

Small Group Bible Studies

The Call to Discipleship - Humble Service

Mark 9:33-37, Mark 10:35-45

I love reading about the times when the disciples get it completely wrong! Take Peter, for example, when Jesus is being transfigured (Mark 9:5) suggesting building huts for Jesus, Moses and Elijah, or how about James and John wanting to call down fire on Samaritan villages, or the disciples arguing about who is the greatest. It encourages me, because just like the disciples, I so often misunderstand Jesus and get things completely wrong. The great thing is that Jesus understands us, loves us and is gracious enough to guide us into truth, rather than show us up as fools and throw us on the scrap heap. Let's learn from the teacher...

Read Mark 9:33-37, Mark 10:35-45

1. Why do you think the disciples were arguing about who was the greatest?
2. Can you imagine a similar discussion happening today? Isn't it good to want to be the best or the greatest?
3. Jesus clearly knew what they had been talking about. Why did he ask them (Mark 9:33) if he already knew?
4. Can you think of other examples in the Bible where God comes to people asking a question to find out something he already knows? Eg Genesis 3

The disciples seem quite embarrassed in v34. They knew that a discussion about being the greatest was not right. Jesus could have given them a telling off, but instead he gently guides them into truth.

See Mark 9v35-37

5. What does Jesus want us to grasp in these verses?
6. When we try to be humble we can sometimes make ourselves feel awful and very guilty. Jesus teaching here is that humility is about relationships, not making ourselves feel like we are worthless. How does Jesus illustration with the child in v36-37 help us to understand this?

Mark 10 shows that again the disciples hadn't fully understood Jesus teaching in Mark 9.

7. What was wrong with James and John's request?

8. Do you think the disciples understood Jesus response in v38? What do you think Jesus meant?

God takes us at our word. It isn't clear if the disciples understood Jesus in v38, but it seems that Jesus was referring to his death. The disciples didn't stay with Jesus at his crucifixion, but James and John later were put to death for being followers of Jesus Christ. It is worth thinking about how we would respond to Jesus if he asked the same of us.

9. What is Jesus teaching in v42-45?

10. How does Jesus way of doing things compare with the world?

Taking Action

Meditate on v43-45. How much do these verses describe me? How can I change to become a servant like Jesus?

To become like Jesus we need to spend time with Jesus, not by following a list of rules and laws. Humble service is based on relationship with Jesus, and with others. How as a homegroup can we help each other serve more like Jesus?

My Action Plan