
O.H.M.S. – Introduction of Mark 10:35-45

Poor James! It's tough enough having to save the world every 3 years but this time, Bond, James Bond, is summoned to save the global cinema industry as well. Some task but if anyone can do it Bond can. No spoilers - I looking forward to going to a cinema to see for myself - but I gather he's getting older, still involved in plenty of awesome action sequences but this time, less of a MCP, emotional desert & spiritual black hole but starting to learn to treat women as equal partners and to come to term with his own past losses and failures.

How will the world be saved? We too are HM servants charged with a mission to save the world, or at least to play our part in sharing the good news of God's grace in Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:19) For Bond it is not all fast cars, fancy gadgets, glamour & pretty women but blood, sweat & tears also. So too for Christ's follower's today in the service of the King of Kings! Jesus gives us our instructions & promises that He is not just in touch but also there with us in every situation however bleak & holds us. His authority is not the kind that rides rough-shod over people. Instead, He identifies with folk, comes alongside and gently guides.

As the Father has sent me so I am sending you....(John 20:21-22)

& He makes clear to misguided James & John, jostling for status & power, submit to the Lordship of God –to rise up, you must first bow down; to lead, you must serve.

Be Servant or slave of all –vv. 43-44

Today, let us learn what it may mean for you or me to serve as now sing *From heaven, You came* & then listen & reflect on Mark 10:35-45

The Servant King - Mark 10:35-45

He will not sign blank cheques.

He will give you all you need and much more beside,

.... often more than you have expected, always more than you realise.

But He will not give you everything you want nor everything that you ask for.

What you ask might not be His to give;

.....it might be neither good nor right for you or for Him.

Whether it was James & John themselves or their mother, who interceded for them

matters little; & the indignation of the other ten made it clear than they were no better. How little they realised or would accept that the Kingdom is about service,its insignia a manger, a towel & basin, & a cross.

Baptism and cup (vv. 38-40):

Jesus was speaking of the cup of suffering,
.....the cup from which He shrank from in dark Gethsemane.
The disciples' glib & quick reply to His question shows how little they understood His way or had counted the cost of following;
.....they were so concerned with privilege & status.
& when this King was lifted up & made His cross into His throne from which He rules the world, see who is on his right hand & His left!

Remember that you too in Baptism have been invited & welcomed into His way
..... and share His cup at every communion.
Being His disciple means that you also share the fellowship of His sufferings.

A ransom for many:

The Fathers of the early Church wrestled with this great saying trying to decide to whom the ransom was paid.
It could not be God if He is as Jesus teaches; but are we all slaves to evil?
One of the many convoluted explanations even saw Jesus as the cheese in a celestial mousetrap to trick & trap the Devil. Such questions are about as profitable as working out how many angels fit on a pin-head; & they belittle what, by His suffering, Jesus has achieved for you.

The key words are ***ransom, redeem, save, deliver, liberate.***

At the foot of the cross, you may realise only a fraction of the cost
.....& can find that He liberates/sets you free from the sins that hold you back, the things that spoil you and your life.;
He delivers you from your inner chains, saves you from being hostage to fortune
.....& sets you free to love.

Ransomed, healed, restored forgiven we sang in our opening hymn
... ***What kind of love is this?***