

Nov 17, 2002

“A Strange Response”
Mark 10:35-45
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The Bible story I would like you to think about this week as we approach Thanks giving is found in the Gospel of Mark. The focus was on God’s definition of service, which seems to be very straightforward. What caught my attention, though, was the request that prompted Jesus’ strange reply to two of His disciples.

James and John got close to Jesus and whispered: *“Master, we want you to do us a favor.”* When He asked them what the request was they said, *“We want to sit on the thrones next to you in your kingdom, one at your right and the other at your left.”* After telling them that they didn’t know what they were asking and making further statements, Jesus told them, *I do not have the right to place you on thrones next to mine. Those appointments have already been made.”*

You and I know that it is all too human to be in favor with those in power. That can be mom or dad, the boss, politicians, and even God. It is also understandable that the other disciples would be resentful of and upset with James and John. What we don’t know is why these two thought they should be in the top spots and not the others.

The reply of Jesus interested me for two reasons. One, He said those spots were not His right to give. Second, He said the appointments were already determined; however, He didn’t say for whom they were reserved. Both of those statements open the door for a lot of questions and speculation. Maybe God had the center throne, and the ones on His right and left were reserved for the Son and Holy Spirit.

In the Christian faith, when Jesus is our Lord and Savior, we become one with Him and His Holy Spirit dwells within. Maybe in God’s kingdom, all those who serve as “servants” will sit next to God’s throne in Him. With this kind of “serving” we may already be ruling along with God in His kingdom. Serving is how Jesus defined power and greatness. Since a lot of service goes on in this community, maybe this week we can look at it from God’s point of view.