

THE PROBLEM OF AMBITION

MARK 10:35–45

Introduction

Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. This was to be a momentous visit to the capital. This was the visit when the crises of His death and resurrection were to take place. He had just shared the fact of the crisis again (vv. 17-19). For months it had consumed His attention and private messages to the disciples (Mt. 16:13-20; 16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27; 20:17). There was no question in the disciples' minds: this visit to Jerusalem was the momentous event for which they had long looked. Jesus was about to free Israel and set up His kingdom on earth.

We, who live today, know what Jesus meant by His death and resurrection. He was to die for our sins and be raised again to impart new life to us. But the disciples did not know this. Jesus had not yet died and been raised from the dead. To them He was speaking of an earthly and material kingdom. Therefore, if He were about to set up His kingdom, now was the time to seize the positions of power in His kingdom. Now was the time to secure the positions of rule and authority. (See *Christ, Messiah*, Mt. 1:18; *Baptism of Jesus and John*, Mt. 3:11; See Mt. 11:1-6; Mt. 11:2-3; *Prophecy Fulfilled*, Mt. 11:5; *Messiah, Judgment*, Mt. 11:6; *Jesus, No Publicity*, Mt. 12:16; See Lk. 7:21-23.)

This is what James and John were doing. They were assuring themselves of key positions in Jesus' government. The disciples argued over who should hold the highest positions in the kingdom of God. This conflict arose on several occasions (see Mt. 20:20-28; Mk. 9:33-37; Lk. 22:24-30). Their desire was for recognition and honour in an earthly kingdom. Jesus had to re-educate their thinking. The disciples' struggle for position and power should not surprise us, for all men have the same needs, the needs for...

- some recognition
- some authority
- some position
- some esteem
- some prestige
- some challenge
- some money
- some physical satisfaction

There is nothing wrong with these needs. They are human and legitimate needs and they must be met. But men allow their hearts to be overtaken with *selfishness* and begin to want more and more to the point of lusting and consuming and hoarding. They become prideful, covetous, worldly, ambitious, envious, and hurtful even to the point of destroying and killing.

What Christ sets out to do is to change the lives of men and re-educate men in their concept of greatness.

I. The deceitfulness of wrong ambition (v. 35).

II. The possible motives for ambition (vv. 36-37).

- III. The great price of ambition (vv. 38-39).
- IV. The exclusive right of God regarding ambition (v. 40).
- V. The potential conflict among men with ambition (v. 41).
- VI. The meaning of greatness of good ambition (vv. 42-44).
- VII. The supreme example of ambition (v. 45).

I. *Mark 10:35 Deceitfulness of Wrong Ambition*

The deceitfulness of wrong ambition. Note what James and John did.

1. They made a secret approach to Jesus. They wanted to get the upper hand on the other disciples; they were aware that the other disciples were also ambitious for position (see Lk. 9:46). They knew that they must get some kind of inside track. They persuaded their mother to go with them, and they approached Jesus when He was off by Himself (Mt. 20:20-21). Remember that Salome was probably the sister of Mary, the aunt of Jesus. Most likely James and John felt she would add weight to their request. Therefore, they made a secret approach to Jesus. The ambition that was gripping their heart was not healthy ambition; it was evil ambition. And evil ambition is sneaky. It tries to get an inside track, the upper hand, by hook or crook. It uses any means whatsoever, including the use and misuse of people, even loved ones (see *Salome*, Mt. 20:20-21).
2. They made an unlimited appeal. Note their words, “Do for us whatever we ask.” Again, they were being sneaky. They tried to get a commitment before they revealed their request. They sensed their desire might be wrong and evil; but they subdued the sense of conscience, blinded by the lust for honour, position, power, wealth, and recognition.

Thought 1. Wrong or evil ambition is *always deceitful* and *sneaky*. When a man wants something he should not have and he is determined to get it anyway, he becomes sneaky.

=> He will sneak to get things of the world.

=> He will sneak to get things of the flesh.

=> He will sneak to use and misuse people.

Mat 23:12 “*For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*”

John 5:44 “*How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?*”

Oba 1:4 “*Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down,*” declares the Lord.

MATHEW 20:20–21 SALOME

The mother of James and John was named Salome (Mt. 27:56; see Mk. 15:40; 16:1). An interesting fact is that Salome was probably the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus, which means that James and John were first cousins of Jesus. We see this in Mark's and John's accounts of the crucifixion. Mark says that Salome was at the cross with Mary, Jesus' mother (Mk. 15:40). John simply says, '[Jesus'] mother... his mother's sister....' (John 19:25). □

II. *Mark 10:36–37 Motive for Ambition*

The possible motives for ambition. Jesus asked the two men what their request was. They answered straight to the point, wasting no time, as any conscientious leader would: "Let me have the top positions in your kingdom [glory, government] which you are going to set up when we get to Jerusalem." The men were extremely ambitious. They wanted to be the top ministers of state in Christ's government.

What needs to be noted is that ambition can be good or bad. The determining factor is motive. One's motive makes ambition either good or bad. The ambition of James and John exposes several possible motives. Each one touches a sensitive spot within every man and urges every man to examine the motives of his heart.

1. There was the motive of favouritism. James and John, along with Peter, formed an inner circle around Christ (Mk. 9:2). They apparently had some feeling that they were special, the favourites of Christ; therefore, they were due the top positions.

Thought 1. Feeling special, as though one is a favourite of God, is a common sin — a sin of pride. How many of us have felt we are one of God's specials or favourites? How often have we felt this way?

Thought 2. The inner circle, or the multi-gifted, often feel as though they are the special ones of God or of the church. Some often feel as though they are due special favours.

Acts 10:34 God does not show favouritism.

Prov 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. (Remember James' and John's desertion of Christ at the cross.)

2. There was the motive of wealth. Zebedee, the father of James and John, was apparently wealthy. He owned a fishing business large enough to furnish fish for the palace (see Mk. 1:20; Jn. 18:15-18). They were better off financially than some of the other disciples. There was the possibility that the two men were acting as selfish, pampered young men seeking more. Wealth did carry weight with monarchs of their day, and they knew it.

Thought 1. Note two points.

- 1) Wealth can make a man self-centred. It can pamper and make one selfish. It can cause one to expect more attention, more honour, more recognition, more favour.
- 2) Those who have wealth often want more. And they set out to get more, whether wise or unwise, whether right or wrong. The wisdom and righteousness of having wealth are determined by a person's motive and true need.

Mark 4:19 *“But the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.”*

1 Tim 6:9 *People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.*

3. There was the motive of power, position, influence, and authority. This was clearly one of the motives of James and John. They wanted to be right next to Jesus in position and influence, power and authority. It is the very thing they asked.

Thought 1. Men want position. Men think in terms of position and influence. Within the business world, men want a position that assures influence and reward. Within the church, some want a position of leadership and of influence. Men seldom think in terms of service or in terms of how they can help the company or the church. Too often their thoughts are on the honour, the reward, the influence, the position they will receive.

Thought 2. How many seek to be next to the boss, the pastor, the leader, or the teacher, seeking to curry his favour; seeking to be recognized by him or by others as knowing him well and as being favoured by him?

1 Cor 10:24 *Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.*

1 Cor 10:33 *Even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.*

2 Cor 8:9 *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.*

Rom 12:16 *Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.*

Phil 2:4 *Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

4. There was the motive of social status. James and John did have some social standing. They were somewhat wealthy and were accepted within the palace and were personally known by the High Priest (see Mk. 1:20; Jn. 18:15-18; Jn. 18:16.)

Social standing often makes a person feel that he is entitled to more — more position, more recognition, a higher seat. Social standing can also make one feel he is better or above others. Perhaps James and John had a tinge of both feelings.

5. There was the motive of love, faith, and loyalty. When ambition is rooted in the Lord and steeped in love and loyalty, it is *always right and healthy*. There is the possibility that James and John wanted to be next to Jesus because they were sensing some degree of love and loyalty to Him. Their love and loyalty to Him would not be the dominant force in their ambition right now, but it was definitely present.

=> They definitely believed Jesus: His Word, His promises, His kingdom, His power. They were showing loyalty to Christ by expressing confidence in His power to usher in the Kingdom of God. They were asking for positions in His kingdom. They knew He was the true Messiah, the Son of the living God, who was to become the King of kings and Lord of lords.

=> They definitely wanted the positions because they wanted to be next to Him. To them He *deserved* the kingdom and the honour. He deserved it because He had done so much and was going to do so much for them and for the people of God.

John 16:27-30 *“No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.” Then Jesus’ disciples said, “Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”*

Eph 6:24 *Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.*

1 Pet 1:8 *Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.*

III. **Mark 10:38–39** *Price of Ambition: Cup, Baptism*

The great price of ambition. Jesus was straightforward, pulling no punches with these two ambitious men. “You don’t know what you are asking...Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptised with the baptism I am baptised with?” Jesus was asking the ambitious believer, “Can you go through the terrible experience I have to suffer? Can you drink the cup of my terrible agony, of my inward agony and pain? Can you bear the baptism of my terrible sufferings?” (See *Cup and Baptism*, Mk. 10:38-39.)

Note: the two men accepted the Lord’s challenge, and they responded immediately, very positively: “We can.” Of course, they did not know what they were doing, not fully. Nevertheless, at this particular moment they were willing to die for Christ in Jerusalem if necessary.

Note also that Jesus foretold them that they would pay the price for their ambition (See *James and John*, Mk. 10:39).

Thought 1. The same challenge is issued to every man. We are to drink the Lord's cup and be baptised with His baptism.

- 1) We are to suffer for His sake, to labour and serve to the point of exhaustion in getting the gospel out and in ministering to a lost world.
- 2) We are to bear persecution if necessary to fulfil His mission. In essence, we are to deny self, do whatever is necessary (See *Cross and Discipleship*, Lk. 9:23; *Cup and Baptism*, Mk. 10:38-39).

Thought 2. We should follow the example of James and John. We should accept the Lord's challenge...

- accept it immediately, not hesitating at all.
- accept it even though we may not fully understand what it involves.

Luke 14:33 *"In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."*

Thought 3. There is a price to pay for ambition. If a man really wants to achieve, he must get to it, and getting to it takes time and work. It involves sacrifice and pain, sweat and tears, isolation and loneliness, and often involves sacrificing his social life. In all honesty, few are willing to pay such a price.

Luke 9:23-24 *Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it."*

Luke 14:26-27 *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."*

Rom 8:13 *For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.*

Gal 5:24 *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.*

Phil 3:8 *What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.*

MARK 10:38–39 CUP AND BAPTISM

There is a difference between drinking the cup of suffering and being baptised with suffering. The cup refers more to what one takes into himself and bears within himself. It is more internal suffering, inward agony. The baptism refers more to what is put upon one from the outside. It is more external suffering.

The cup means drinking the bitterness and agony of trials, pain, hurt, sorrow, heartbreak, suffering, disappointment, and tears (see *Christ's experience in the Garden of Gethsemane*, Mt. 26:36-46; *His sufferings*, Mt. 20:19; 27:46-49; and *John's experience on Patmos*, Rev. 1:9).

The baptism of suffering means being immersed in the rapids of affliction, rejection, abuse, ridicule, opposition, persecution and martyrdom.

The Christian believer who truly lives and witnesses for Christ will drink His cup and be baptised with His baptism. Just think for a moment. Christ demands *all we are and have* in order to help people and to carry the message of salvation to a lost world. If we should be serious and give *all we are and have*, just imagine the cost to us. That is how different we would be from the world. Imagine the world's reaction to us. That is the reason Jesus and the apostles met with so much opposition so often. They gave *all they were and had* and lived so differently. They lived for God instead of living for self and the world. Therefore, the world could not understand them. Some ignored and others ridiculed, abused, persecuted, and even killed them. They had the Lord's cup and baptism of suffering and sacrifice to bear. And so do all who truly follow Christ. (See Mt. 10:16-23; 10:24-33; 10:34-42; 19:23-26; 19:27-30. See Mt. 10:22; Phil. 1:28; 2 Tit. 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:21; 4:1-5; 5:10; Mt. 19:29; Rom. 8:16-17.) □

MARK 10:39 JAMES AND JOHN

James was killed by Herod. He was the first apostle to drink the cup of martyrdom.

John lived to be around one hundred years old. Just how John died is unknown; however, he drank the cup and was baptised with suffering in a most distressful way.

1. He witnessed the sufferings of Jesus' death.
2. He lived through the murder and deaths of all the other apostles.
3. He lived a long life of banishment and exile on the island of Patmos. □

IV. *Mark 10:40 Prerogative of God*

The prerogative of God in ambition. Note the exact words of Jesus: "To sit...is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared" Two things are being said.

1. Jesus said that some *will sit* on His right and some on His left hand. God is preparing to bestow such honour upon some. This points toward degrees of glory in heaven.
2. Jesus said that the right to reign with Him is to be determined by God alone (that is, His absolute justice). He also makes a distinction between the *great*, who only commit themselves to serve and the first (greatest), who commit themselves to be *bond-slaves*. (Mt. 20: 23-28.)

Mat 10:27 *“What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.”*

John 12:26 *“Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.”*

John 13:14 *“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.”*

John 21:16 *Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”*

1 Cor 6:20 *You were bought at a price [Christ’s blood]. Therefore honour God with your body.*

1 Cor 7:22 *For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord’s freedman; similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ’s slave.*

Col 3:24 *Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

V. Mark 10:41 Ambition and Conflict

The potential conflict among men with ambition. How did the other ten disciples hear what James and John had done? They probably saw the two approach Jesus off in the distance. They saw them bow before Him (Mt. 20:20). Such was most unusual because of their daily association with Him. They knew something unusual was happening. When James and John returned, the ten asked what was going on. Of course, James and John were hesitant to reveal the truth. But, as would be expected, this only aroused the disciples’ curiosity and cross-examination more. They pressed and pressed the issue until James and John had to tell their evil and ugly plot.

=> Anger was aroused.

=> Tempers flared.

=> Arguments became inflamed.

The ten were indignant with James and John. What right did they have to do such a thing? Why did they deserve a higher position than any of them? Jealousy, envy, pride, self-centredness, and bitterness bred within the heart of each against the two. Perhaps

even hatred was being expressed. One thing is certain. The band of disciples was threatened; their cohesiveness and the very work of the Lord was at stake. A divisiveness beyond repair was possible.

Thought 1. Selfish ambition can cause some terrible things among men. It can cause...

- jealousy
- hatred
- suffering
- envy
- sneakiness
- divisiveness
- bitterness
- conflict
- death
- anger
- self-centredness
- destruction

Prov 17:19 *He who loves a quarrel loves sin; he who builds a high gate invites destruction.*

Prov 25:27 *It is not good to eat too much honey, nor is it honourable to seek one's own honour.*

Mat 23:12 *“For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”*

John 5:44 *“How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?”*

VI. Mark 10:42–44 Greatness of Good Ambition

The greatness of good ambition. Jesus did not find fault with ambition on the whole. There is good and true ambition just as there is bad and false ambition. But Jesus was quite clear about the difference between the two. One is of the world, the other of God. Note exactly what He said. True ambition, ambition that is good and healthy, is an ambition that does not seek to rule and to exercise authority.

1. The world's view of ambition is twofold. Most men are caught up to some degree in worldly ambition, seeking more and more. Few are void of worldly ambition.

Psa 49:11 *Their tombs will remain their houses forever, their dwellings for endless generations, though they had named lands after themselves.*

- a. There is the internal view of ambition. A man should have some degree of freedom to seek what he wishes.

A man should be allowed some recognition, some position, some influence, some fame, some wealth, some gadgets, some vehicles, some machines. A man should be allowed to fulfil his ambition, seeking and securing whatever he wishes.

- b. There is the external view of ambition. A man's ambition (greatness) is judged successful by...

- his wealth
- his home
- his vehicles
- his gadgets
- his position
- his influence
- his recognition
- his fame
- his authority
- his social standing

- 2 The Lord's view of ambition is fourfold.
 - a. True ambition or greatness is not exercising lordship and authority over people. It is not desiring the chief positions. True ambition is not self-centred and selfish, not worldly-minded.
 - b. True ambition does desire greatness. Note Jesus' exact words: "Whoever wants to become great among you." But there is a crucial point to note: the greatness desired must focus upon Christ if it is to be true ambition. A man becomes great by doing what Christ says. The greatness sought *must not be* greatness for oneself, but in doing what the Son of God says. It is greatness due to obedience, due to doing what Christ has revealed.
 - c. True ambition (greatness) seeks to serve, not to be served (see Mk. 10:45). It looks for people to help and for ways to help them, whether at work, home, play, or church. It is always seeking those who need a visit, care, attention, company, food, clothing, shelter, money. It seeks for the sake of serving (see Mt. 25:34-40).
 - d. True ambition (greatness) becomes the *slave of all*. The word *slave* (doulos) means a bond-slave (see *Slave*, Rom. 1:1). Christ made a significant distinction between the terms *great* and *first*. Note the difference.

=> The "great" are they who "serve."

=> The "first" are they who are "slaves" or *bond-slaves*.

What Jesus was saying is that among His disciples, *they who serve are great, but they who are bond-slaves are the first*. The idea of serving is that of occasional service, whereas the bond-slave is a person who is bound to the lord every moment of life, always serving — regardless of hour or call or difficulty.

The idea of degrees of service is unquestionably in mind. Not every believer serves with the same fervour or commitment. The idea of degrees of reward for works is also conveyed by our Lord's teaching.

What Christ means is this: a person is to be a servant and a slave, a bond-slave. True greatness is not found in not being a lord or a master, but in ministering and serving others. True ambition and greatness is a person's becoming *a servant and a slave by nature*. He assumes the role of a slave of a bond-slave (see notes, *Servant*, Rom. 1:1).

Mat 10:42 "And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Mat 18:14 "In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost."

Luke 22:26 "But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves."

John 13:14 “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.”

Eph 6:7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men.

Heb 12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.

Prov 22:4 Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honour and life.

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

ROMANS 01:01 SERVANT, SLAVE (DOULOS)

*Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God. **Romans 01:01***

Paul was a “servant” or “slave” of Jesus Christ. The word “servant” or “slave” (doulos) means far more than just a servant. It means a slave totally possessed by the master. It is a *bond-servant* bound by law to a master.

A look at the slave market of Paul’s day shows more clearly what Paul meant when he said he was a “slave of Jesus Christ.”

1. The slave was owned by his master; he was totally possessed by his master. This is what Paul meant. Paul was purchased and possessed by Christ. Christ had looked upon him and had seen his degraded and needful condition. And when Christ looked, the most wonderful thing happened: Christ loved him and bought him; therefore, he was now the possession of Christ.
2. The slave existed for his master and he had no other reason for existence. He had no personal rights whatsoever. The same was true with Paul: he existed only for Christ. His rights were the rights of Christ only.
3. The slave served his master and he existed only for the purpose of service. He was at the master’s disposal any hour of the day or night. So it was with Paul: he lived only to serve Christ — hour by hour, day by day, and night by night.
4. The slave’s will belonged to his master. He was allowed no will and no ambition other than the will and ambition of the master. He was completely subservient to the Master and owed total obedience to the will of the master. Paul belonged to Christ. In fact, he said that he fought and struggled to “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Cor. 10:5).
5. There is a fifth and most precious thing that Paul meant by “a slave of Jesus Christ.” He meant that he had the highest and most honoured and kingly

profession in all the world. Men of God, the greatest men of history, have always been called “the servants of God.” It was the highest title of honour. The believer’s slavery to Jesus Christ is no cringing, cowardly, or shameful subjection. It is the position of honour — the honour that bestows upon a man the privileges and responsibilities of serving the King of kings and Lord of lords.

=> Moses was the slave of God (Deu. 34:5; Psa. 105:26; Mal. 4:4).

=> Joshua was the slave of God (Josh. 24:29).

=> David was the slave of God (2 Sam. 3:18; Psa. 78:70).

=> Paul was the slave of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Tit. 1:1).

=> James was the slave of God (Jas. 1:1).

=> Peter was the slave of Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:1).

=> Jude was the slave of God (Jude 1).

=> The prophets were the slaves of God (Amos 3:7; Jer. 7:25).

=> Christian believers are said to be the slaves of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:18; 1 Cor. 7:22; Eph. 6:6; Col. 4:12; 2 Tim. 2:24).

(This point is built upon what William Barclay says in *The Letter to the Romans*. “The Daily Study Bible.” Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1955, p. 2).

John 12:26 “Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.”

Eph 6:6-7 Obey them not only to win their favour when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men.

Col 3:23-24 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Heb 12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.

Exo 23:25 Worship the Lord your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you.

Deu 10:12 And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Psa 2:11 Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

Psa 100:2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. □

VII. *Mark 10:45 Supreme Example of Ambition*

The supreme act of ambition is seen in Jesus Christ. He set His face like a flint to accomplish His purpose. This is seen in three supreme acts.

1. The supreme humiliation. This is the act of coming to earth: “The Son of Man *came*.” The incarnation is the Son of God becoming man. To most men, mankind is the summit of creation on this earth. But within the span and scope of the universe and before God, man is nothing - not to an honest and thinking man. He is as a microbe on a speck of sand floating through what seems to be infinite space and lasting only about seventy years if he can.

In all reality, for God to become a member of so low a race of beings is unimaginable. It is the most humiliating act possible.
2. The supreme mission. There is the act of serving: “[He] did not come to be served, but to serve.” He was treated as the lowest by the men to whom He came. Impossible, yet true! They gave Him no place to lay His head (Mt. 8:20; Lk. 9:58), and only three years after publicly announcing that He had come to save them, they killed Him. Now note: Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords, yet He secured his kingdom by becoming a servant and a slave to all. He did not “lord it” over men. He ministered to and served men. Because He became the servant to all, God has now highly exalted Him to the highest place (Phil. 2:9).
3. The supreme price. This is the act of giving His life “a ransom for many” (See Ransom for Many, Mk. 10:45). ■

MARK 10:45 RANSOM FOR MANY (LUTRON ANTI POLLON)

A ransom in exchange (pollon) for many, a ransom for many, a ransom instead of many.

Ransom (lutron) is a means of setting loose in the Old Testament. It is the setting loose (ransom) of a life (Exo. 21:30); it is the ransom price, the redemptive price for something, for example: a slave (Lev. 19:20), some land (Lev. 25:24), a captive (Isa. 45:13).

The Greek word for *ransom* (lutron) is significant. There is no question that the idea of *exchange* is present. Christ gave His life in *exchange*, as a substitute for many. The word is used two other times in the New Testament; in the equivalent passage in Mt. 20:28 and in 1 Tim. 2:6. In 1 Tim. 2:6 the words are a “substitutionary ransom for all” (*antilutron huper panton*). In die Greek *huper* is the preposition for the idea of substitution. It is a substitution in behalf of all.

2 Cor 5:15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for [huper] them and was raised again.

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for [huper] us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Heb 7:27 *Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.*

Heb 9:13-14 *The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

Heb 9:25-26 *Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place even year with blood that is not his own. Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

Heb 10:10 *And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

Heb 10:12, 14 *But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*

1 Pet 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.
(see 1 Cor. 5:7; Eph. 5:2) □*