

A Plea for Sight (v. 29-34)

- Jesus has been tipping over worldly structures... inverting our ways of thinking
- The identity of Jesus has been at the forefront and it has been surprising who has seen him clearly and who hasn't
- These two blind nobodies zeroed in on Jesus' identity; they cracked the code for Israel's long-awaited Messiah
 - How did street-level hearsay become truth so powerful, they cried out with abandon?
 - We don't know how much they understood, but we do know they perceived something about Jesus so many before had missed
- V. 32 – *And stopping, Jesus called them and said, "What do you want me to do for you?"*
 - With all that is looming before him, he stopped. Jesus stops.
- As opposed to seeking a privileged life, these two men sought the mercy of the great physician
- Upon beholding the world with new found sight, there was but one thing they wanted to do – Follow Jesus!

April 22, 2018

Going Up to Jerusalem

Matthew 20:17-34

A Prediction of Suffering (v. 17-19)

- An emphasis on "going up to Jerusalem"
 - Would have invoked thoughts of celebration, joy, worship, triumph
 - The disciples' minds would have gone to: the kingdom is about to be inaugurated
 - There seems to be an urgency for the disciples to understand; more details given
 - Not only was Jesus going to Jerusalem to die, but he was going to die by becoming accursed by God (Deut. 21:22-23; Gal. 3:13)
 - Israel's long-awaited Messianic King who was to rule and reign was going to be condemned, rejected, and crucified
 - What if in that moment of not seeing how any of it added up, they knew of a God who defies all humanly possibilities?
 - We serve a God who is always doing more than we can see

A Petition for Status (v. 20-28)

- This issue of greatness in the kingdom is an old favorite of the disciples
- This interaction calls to mind throne-room language... this coming and kneeling, and Jesus telling her to state her request
- She's pursuing kingdom honor, without the prerequisite of kingdom humility
- By the ways of the world's power structures, this petition makes sense
 - Jesus responds, *"You do not know what you are asking."* (v. 22)
 - *"Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?"* (v. 22)
- The "cup" is used metaphorically for suffering and pain, even devastation that comes by way of God's wrath

*Wake yourself, wake yourself,
stand up, O Jerusalem,
you who have drunk from the hand of the Lord
the cup of his wrath,
who have drunk to the dregs
the bowl, the cup of staggering. –Isaiah 51:17*

Thus the Lord, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. They shall drink and stagger and be crazed because of the sword that I am sending among them." –Jeremiah 25:15-16

- This cup is a vessel from which God will pour out his righteous judgment onto Jesus as the bearer of our sins
- In the eternal designs of Jesus serving as our sin-bearer, no, they will not drink that cup... but they will know suffering for following Christ
- V. 25 – *"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them."*
 - The world's way of achieving greatness is privilege through power... thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought
- V. 26 – *"It shall not be so among you."*
 - This type of self-promotion is not be among you, Lakeview Christians
- V. 26-27 – *"But whoever would be great among you must be your **servant**, and whoever would be first among you must be your **slave**"*
 - Two seats of status? No. Two lowly positions of sacrificial service? Yes.
 - Being a "follower" of Jesus means we actually have to follow him!
- V. 28 – *"even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*
 - The reality of Jesus giving his life as a ransom to redeem God's people corrects any ideas about serving our way into the kingdom