

▼ **In the Shadow of the Cross - Part 3**

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- **Read the Passage: Matthew 20:17-34**

▼ **Understand the details of the passage.**

- Jesus gives the disciples a detailed prediction of his death and resurrection.
- ▼ The disciples respond selfishly:
  - ▼ John and James ask for key positions of honor.
    - They seem to interpret Jesus' prediction as an announcement that he will soon take his throne.
    - Through their mother, they ask to sit at his right and left.
    - The disciples resent this political maneuver.
  - Jesus uses this as an opportunity to teach them Kingdom values: greatness is about service.
- ▼ Jesus heals two blind men:
  - Two blind men hear that Jesus is passing through. What's life like for them? Illustrate this?
  - They address him by his messianic title and ask for mercy.
  - Jesus asks them what they want him to do for them. Why?
  - They ask for their sight.
  - Jesus heals them and they follow him.

▼ **Understand what Jesus is trying to accomplish and the significance of the disciples' response.**

- ▼ This is at least the 3rd time Jesus has predicted his impending death. He wants to prepare the disciples so that they can respond properly :
  - Matthew 16:13-28 - Jesus predicts his death.
  - Matthew 17:9-13 - Jesus predicts his death again.
- ▼ The disciples remain clueless:
  - Jesus has come out on top in every encounter with man, nature, and spirits up until now.
  - They don't understand the significance of his warning.
  - ▼ They don't understand how Jesus' death is actually going to affect them.
    - Consider how the disciples actually responded to Jesus crucifixion.

- Did they make plans for political office?
- What did they actually do?
- ▼ They don't engage with Jesus' warning!
  - Why is there a mismatch between the way Jesus views his impending death and the way the disciples view it?
  - Whose attitude needs adjusting?
  - What might the disciples have done differently in order to align with Jesus?
- What can you do when God tells you something that's a big deal to him but doesn't seem like a big deal to you?
- Does this resemble any physical human conditions that we've encountered in the Bible?
- ▼ **Understand our own response to the cross.**
  - If you didn't already know that Jesus was going to be crucified and resurrected, would you have predicted it at this point in his story?
  - Why did someone like Jesus have to die? What can God possibly have in mind?
  - What questions does this passage raise for you?
  - What questions does the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus raise for you?
  - God is becoming King by producing people who will oppose evil without spreading it.
- ▼ **Respond to the cross properly.**
  - The cross is not an accident! God wants us to learn from it.
- ▼ **Respond to God's warnings properly.**
  - Is God warning you about anything right now?
- ▼ **Discussion (last week):**
  - How have the disciples been responding to Jesus' warnings about his death? How have you been responding? How should you be responding?
  - What is God warning you about in your own life? How are you responding? How should you be responding?
  - Are there any areas of blindness in your life that you need Jesus to heal?
  - How can we help you? Do you need prayer for any of this?