



## Grain

“One way to pray in a fear-filled world is to choose love over anxiety.” Henri Nouwen

Submitted by Reverend Jason Clifton, Solon Springs, WI

## Field

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." 36 And he said to them, "What is it you want me to do for you?" 37 And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." 38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" 39 They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; 40 but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." 41 When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. 42 So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. 43 But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant... Mark 10:35-43

## Thoughts

James and John wanted first class tickets sitting on each side of Jesus for the ride into the Kingdom. However, a significant part of the trip would include experiencing those in power bringing Jesus down. The boundary between Jesus engaging with the crowds as the popular Messiah and his being crucified was fragile. Was that the kind of journey any of the disciples expected? Probably not, judging from Jesus' response. He knew he had to speak to them about the power society was used to - rulers lording it over others with the great ones as tyrants. "But it is not so among you."

"But it is not so among you" are words that carry through time. We hear them when we've messed up and felt the seduction of dwelling in our mistakes rather than being forgiven and mending what we've harmed. We hear the words when we are tempted to join in with bullies or listen too closely to voices that say we are not enough as children of God. As people elevate policies that hurt those who hunger, and we want to respond to fear and hate with more of the same, Jesus says, "But that's not for you."

If James and John knew the extent to which some authorities would go to protect their power, maybe they would have skipped their request for riding first class next to Jesus. "We'll take two seats back a bit. Nearest the exit please." Jesus tried to get them off that track of thinking altogether. His life wasn't about the praise that comes from being able to lord it over others, but rather salvation from that way of being. The path of grace and living out of that grace - now that's for you. Happy Monday!

## Prayer

Highly recommended.

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy