



James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." He replied, "What do you wish me to do for you?" They answered him, "Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" They said to him, "We can." 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; but to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at James and John. Jesus summoned them and said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Introductory Prayer: Lord Jesus, your apostles longed to follow you. You want to show me the difference between earthly and heavenly glory. For you, what matters is not being at Christ's right or left but sharing in his redemptive work. As I kneel before you today, I want to offer myself and all of today's struggles and efforts as a sign of my friendship and love.

Petition: Lord Jesus, help me to learn how to be a Christian leader.

1. Gentile Rulers, AKA, the Bossy Soul: People who "make their authority felt" have a variety of ways to do so. Sometimes they thank you for your good idea and then proceed to tell you why it would never work. Their approach is sometimes subtle — a quiet

reminder of potential negative consequences. Other times it can be a shout to help focus attention. We all know people like this, people who boss others around. Maybe we're even one of them.... Jesus has only one answer for this outlook — his own example: “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve...” Jesus is Lord, but he wasn't bossy!

2. If Not a Gulp, at Least a Sip: For James and John to follow Christ, they will have to “drink the cup” that the Lord will drink. What is this cup? Fast forward to Gethsemane: “Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me” (Luke 22:42). Jesus' own human nature struggled with the implications of full adherence to God's plan. Ultimately, he would drink that cup — one of bitter suffering, to the very dregs. He called James and John to imitate him. He is inviting us as well. Fortunately, he prepares our souls to be generous. He guides us to greater spiritual maturity, offering us little “sips” from his cup. The small sufferings of daily life purify our souls.

3. Servant Leadership: Jesus' life was a “ransom for many.” He was the servant of Yahweh and, as such, he constantly served others in their most profound needs. Jesus met people where they were the weakest: he helped the blind regain their sight, the lame to walk, lepers to be cleansed, the deaf to hear, the dead to rise, and to the poor he preached the good news (Cf. Matthew 11:5). A leader has vision, but unless he is a servant leader, he may see only his vision. We cannot allow ourselves to be out of touch with the needs of those around us. Let us strive to serve others by meeting them on their level.

Conversation with Christ: Thank you, Lord, for this time of prayer. I have seen how you formed James and John. Through humble service of my neighbor, help me to go to the next level.

Resolution: I will perform a hidden act of charity for someone whom I find bothersome.