

The Story of Jesus

Part 27: Does Love Actually Work in the Real World?

Mark 10:32-45 - [watch online](#)

Summary:

Jesus' illogical kingdom is the only thing that can change the world

Main Ideas:

[01:18] We've created systems and institutions to give us a sense of security in an uncertain world.

[02:07] Our human systems always end up being ruined by humans

[02:45] The only way to change the world is through Jesus' illogical kingdom

[05:13] Jesus' death wasn't an accident. It was his planned inauguration.

[07:09] We think the solution is just a different version of all the other failed solutions.

[08:59] A new and better solution requires something new and more demanding

[11:38] The Kingdom of God isn't about having power over others, it's about giving service to others.

[12:18] Jesus put our lives over his.

[13:01] Jesus' service to the world transforms how we see the world.

[14:38] The completely 'different' of the Kingdom of God is the only thing that can fix our real world.

[18:28] In the Kingdom of God we serve because our King first served us.

Invitation:

[16:12] If you are ready to live for the Kingdom of God...

- Accept Jesus' invitation to join his kingdom.
- Follow the way of the King
 - Reread Mark 10:42-45
 - Practice by serving 5 people this week

Discussion Questions:

1. What big picture issues do you tend to worry about? What do you usually do with those worries?
2. Why do you think the methods and values of the Kingdom of God seem so illogical, yet are so effective?
3. Jesus used images from Isaiah 53 to describe what was going to happen to him in Jerusalem. Read Isaiah 53. What stands out to you?
4. What steps can you take this week to follow the way of the King?
5. How can your group pray with you this week?

Transcript:

WE: Ever find yourself worrying about the state of the world?

- Afraid the country is headed in the wrong direction?
- Politics?, Wars?, Economy?, Even the end of the world.

What do we do when we worry? Try to find solutions.

And for most of human history, in a general sense... we band together and create systems/institutions

We've created systems and institutions to give us a sense of security in an uncertain world.

Not necessarily all bad things... some seem pretty essential actually.

- Governments: Monarchy, Dictatorships, Democracy, Democratic Republics
- Economic Systems: Socialism, Communism, Capitalism
- Religious Systems/Institutions

Or a combination of all of them...

If we get organized, find the right system, and get the right people running them, everything will be ok.

But the problem is...

We start seeing these systems as our protection. start putting all our hopes into them and...

They never live up to their promises/all tend to fall apart after a while... Why?

- Our human systems always end up being ruined by humans

Hierarchies form, people gain power and don't want to let it go

Factions are created and pitting us against each other...

And, ultimately, those w/o power, those who are different, weak... always lose

But here's where it gets interesting... Jesus came along and introduced something completely different...

- He called it the KoG: God reigning in the hearts and minds of his people.

But this Kingdom is counterintuitive... everything in us tells us it shouldn't work...

- But somehow it's been working for 2000 years.

Something everyone is invited into.

Here's what we'll discover... The only way to change the world is through Jesus' illogical Kingdom

GOD: Jesus knew how flawed our systems are...

The Roman Empire was oppressive, ruthless. Used its military might/violence to control and dominate.

And the Religious Establishment/Sanhedrin: Made up of teachers/priests who decide law based on Jewish Scriptures, wasn't much better.

- With its complex rules/rituals used to control and condemn people.

As Jesus' ministry was ending... He made his way to Jerusalem, the center for both of these institutions, to declare himself the true king, show the weakness of these systems, and offer something completely different.

V. 32-34 Jesus relentlessly marching to Jerusalem with determination, nothing will stop him... it's time for the final showdown between him and these oppressive systems/institutions.

While his followers are struggling to keep up and wondering what has gotten into their rabbi.

Jesus takes a quick break and for the 3rd time in Mark's account Jesus explains the plan.

Most detailed explanation yet.

- We are going to Jerusalem
- I will be betrayed (by Judas)
- I will be judged by the religious leaders... (Will use what they do best... use laws/rules/religious technicalities to try to control me)
 - They will sentence me to die...
 - but under Roman law they don't have the power to execute me.
- So they will hand me over to the Romans.
- They will do what their system does best...they will use their might/strength/violence to try to control/conquer me...
- I will be tortured and executed.
- But it won't stick. After 3 days... I will rise.

Very important... the crucifixion isn't just something that happened to Jesus... it was something he made happen.

Jesus' death wasn't an accident. It was his planned inauguration.

It's not that Jesus challenged the power structures/systems and lost...

- Through his death and resurrection he proved how weak those systems actually are.

Now even though Jesus is speaking very plainly it's still too much for the disciples to wrap their minds around...

But they do understand the idea that Jesus is going to start his Kingdom and declare himself the true king!

So two of the disciples, James and his brother John, see their chance to solidify their positions in the new kingdom...

V. 35-37 Before we judge these jerks... 1st... Look at their faith!

- Not, "IF we win" but "WHEN you sit on your glorious throne!"

They really believed Jesus was going to take over... clean up their religion, kick out the Romans, and start a new kingdom.

These two (along w/ Peter) were in Jesus' inner circle

"When Jesus takes his throne, we need to make sure we edge out Peter and get the seats closest to Jesus... the seat with the most authority!"

- Matthew's account... they have their mom ask Jesus.

They expected the KoG to work like all other systems/kingdoms in history

- Hierarchies/power/dominance
- Those with the titles get to make the rules

And now it's their turn to be in charge...

- Even though it had never worked for anyone else... it just might work for them.

We do the same thing... **We think the solution is just a different version of all the other failed solutions...**

- Everything we try to do just puts different people in power over other people.
- We need to get our people in charge so the country turns around
- We need argue/manipulate/debate/fight for power... for the good of the world/country
- It doesn't matter who gets hurt/slips through the cracks... the ends will justify the means.

Jesus sees he needs to give these guys a dose of reality...

V. 38-40 Jesus: You don't know what you are asking... you want to be on my right/left when I bring in my kingdom?

- When I'm lifted high and show the world who I really am?
- Guys I've told you how that is going to happen... my death.
- Are YOU willing to make that sacrifice?

Sound just like teenagers... don't they?

- Not really listening... just a whole bag of confidence.
- "Yeah we got this Jesus... Every kingdom takes work at the start but, we've got this and then we'll be in charge so it'll be worth it."

We do the same... we often think, "Yeah, we might have to do some work... it might be a little tough... but we can handle it... b/c it means we'll finally be on top and then we can be in charge and fix things."

And Jesus looks at us and says... you really want to find a solution... It's going to involve a lot more than you think...

A new and better solution requires something new and more demanding

So Jesus says don't worry boys... soon you will understand

- James, we know was executed by the king with a sword (Acts 12)
- And tradition tells us John suffered terribly as well.

But the spots next to me, Jesus says, are already taken.

- As we read the end of the story we will see he is crucified between two criminals... one on right/other on left.

Now, James and John weren't very subtle and the other disciples see what's going on...

V. 41 Why are the other ten mad?

- B/c James and John should've understood by know that's not how things work
- Should have learned their lesson from before when they were arguing about who was the greatest?

Nope... They are mad b/c they didn't think of it first... Who are you to think you should be over me?

So again Jesus tries to get these guys to understand just what his Kingdom is going to be like...

V. 42 Come here guys... Listen... I need you to get this!

“Every other kingdom/system/institution turns into the strong oppressing the weak... those with power ruling over those w/o”

And the disciples are thinking... yeah I know Jesus ... we've seen it at the hands of the Romans... We've experienced it with our religious leaders...

- And when you finally take over we will be the ones in power and we can lord it over all the evil doers and use the power for good!

No... just listen...

V. 43-44 Jesus flips our thinking of power/institutions/systems completely on its head.

He says, “Everyone else is fighting for influence, power, control... but you, my followers, will be different.

Authority/Leadership in my kingdom is not measured by how much you can force others to do your will...

- Instead of walking over others... you will lift others up
- Instead of pushing your way to the front you will serve at the rear.
- Instead of standing strong and conquering you will kneel and serve

The KoG isn't about having power over others, it's about giving service to others.

But how does Jesus know this will actually work? B/c he went first...

V. 45 The Son of Man... the one in Daniel 7 who has been given all authority/all power/whose kingdom will never end...

- The only person who actually deserved to have every single person serve him...the God of the universe in a human body
- Didn't come to be served but to serve.
- Didn't use his power/authority to conquer and force obedience but to save all of humanity
- **Jesus put our lives over his.**

Jesus came to bring a revolution.

- To show the flaws and weakness of our human systems, intuitions, power structures.
- On the cross Jesus reversed the meaning of power.

He ransomed us from sin and death... Ransom (price paid to free slaves/captives)

And then showed the emptiness of everything else we use to fix the world...

He conquered our greatest enemy, death, by serving. Not by dominating.

His kingdom puts the least on top so they can be held up, served and loved and cared for.

And in his kingdom our natural/logical assumptions and views no longer apply.

Jesus' service to the world transforms how we see the world.

And if this is how the King inaugurated his kingdom then his followers must follow his example.

Objection: But... you might say...It's a sweet ideal, and in a perfect world it might be great... but this doesn't work in the real world.

If we don't fight for power then THEY will. We will be taken advantage of. We will lose any influence on society.

Service and love are nice and all but they don't really have any real power to get things done.

Let me ask you... Do you actually think what we call the "real world" is working?

In the real world... might makes right, those with power/money make the rules, make sure they always stay in charge at the expense of the good of the whole

In the real world the poor, the weak, the marginalized, the different, are used, abused, and thrown away.

The real world is about us v. them... never compromising, never actually finding a solution together b/c then the fight would be over and we wouldn't need those leaders/factions anymore.

Look around... it's the real world that doesn't work.

But what does work... when we actually get it... is the Jesus way.

It's this way that has change billions of lives for 2000 yrs

- Taken care of widows, orphans, the sick, hungry.
- Cause people to sacrifice everything for the good of the neighbors

Even if don't believe the God thing... can't deny the Jesus way has shaped/changed the world for the better.

The completely 'different' of the Kingdom of God is the only thing that can fix our real world.

YOU: What system/institution are you relying on?

- Government/Politics?
 - The only way to save our nation is for my party/people to win.
 - If only THEY would get it and agree with us then everything will be good

- Economic?
 - People just need to work harder and pull themselves up like I did.
 - If I could just get a little more than everything would be ok
 - If we just got rid of heartless capitalism then things would be good.

- Religion?
 - If we got our nation to be a Xian nation we'd be saved
 - If I can make God happy by praying enough/going to church enough/if I just follow the right rules I'll be ok.

Have they worked out for you? It's what we've been using for the history of humanity... doesn't work.

- In some cases they are necessary evils but they won't actually fix anything.
- Can't rely on them

Jesus invites every one of us to something so much better... to join his different kingdom.

He died to ransom you from the fear of the future, the fear of "what-if", the fear of "maybe I'm not good enough", and even the fear death

He has proven he is more powerful than all of them.

He has bought your freedom with his death and resurrection.

He has broken the chains. And offers us true freedom now and forever.

So **if you are ready to live for the Kingdom of God...**

Accept Jesus' invitation to join his kingdom.

- Thank you for loving and ransoming me. I pledge my allegiance to you and your kingdom. Make me new/yours.

Then **follow the way of the King**

- **Reread Mark 10:42-45**

- **Practice by serving 5 people this week**

- Whether they know it or not
- Help neighbor with yard, trash cans, single mom, young parents needing break, etc.
- One way... Serve here. Not to keep the machine going but to practice this type of others-first service.
 - Needed... 8 families (18 people) are the majority of people that physically take time to serve you/community by making sure this happens.

We serve b/c our King served us first.

WE: Do you want to keep living in and for the real world... living by the same old rules... living under the same old systems that never actually deliver on their promise?

Or are you ready to live in the KoG... now and forever. To live for and with the true King who lived and died and rose again to serve you and ransom you from sin and death?

This Kingdom is not just wishful, naive thinking.

This is the kingdom that completely changed the world.

The Roman Empire is just dust and ruins.

The Temple is nothing but a pile of rocks.

The kingdom and way of Jesus has outlasted them all. It has changed billions of lives for 2000 years.

It's the only thing that actually works.

Imagine a society/community where everyone was trying to outserve each other?

Just imagine a family or relationship where we were trying to outserve each other?

Imagine a church...

That's the way of Jesus.

In the Kingdom of God we serve because our King first served us.