor 1:5). As we share in the sufferings we enter a fellowship with all believers who suffer (Phil 3:10). We continue the work of God in Christ by offering our lives as "instruments" of righteousness for the Lord (Rom. 6:13). The hardships we Christians suffer—sometimes even at the hands of the organized church—happen so that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead (2 Cor 1:8-9). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

To share someone's cup was a recognized expression for sharing his fate. In the OT the cup of wine is a common metaphor for the wrath of God's judgment upon human sin and rebellion, and this understanding was kept alive into the first century. (Lane)

*be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with.* The image of baptism is parallel to that of the cup, referring to his suffering and death as a baptism (see Lk 12:50; cf. Ro 6:3-4 for the figure). (CSB)

Apparently Jesus call His passion a baptism (cf. Luke 12:50) because He and His disciples were familiar with John's rite of repentance, which he called "baptism" and set in an explicit context of God's judgment upon human sin. Jesus understood that His baptism expressed His solidarity with sinful men and signified His willingness to assume the burden of the judgment of God. The baptism which He anticipates is His death upon the cross in fulfillment of His messianic vocation. Applied to Jesus, the images of the cup and baptism signify that He bears the judgment merited by the sins of men. (Lane)

**10:39-40** Jesus teaches three things. First, the brothers will share his cup and Baptism, i.e., they will suffer for the sake of the Son of Man's ministry. Second, in his state of humiliation, Jesus cannot grant positions of power or privilege. Third, the places are not open for arbitrary distribution but are designated for those for whom they have been prepared. God the Father is clearly the implied giver, but he remains unstated out of reverence for God's name by listeners or readers. Matthew (20:23) makes explicit what Mark implies. The recipients remain a mystery. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**10:40** *is not mine to grant.* Jesus would not usurp his Father's authority. (CSB)

Compare these translations: NIV: "These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared." Beck: "Something I can give only to those for whom it is prepared." (Buls)

Ylvisaker: This may be done only in accordance with the will of the Father, to whom He now willingly submits. In His lowly estate he may do nothing of Himself (John 5:19). (Buls)

Stoekhardt: Jesus does not say that the Father has a power which the Son does not have. He means that He does not act as does an earthly king. He does not assign places to His servants in the Kingdom on the basis of caprice or pleasure but the Father, who has chosen them from eternity by grace to everlasting life, will give them their portion with the Son in the coming glory and rule. (Buls)

Lenski: Jesus is now carrying out all the Father's counsel of grace and thus says regarding these glory-seats that they are not his own to allot by gift at this late date. Their very preparation the Father has attended to long ago, also their allotment to those who shall occupy them . . . It is possible that this knowledge was withheld from Jesus during His state of humiliation. (Buls)

In 37 James and John said: "Give to us." In 40 Jesus says: "It is not mine to give." They ask on the basis of presumptuous pride. His answer is the very antithesis of this -- humility. (Buls)

Notice the humility and focus of the Son of God. First, he explains that one's place in the universe is determined by the Father; this prerogative does not belong to Jesus. Second, Jesus consistently refers to and defers to the will of God, who has prepared work for us to do and reward that is concomitant with such service. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

**10:41** *the ten.* The other disciples. (CSB)

*indignant.* Possibly because they desired the positions of prestige and power for themselves. (CSB)

The other disciples also hoped to sit in the seats of highest honor. (TLSB)

Hendriksen: The spiritual attitude of the ten was not any better than that of the two. How easy it is to condemn in others what we excuse in ourselves. (Buls)

Lenski: The ten show themselves no better than the two. Many feel wronged by the success of others, when similar success on their part appears quite without wrong to them. (Buls)

Surely the other disciples would take advantage of the lesson just taught, but they did not. Again, human nature simply refuses to grasp the truth, but instead grasps in futility for what does not belong to it. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

*aganaktein*, "to become indignant," is the same word used in reaction to the woman in Mk 14:4. It marks an expression of displeasure. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

"When the ten heard about this, they became indignant." Paul reminds us to "serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' If you

keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other” (Gal 5:13–15). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The ten were no better than James and John, but only sorry they hadn’t thought of asking first. (PBC)

Their insensitivity to the seriousness of the moment links them with James and John, and suggests the cruel loneliness which Jesus faced the journey to Jerusalem. It also indicates the degree to which selfish ambition and rivalry were the raw material from which Jesus had to fashion the leadership for the incipient Church. (Lane)

**10:42-44** The Good Shepherd addresses a situation that is getting out of hand. Jesus now plainly and profoundly inverts the accepted thinking of dysfunctional humanity. Pyramid schemes refer to businesses that base their success on an ever-growing number of supporting workers. Jesus inverts the pyramid concept. The more capable you are, the more God has gifted and called you, the lower you place yourself in the interest of supporting others. This is not a glory that anyone would seek. It is a service that only regeneration, the Spirit of God, and the needs of people can press us toward. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

In Christ’s kingdom, positions of authority carried a servant’s job description, as He demonstrated with His own life. (TLSB)

**10:42** *Jesus called them to him* – Lest this matter become a cause of strife among the Twelve, Jesus then instructed them on the enormous difference between the kingdoms of this world and the kingdom of heaven. (PBC)

"Called them together" is used more frequently in Mark than Matthew or Luke. Jesus nips the argument in the bud. Note the utter contrast between Himself and the twelve. Note the parallelism for the sake of emphasis. The point is their selfish, dominant authority. It is a fact of life in the kingdom of power and is such because we live in a world of sin. Jesus is not passing judgment on them here. (Buls)

*exercise authority over them* – *katexousiasoudzin* means pure raw power. In a world having many unbelievers, it necessary for the rulers to have this authority so that they can make society safe for all.

**10:43** *Not so among you.* Jesus overturns the value structure of the world. The life of discipleship is to be characterized by humble and loving service. (CSB)

This is not a wish. It's a fact. "Among you" denotes the kingdom of grace. Note that this phrase is repeated in this verse and once again in 44. In 42 selfish, dominant authority is limited to a few. What Jesus speaks of in 43 and 44 is open to all. It is by grace, not by arbitrary choice or human endeavor, sinful human endeavor. In both 43 and 44 we have not a wish, but God's established way. (Buls)

*great among you* – *megos* means a high position or more prominent. This is associated with more responsibility. This takes for granted that there will be ranks and gradations of office in the church. Christ lays down the rule that men who become governors therein in order that they may serve their brothers be ministers of those who are subject to them.

*Must be your servant* – diakonos means to be ready to serve. It makes no difference whether there is a reward. They also know those whom they serve very well so that they can serve them properly. Those are served will be better off for having been served by these leaders (Ephesians 5:21-6:9).

**10:44** *would be first* – protos means chief, the most prominent or leading person.

*Be your slave* – doulos – Slaves had no freedom or rights. When Jesus washes the feet of his disciples in John 13, he is doing the work that only non-Jewish slaves did. They had the lowest status in society.

Stoekhardt: The domain of the church is nothing but service. (Buls)

Jesus teaches an important lesson to all disciples who seek honor, glory, or power. First, power marks the leadership style of non-Christians (v 42). The verbs *katakurieuosin*, “lord it over” and *katexousiazousin*, “exercise authority over” are emphatic and speak of absolute power. Jews living under Roman rule would have vivid biblical and contemporary examples of such arbitrary and absolute domination. The preacher may want to use illustrations of abuse of power in today’s political world to demonstrate Jesus’ concern about power seeking in the church. Second, greatness for disciples of Christ comes in service (vv 43–44a). The call to discipleship is countercultural in an age where people demand service. Third, the Son of Man provides the model and basis for such servant leadership (v 45). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**10:45** A key verse in Mark’s Gospel. Jesus came to this world as a servant—indeed, the Servant—who would suffer and die for our redemption, as Isaiah clearly predicted (Isa 52:13–53:12). (CSB)

*but to serve* – Jesus set aside His own welfare for the sake of sinners. (TLSB)

*ransom*. Means “the price paid for release (from bondage).” Jesus gave his life to release us from bondage to sin and death. (CSB)

This expression explains Jesus’ mission and describes the purpose of the cross that He would soon bear. (TLSB)

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” The gospels, record the title “Son of Man” 81 times. Daniel 7:13–14 pictures the Son of Man (Jesus) appearing before the Ancient of Days (Jesus’ ascension and session) in the end times. He is entrusted by the Ancient of Days with authority (Matt 28:18), glory (John 13:31–32), and sovereign power (1 Cor 15:24–28). Jesus gives his life in place of humankind, a substitutionary atonement, as the price paid to release us from bondage to sin, death, and the devil. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The conjunction “for” makes evident that all the preceding thought is based on the verse to follow and concludes what the introductory verses (32–34) began. Lordship, dominion, power, and glory are displayed in self-sacrifice on behalf of the helpless. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

lutron – The symbolism is that of prisoners who are liberated upon the payment of a price. This ransom was not paid to the devil, but to divine justice. God breaks the power of sin (as one would break chains) in order to release people from bondage. It is also a gift that covers or forgives a fault, given by one who acted in our place. In OT life, it was the dignified duty of a responsible relative to free a loved one taken as a captive, or to buy back land that belonged to the family. These were the responsibilities of the “kinsman-redeemer” (Leviticus 25; Ruth 4). God established a bond with us as our Creator. He then extended that bond to that of Redeemer by delivering Israel from the bondage in Egypt (Ex 6; 15:13), and promising to redeem the nation from its chronic, incorrigible sinful condition, though the nation would have to undergo tribulation first, as with the disciples in our text. The act of redeeming another was often done by money payment, but in more important transactions it was done with the life of an animal – or of another human being. The single most important passage for understanding Jesus’ use of this word is Isaiah 52:13-53:12. There, perhaps more clearly than in any other passage of Scripture, the Suffering Servant is described as offering his life as the price of redemption for the sins of many. In addition, the meaning of Jesus’ description of his purpose as “to serve” is defined by the four Suffering Servant Songs (Isaiah 42:1-9; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12).

*for*. That is, “in place of,” pointing to Christ’s substitutionary death. (CSB)

*many*. In contrast to the one life given for our ransom. (CSB)

"You see, even . . ." The "but" means "namely" or "in particular." Here is the true meaning of service. It is selfless, voluntary and universal. Though men served Him, never did He ask to be served. (Buls)

Hendriksen lists these verses as parallel thoughts: 1 Peter 1:18-19; Exodus 30:12; Leviticus 1:4; 16:15,16,20-22; Numbers 3:40-51; Psalm 49:7-8; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23; Galatians 3:13; 4:5; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 2 Peter 2:1; Revelation 5:6,12; 13:8; 14:3-4. (Buls)

The redeemed are called many compared with the one Son of man. Look at Romans 5:19. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: The term 'many' is used with special reference to the great number in whose behalf the sacrifice should be made.

The Reformed, of course, deny the universal atonement at this point. They say that Christ died only for the elect out of all nations, many, not all. (Buls)

**10:35–45** Jesus puts our welfare and needs ahead of His own as He conducts His ministry, showing us what real leadership is. Jesus shows that those who lead in the kingdom of God serve others in humility. He leads by laying down His life as the sacrifice for our sins and calls us to similar sacrifice. • Dear Father, You have sent Christ to serve us, although He had the right to demand our service. Forgive us, Father. Lead us to give ourselves for the sake of others, that we, being last, might truly be first with Jesus in His kingdom. Amen. (TLSB)

*Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight*

**46 And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 48 And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried**

**out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” 49 And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.” 50 And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51 And Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And the blind man said to him, “Rabbi, let me recover my sight.” 52 And Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.**

**10:46-52** The healing of Bartimaeus occurs in the synoptic gospels after Jesus predicts his imminent death (Matt 20:18; Mark 10:32; Luke 18:31), and after the request of James and John to sit beside Jesus in his glory (Mark 10:37). This request results in Jesus’ announcement of servanthood: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (v 45). Our text illustrates exactly what Jesus meant by serving. Jesus rebuked the world’s pressure not to cry out to him, and called forth a believer to lay aside his old life and be renewed. After the healing of Bartimaeus, Jesus fulfills his mission as he enters Jerusalem to lay down his life for all. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

We need to look at the verbs depicting action in this pericope to understand the dynamics of this Gospel reading. Bartimaeus was sitting by the side of the road and begging (v 46). This suggests that he is idle. *What blindness and poverty keep Christians sitting idly by the side of the road today?* He clearly heard that the person before him was Jesus of Nazareth. He began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (v 47). Bartimaeus acts with the certainty of faith when he asks Jesus for mercy. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

**10:46 Jericho.** A very ancient city located five miles west of the Jordan and about 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem. In Jesus’ time OT Jericho was largely abandoned, but a new city, south of the old one, had been built by Herod the Great. (CSB)

This ancient city’s center had moved to various locations, causing writers to describe it more like a region (cf Lk 18:35. (TLSB)

*leaving Jericho* . Luke says Jesus “approached the city” (Lk 18:35). He may have been referring to the new Jericho, while Matthew (20:29) and Mark may have meant the old city. (CSB)

*Bartimaeus ... son of Timaeus.* Aram *bar* means “son of.” The translation was included to benefit Gentile readers. (TLSB)

*a blind man ... begging.* The presence of a blind beggar just outside the city gates, on a road pilgrims followed on the way to Jerusalem, was a common sight in that day.(CSB)

**10:47 Son of David.** A Messianic title (see Isa 11:1–3; Jer 23:5–6; Eze 34:23–24; and notes on Mt 1:1; 9:27). This is the only place in Mark where it is used to address Jesus. (CSB)

“Son of David” is an important Christological title (cf. Matt 20:29–34; Luke 18:35–43). Bartimaeus associates this title with mercy (v 46, 48). Later, (Mark 12:35) Jesus points out that this title is reserved for the Messiah, the Christ. In Matthew the people use the title to praise Jesus during the passion drama. The chief priests and teachers of the law, however, despised this identification (Matt 21:9, 15). Matthew’s genealogy highlights that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of David.” Jesus fulfills the promise of the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:14–17). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

*have mercy. Cry for help from God in Ps. (TLSB)*

**10:48** The crowd that accompanied Jesus included many who rebuked Bartimaeus. The imperfect verb in v 48 signifies that they kept on telling him to stop. They thought that his plea was not important to the Son of David. But Bartimaeus would not be intimidated by the world. He kept on shouting with confidence to the Son of David (v 48). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

**10:49** Jesus acted with authority as he ordered the crowd to “call him.” They did. Now the antagonists, conforming to Jesus’ attitude, adopted a new perspective. They no longer rebuked him; they encouraged him, and exhorted him to cheer up, get up, and find Jesus (v 49). Bartimaeus’ blindness and poverty did not hinder his life of faith. He threw his cloak aside, jumped on his feet, and went to Jesus. In spite of his blindness, he acted in a decisive manner, not because he saw physically but because Jesus called him. His eyes of faith perceived his Lord. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

**10:50** *cloak.* Folded on the lap to receive alms. He tossed away the cloak in order to get up, not knowing if later he would be able to find the alms and his source of warmth. (TLSB)

*sprang.* Shows urgent excitement. (TLSB)

**10:51** *Rabbi.* Hebrew word for “(my) teacher.” (CSB)

Jesus then questions him, “What do you want me to do for you?” (v 51). Bartimaeus calls him *rabboni*, “Rabbouni.” This title occurs only here and in John 20:16 in the New Testament. It is an intensified form of *rabbi*, “rabbi.” (The NIV translates it as if it simply was “rabbi,” which it is not.) While “rabbi” is the usual Hebrew term for respected religious teachers, the intensified form in our text was usually reserved for God himself in Jewish literature (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 6, p. 962). The title may be translated as “my Teacher (capitalized)” or “my Lord” (also in John 20:16, where the footnote in the NIV Study Bible ignores the variant Greek readings which indicate that the word means something like “Lord Teacher”). Bartimaeus therefore confesses that Jesus is more than another Jewish scholar; he is the Son of David who is also David’s Lord and God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

**10:52** *faith has made you – Saved by faith:* We need to examine the meaning of Jesus’ words, “Your faith has healed (perfect tense) you.” Should this be translated “your faith has healed you” or “saved you”? The Greek verb can mean either. I believe that both dimensions are important to the story. The main thrust is that the blind man received his sight, but added to that was Jesus’ affirmation based on Bartimaeus’ confession—that he was a member of the community of believers saved by faith. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

In the healings of Jesus, *sōizō* implies a healing of the whole person. This is significant, for then we can translate the text “your faith has saved you.” We find support for this in a similar encounter in Mark 5:34. (G. Foerster, “*sōizō*,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 7, p. 990). See also Luke 7:50; Matt 9:2. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Physical healing is only part of Christ’s work. Jesus rescued Bartimaeus from sinfulness as well as its collateral damage: blindness. (TLSB)

**10:46–52** Though Jesus is intent on going to the cross, He pauses to have mercy on Bartimaeus, who can do nothing to solve his problem except cry out to the Lord, “Have mercy!” Like Bartimaeus, learn to call on the Lord and trust in His power to deliver you. Jesus will hear and respond compassionately. • “Lord, Your mercy will not leave me; Ever will Your truth abide. Then in You I will confide.” Amen. (*LSB* 559:4) (TLSB)