

AIM

- To show the contrast between what James and John asked Jesus to do for them, and what Bartimaeus asked for.
- To show that following Jesus is about service, not status – and that we need to ask Jesus for mercy, not a reward.
- To challenge group members to consider what they want Jesus to do for them.

EXPLORE

- None

LISTEN (DVD)

- Mark 10:36 – “What do you want Me to do for you?”
 - If God said, “What do you want Me to do for you?” what would you ask for?
 - Before James and John tell Jesus exactly what they want from Him, He tells them what He is going to do for them. But James and John respond to the news that their closest friend of the last three years is going to be brutally murdered (see Mark 10:33-34), not with grief, but with greed. He is deliberately going to give up His life for others; they are desperately trying to hang on to their lives for themselves.
 - James and John wanted power and prestige, importance and status and recognition—they want to win! But Jesus offers something far more valuable—Himself (Mark 10:45).
 - Following Jesus is about service, not status (Mark 10:42-44). Contentment, satisfaction, and fulfillment don’t come from status-seeking, or anything else—they come from God. We make these things more important than God. The Bible calls this idolatry—turning something God has created into a substitute for God. We are far too easily pleased, if only we had eyes to see it.
 - Ironically, this passage ends with a blind man who has perfect vision. Blind Bartimaeus called Jesus the “Son of David” (i.e., God’s King in God’s world) and asked for mercy (Mark 10:47-48)—he knew that he needed Jesus. His request was, “Master, I want to see,” and that’s exactly what the disciples should have asked for, too. In response to his request, he received mercy and followed Jesus (Mark 10:52).
 - James and John, and Bartimaeus were asked the same exact question by Jesus—“What do you want Me to do for you?” (Mark 10:36, 51). It is striking that while the disciples are rebuked by Jesus for their request, Bartimaeus is healed (lit. “saved”). Why does Jesus respond differently? Because, while the disciples demand that Jesus do whatever they ask of Him, Bartimaeus knows that he’s in no position to make demands—he knows he needs mercy. Although James and John are blind to it, blind Bartimaeus knows that the greatest treasure in the entire universe is standing right in front of him—he knows it can’t be grabbed with a grasping fist, but only received through opening his hand, begging for mercy, and following Jesus.
 - What do you want Jesus to do for you?

DISCUSS

- *Was there something in particular that stood out or stuck you from the DVD?*
- *Who do you identify with most and why? James and John? Or Bartimaeus?*
- *What do you want Jesus to do for you?*

FOLLOW-UP

None