



**St Matthew's Holland Park
Weekly Bulletin 20th October
2024**

*This week's Revd. Morris' message: **Deep down, do we really want to follow Jesus and serve God and others? ... or, sometimes, do we want them both to serve us?***

In today's Gospel, we see Jesus providing His Disciples with one of the most comprehensive description of His death and resurrection. Again, we see that they 'missed His message' and didn't seek any clarification of Jesus' vital and important warning of what was to come. Instead, James and John seek their own self promotion and preeminence. They had witnessed Jesus in Glory at his Transfiguration in the preceding chapter [Mark 9:2ff] and now wanted a perpetual part in sharing that Glory - the Divine Shekinah of God's immediate presence.

Jesus responds to their request in part by stressing that, rather than seeking the world's glory, authority and power, all of the Disciples are called to follow their master's path of 'servant leadership'. **'For, the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many'**. [v. 45]

Interestingly, the Greek word translated as 'ransom' above ['lytron'] literally means 'a death that has meaning'. Often in the Septuagint [Greek] version of the Old Testament this expression refers to a redemption or purchased freedom as well as a liberation wrought by Divine strength and power [see examples of the latter meaning in Exodus 6:6; Deuteronomy 15:15; 2 Samuel 7:23; Psalm 69:18 and Isaiah 43:14].

Therefore, Jesus' death is not simply a pointless loss of innocent life at the hands of those in power who were threatened by His radical calls to humility, faithful service, faithful servant leadership and denial of ego and self. It was a foretaste of what we all can expect to also occur to his faithful followers down through the ages who also threaten those in position of power. But more than this, His death also was the 'lytron' which opened the way to the new Covenant of Love and the fresh path to eternal life for all people.

So here in verse 45, Jesus is both explaining to His Disciples His role in God's Divine plan of Salvation as well as *how He fulfils this role - as a servant*. Note that *Jesus' service is bifocal*. He is God's servant, seeking and obedient to His will as well as being a servant to those he meets. In this service for others, we see Him seeking to help them find God's way in their lives by themselves. Unlike the Gentle powers Jesus referred to, He never forces His followers to do anything - he merely invites them to voluntarily *'take up their Cross and follow Him'* [see Mark 8:34]

Well, what does this mean for us today?

Jesus' call to humility, faithful service, faithful servant leadership and denial of ego and self are as relevant and desperately needed today as they were in the First Century. How

often to we see some of our political, corporate and, sadly, even religious leaders follow a different path?



But closer to home, how often do we find ourselves doing likewise? I wonder if it may be time to ask a few questions of ourselves. What are the true 'drivers' behind my actions? Is it to follow Christ or for self promotion, recognition, acceptance or success? [or a mixture of these?] Is my 'leadership style' [in my relationships, my family, my church, my work, my community etc] actually serving God and those whom I meet? Are my actions pointing others to Christ and leading them Godwards .. or, are they pointing to myself ...or in other directions?

My guess is that we are all like James and John from time to time - it's just a part of being human. However, many of us have had the privilege of being part of a team led by a servant leader - What a delight it is to serve with them! [NB Now, even many of our secular business schools are promoting *servant leadership* as being proven to be the most effective leadership style!]

I wonder what our lives may look like if we ask Jesus for His Grace to be more of a servant leader in our interactions with all those around us?

Gospel reading: Mark 10: 32- 45. Some resources to dig deeper: <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/ordinary-29-2/commentary-on-mark-1035-45-2> ; <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/christian-terms/what-is-the-meaning-of-shekinah-glory.html>; <https://www.wycliffe.org/blog/posts/6-qualities-of-a-servant-leader-1> ; <https://businessleadershiptoday.com/how-to-be-a-servant-leader-7-steps/> ;

Upcoming Parish Activities: Midweek service : Wednesday 10:30 a.m **Meditation group** 6:30 p.m ; **Every Sunday Guitars and Ukulele lessons** at 3 p.m; **Bible Study** Wednesday at 7 pm and Friday at 10:30 am; **Next Sunday - Messy Church** the theme: **International Grandparents Day; Readings for Next Sunday:** Job 42:1-6 and 10-17; Ps 34:1-8 and 19-22 ; Hebrews 7:21-28; Mark 10:46-52

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Parish website : <https://www.stmatthewshollandpark.com/>

Parish Private Facebook site : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/292308270851142> ; **Public Site:** <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556418523933> ;

Tipper's Treasure's Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61559040358754>

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY:

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Turrbal and Jagera Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather today. We acknowledge their continued spiritual connection to country and surrounding land, sky and water. We pay our respect to their Elders, past present and emerging and pray that we may continue to learn from and nurture one another in the spirit of Reconciliation.