



November 12th, 2017 Discussion Guide

Questions Jesus Asked: “Can You Drink From The Cup?”

Mark 4:35-41

Introduction

As you trace the metaphor of “cup” throughout the Biblical writings, you find that among other things, it is a symbol of suffering. As James and John came asking for special status in the Kingdom of God, Jesus tries to help them understand the price that must be paid in order to follow him, much less to sit at his right or left. Read Matthew 20:20-23 and Mark 10:35-45. Then discuss how you will or presently are answering the question that Jesus asked of James and John.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the worst kind of suffering you have ever faced? It could be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual. What was the outcome of that experience?
2. Have you ever had to suffer a disagreeable consequence as a result of your Christian faith? Did you choose to sacrifice and suffer in this circumstance, or was the suffering an uninvited and unintended result that kind of caught you off-guard?
3. It might be safe to say that in America, Christians don't run much of a risk or pay much of a price for following Christ. Most of us would say that is a blessing. But can you see where there might be a down side to that as well?
4. You have heard the term “baptism by fire.” Jesus uses the word “baptism” along with “cup” as a picture of suffering for his sake. Water baptism is understood to be an act that indelibly identifies someone as a Christ follower. In cultures that are opposed to Christianity, the act of Christian baptism is an event that immediately invites persecution. What would you say to someone who is hesitant to be baptized because of inevitable negative consequences?



5. Jesus loved to speak in paradoxes. He would say that in order to live, one must die. To be rich, give up everything. And in this conversation, he says that in order to be great, one needs to race to the back of every line and be dedicated to serving others. Would you say that responding to the needs of others comes naturally to you, or is it a struggle? What is one of the nicest things someone ever did in service to you?

6. Is there a way that your group might offer yourselves in service in the coming weeks, especially in light of the coming holidays when “giving” is uppermost in our minds?

Moving Forward:

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. [Mark 10:45] May that spirit infect us all in the coming days.