



Greatness in God's Kingdom

Matthew 20:20-28

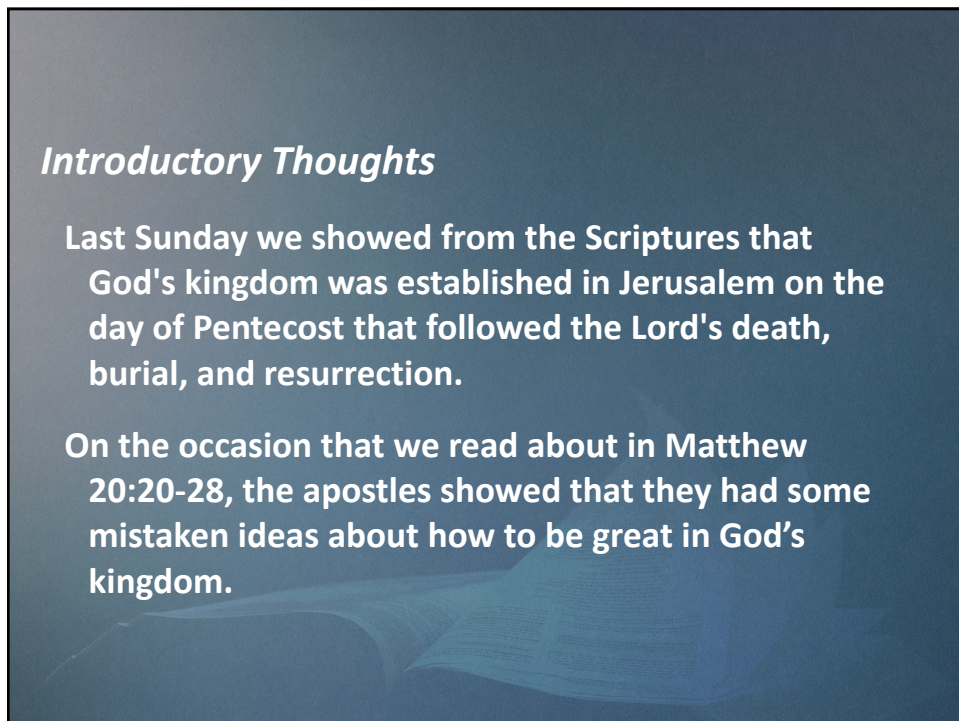
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1



Introductory Thoughts

Last Sunday we showed from the Scriptures that God's kingdom was established in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost that followed the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection.

On the occasion that we read about in Matthew 20:20-28, the apostles showed that they had some mistaken ideas about how to be great in God's kingdom.

2

Introductory Thoughts

This was not the first or the last time that they demonstrated this problem – Matthew 18:1-4 – Luke 22:24.

Although the apostles were mistaken, Jesus made it clear that the way to be great in His kingdom is through serving others.

3

James and John Made a Request of Jesus – Verses 20-21

Their request was that they be given what they considered the 2 most prominent positions in the Lord's kingdom.

From Matthew's account it seems that this request came from their mother.

4

Jesus Responded to Their Request – Verses 22-23

Jesus first asked them if they were able to suffer as He was about to suffer, and they said they were able – Verse 22.

Jesus let them know that they would suffer, but He also let them know that these 2 prominent positions were not His to give – Verse 23.

5

The Other Apostles Became Indignant Toward James and John – Verse 24

They became much displeased with James and John – Mark 10:41.

Two apostles wanted what they thought were the greatest positions in the Lord's kingdom.

The other apostles became angry with James and John.

Jesus used this situation as an opportunity to teach all the apostles how to be great in His kingdom.

6

The Lord's Response to The Situation That Had Developed – Verses 25-28

Jesus referred to the Gentile government with its different levels of authority – Verse 25.

Jesus said that His followers are not to act like the rulers of the Gentiles – Verse 26a.

The desire for preeminence is strongly condemned in the Bible - 3 John 9-10.

7

The Lord's Response to The Situation That Had Developed – Verses 25-28

Even the men appointed to be overseers are forbidden to be lords over the Church – 1 Peter 5:3.

The way to become great in the Lord's kingdom is by being a minister and a Servant –

Verses 26b-27.

In other words, we are to be like Christ – Verse 28.

8

Closing Remarks

The way to enter the Lord's kingdom is by being born again - John 3:3, 5.

After entering the Lord's kingdom, the way to become great is through serving others.

Service to others will be important at the judgment – Matthew 25:40, 45.