

Sermon Discussion Questions: March 15, 2026
The Hard Road

Call to Worship: Psalm 131

1. David, a King, seems disinterested in the pursuit of status. Describe an event in his life that indicates his disinterest was sincere.
2. What world views or values did Pastor Paul mention that would result in us having the perspective David expressed in this Psalm, as opposed to the perspective James & John expressed in the sermon passage?

Sermon: Mark 10:35-45

I. Do Whatever We Ask - Verses 35-40

1. What discussion, that preceded the Apostles' request, made that request particularly insulting to Jesus?
2. Our human nature is to crave the benefits that accrue from taking risks and enduring suffering, without actually engaging in the activities that will expose us to risk or suffering. What are some of the types of entertainment that purport to allow us to enjoy unearned or counterfeit benefits?
3. What good example did Jesus set by his response in verse 36?
4. If you can find anything good about the Apostles' request in verse 37, explain it.
5. Is Jesus saying, in verse 39, that James and John would have the same Passion experience that he had?
6. Restate Romans 6:4 in your own words, and then explain in what sense the verse is true.
7. What difference in roles, between the Father and the Son, is implied by verse 40?
8. What was significant about being seated at the right and left hand of an important person?

II. When We Are the Competition - Verses 41-42

9. Speculate as to why the other Apostles were indignant. If possible, support your speculation with scriptures.
10. Jesus began his instruction, in verse 42, with a “negative example”. What is the value of this teaching strategy?
11. We are tempted by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Which of these forces were likely motivating James and John to jockey for their positions in the coming kingdom? Try to defend your conclusion.
12. How does the American constitution address the dangers of people accumulating power?

III. Not to Be Served, but to Serve - Verses 43-45

13. List three ways that the kingdom of the fallen world differs from the kingdom of God.
14. What comment from John the Baptist indicates that he clearly understood the difference between these two kingdoms?
15. How does an effective leader demonstrate humility? Give an example from:
 - a. Scripture.
 - b. Personal experience.
16. Verse 44 might be invoked as a rationalization for never asserting oneself. Is a person violating the principle enumerated in verse 44 when she disobeys peers or an authority figure?
17. Jesus' life was paid (verse 45) as a ransom.
 - a. What did the ransom purchase?
 - b. To whom was the ransom paid?

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Holy Spirit to crush the “James and John” spirit in your heart that craves recognition.
- Ask God to show you one specific “lowly” task you can do this week for someone else in the body, without seeking credit.
- Pray that the reality of Christ’s substitutionary death would move from your head to your heart.