

# The Problem of Ambition

## Mark 10: 35-45

(Mt. 20:20-28; see Lk. 22:24-47)

### 1. *The deceitfulness of wrong ambition*

- a. A secret approach, see v. 41
- b. An unlimited request

### 2. *The possible motives for ambition*

- a. Favouritism and wealth
- b. Power and social status
- c. Love, faith, loyalty

### 3. *The great price of ambition*

- a. The cup: Sacrifice and suffering
- b. The baptism: Immersed, dying to self
- c. The prophecy:  
The certainty of paying the price

### 4. *The exclusive right of God regarding ambition*

### 5. *The potential conflict among men with ambition*

### 6. *The meaning and greatness of good ambition*

- a. Not to rule,  
not to exercise authority
- b. To be a servant
- c. To be a slave, a bond-slave

### 7. *The supreme example of ambition*

- a. Supreme humiliation
- b. Supreme mission
- c. Supreme price

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him.  
“Teacher,” they said,  
“we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”

36 “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

37 They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right  
and the other at your left in your glory.”

38 “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said.  
“Can you drink the cup I drink  
or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”

39 “We can,” they answered.  
Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink  
and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with,

40 But to sit at my right or left  
is not for me to grant.  
These places belong to those  
for whom they have been prepared.”

41 When the ten heard about this,  
they became indignant with James and John.

42 Jesus called them together and said,  
“You know that those  
who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles  
lord it over them,  
and their high officials exercise authority over them.

43 Not so with you.  
Instead,  
whoever wants to become great among you  
must be your servant,

44 And whoever wants to be first  
must be slave of all.

45 For even the Son of Man  
did not come to be served,  
but to serve,  
and to give his life as a ransom for many.”