

**Mark 10:35-45 (NIV)**

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”

36 “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

37 They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.”

38 “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”

39 “We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with,

40 but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

41 When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.

42 Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.

43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,

44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.

45 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.”

41-10-05-The Culture of God’s Kingdom

service, servanthood, authority, culture, God’s will, Heaven

Mark 10:35-45

Jesus entered fallen human culture not to affirm it but to transform it.

**INTRODUCTION:** (Scripture reading)

–By His Incarnation, God’s Son forever became a human and part of material creation. That blows our minds! It also *affirms* our humanity and material creation. But, *flawed by sin*, humans interacting with each other in a **now** sin-cursed world, produce *fallen cultures*.

–**HOM.idea.** He came to teach us **the culture of God’s Kingdom**, and later, to bring us into *Kingdom culture* [*Kingdom living*] by paying for our sins and dealing a death-blow to the sin nature through *His Cross*.

–**Mark 10** contains several *examples of Kingdom culture’s conflict with fallen human culture*, and before exploring one of these in depth, it would be helpful to review them, because the *first one reveals*...

**I. God’s Standard for Implementing Kingdom Culture**

- A. In v.1-12, Jesus confronts **divorce**, allowed by God only because “hearts were hard.” (Though God permits fallen culture to exist, His *standard* is one-flesh union, as “*at the beginning of creation*.”).
- B. In v.13-16, to the idea that **children** are unimportant, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” (Sin brought childishness, but “*at the beginning of creation*,” Adam & Eve were childlike and *receptive* to God.)
- C. In v.17-31, Jesus strikes at **idolatry** [*things possessing you*] with “*Give it up*” “Then come, follow me.” (Our job “*at the beginning of creation*” was managing God’s creation, not *owning* or being *owned by it*.)

**TRANS:** **Jesus entered fallen human culture not to affirm it but to transform it.** These 3 confrontations of Jesus introduce the last one in *Mark 10*. But all point to “*the beginning of creation*,” before the Fall, as the standard of Kingdom culture, the way it should have been before Satan went to work. Eden was to be like Heaven on earth, a place of *unity not discord*; of *childlike responsiveness to God*, not childish disobedience; of *a bond with God*, not a bondage to things. “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.” But His Incarnation gave us...

## II. The Embodied Example of Kingdom Culture

- A. God asked fallen Adam 3 questions: “*Where are you? Who said you were naked? And did you do what I warned you not to do?*”
1. Adam was close to God; now he ran to hide from Him (*divorce*).
  2. Adam lost his *childlike openness* to God by listening to a liar.
  3. Adam *idolized* a fruit, letting it supercede God and His Word.
- B. The 1<sup>st</sup> Adam failed to live the heavenly life destined for him; but God’s Son became the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam to reclaim that human destiny— 1 Cor 15:47. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. (Jesus became one of us to emulate what it meant to be a true human, *living a heaven-connected life* and calling us to it.)
1. He maintained unity with His Father— “I and the Father are one.”
  2. He manifested childlike responsiveness to His father— John 14:31, “... I love the Father and... do exactly what my Father has commanded me.
  3. He never idolized bodily life but saw it as God’s tool— Heb 10:5-7, “... when Christ came into the world, he said: “... **a body** you prepared for me... Here I am... I have come to do your will, O God.””

**TRANS**: Jesus entered the fallen human culture of *discord, division, divorce... of childish and disobedient ways... of idols of self and things* placed before God, **not to affirm it but to transform it** with Kingdom culture. He taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” And facing the dreaded cup of betrayal, condemnation, mocking, flogging and crucifixion for our sins, He lived out the prayer He taught by praying, “not my will but thine be done.” *He showed us that...*

## III. Servanthood Is the Key Element in Kingdom Culture

- A. In our **text, v.35-45**, after telling of His Cross, Jesus confronts in 2 disciples another major aspect of fallen human culture: **elevated status, fame, power, high position, top dog!**— “*Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.*” (First, He rebukes them by His example: “[That] is not for me to grant.” “*I’m not in charge here! Haven’t you been listening to me? I’m a servant of the Father.*”)
- B. Then He gets specific about Kingdom culture and what *our true human destiny* is about, which He’s been exemplifying to them— v.42-45, “*You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 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.*”

### **CONCLUSION**:

—Jesus came to *affirm* our true humanity, **not the fallen human culture of division, immaturity, idolatry and prestige-hunger**. He, *by example, reaffirmed our true human destiny* of imaging the Supreme Servant, the Triune God Who is Designer, Provider and Preserver of all creation. There is no higher status, no higher calling than to be *servants like our God and servant-King*. That’s the *heavenly Kingdom culture* which confronts and can **transform** fallen human culture. And it happens only when Christ’s call, “Come, follow Me,” is met by our childlike response: “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”