

Jessica Kelecava '13

Scripture

Mark 9:30-41

³⁰They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; ³¹for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." ³²But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" ³⁴But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. ³⁵He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." ³⁶Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

³⁸John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." ³⁹But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. ⁴⁰Whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward."

Devotional

Do we ever notice how patiently Jesus teaches, enlightens, and corrects his disciples? He has had the chance to tell them once more what will come of him. The disciples are still bothered and shocked by this revelation. So they distract themselves with bragging rights of the greatest in saying, "Well, I'm the best at this important thing—surely I'm more important than you," and back and forth they go along the road. And Jesus stops and challenges them once more and says, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all" (Mk 9:35).

Are we not the same as the disciples? How quickly do we forget or misunderstand the sacrifice Jesus made for us? In our own struggles we turn to ways of bettering ourselves and doing our best. We become the best at something and find the right to brag to others about it. Jesus is showing the disciples not just to serve for themselves or selflessly, but to remember him. The disciples were only beginning to understand the miracle of Jesus himself as the Son of God. And every day and through every pain in life and every puff of pride or burst of anger, we can try to remember how Jesus serves us through his sacrifice to bring us life. Jesus is the greatest of all. May we strive to be like him, but in all blessings and good things may we recognize him.

Prayer

Dear Lord, as we walk through the wilderness of life and reflect on how you did the same, may we remember your humble service to us. May we remember the ultimate sacrifice you willingly gave so that we in turn may show your greatness and life to all. Amen.