



Lesson 105 - MARK 9:34-37

33And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? 34But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. 35And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. 36And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, 37Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

1. What had happened on the way to Capernaum, Galilee?
 - a. Who do you think was in the dispute? Why would this dispute come up?
 - b. Do you see the irony of their dispute?
 - c. How did Jesus know what they were talking about?
2. Whose house was it?
3. Where did the child come from?
4. How old was the child? Was it a boy or a girl?
5. Why did Jesus chose a child for His object lesson?
6. What was the lesson He wanted the disciples to understand?

Answers

1. The disciples debated which of them would be the greatest (in authority) when Jesus would reign as King of Israel.
 - a. It makes sense that these disciples were probably Peter, James and John, the ones who had seen the amazing transfiguration of Jesus that very day on the mountaintop. They knew they had witnessed a special event.
 - b. They were trying to decide who was greatest, when they were in the presence of truly the greatest, the Son of God, the Lamb of God, the Messiah of the world.
- P: It is God Who judges who is the greatest, not men.**
 - c. Jesus may have overheard them talking, but I think this was another example of the Holy Spirit revealing it to Him by a word of knowledge.

2. Many think it was Peter's house because He did visit there on the same day (Lk4:31, 38).

I think it was the house Jesus either bought or leased for His mother and brothers when He moved His family to Capernaum from Nazareth. (Mt 4:13 12Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; 13And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum...) See also Mt 9:28, 13:1, 36, Mk 7:17

Jesus, as the eldest son, would have provided a home for His mother and brothers to live in while He was traveling and He came back to it many times. (Evidently Joseph, Mary's husband, had died by this time, so as head of the house, Jesus would have checked on His family often.

Remember, too, by this time Jesus' half-brothers were grown and well able to take over the successful carpentry business that their father Joseph had established and Jesus had continued during the eighteen years He waited in faith until the time for His public ministry to begin.) There is a verse in Mt 8:20 where, in reference to a man saying he wanted to follow Jesus, Jesus responded by saying "...the Son of man has not where to lay His head." I think this was Jesus' way of pointing out the difficulties of discipleship, not that He didn't have a family home.

As to whether Jesus actually owned a house or not, it's not a very important point in the larger picture of all that Jesus came to do.

His sisters stayed in Nazareth. They didn't move to Capernaum. They were probably married women by this time. (Mk 6:1-3 1And he went out from thence, and came into his own country(Nazareth,where He grew up -Lk 4:16); and his disciples follow him. 2And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? 3Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James (not the James of Jesus' disciples. Jesus' brother, James, didn't become a believer till after Jesus' death and resurrection), and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?

3. I don't know. Perhaps some of the disciples had their families with them at this time. Many of the disciples were from the Capernaum-Bethsaida area. (Jn 1:44, Mt 9:1,9). It could have been one of Jesus' nieces or nephews, a servant's child or one of the neighbor children who loved to be around Jesus.

4. The boy was young enough for Jesus to pick him up and hold him in His arms. **36And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms .** The phrasing of this verse makes me think Jesus went over to a parent with a child and "borrowed" the toddler for the object lesson. Then He sat down, picked up the little boy, sat him in His lap and began to teach. Notice the child wasn't afraid. **We don't need to be afraid of anything the Lord wants to do with us.** He can use us to teach others, just as He did with this little boy.

5. The best teachers use the simplest of things to illustrate their lessons. Jesus could have explained without the child what He wanted the disciples to know, but the child made it easier for them to understand the lesson quickly.

We can use simple things, everyday conversation and events to bring Jesus or God into our days. The beautiful leaves on the trees in the autumn remind us of God the Wonderful Artist.

Cutting up fallen trees can remind us that we need to remove the "dead wood" in our lives that is keeping us from being closer to the Lord. The beauty of the spring sky can speak to us of the beauty our lives can have, when we let the Lord work in and through us without restraint.

In another passage, Jesus defines the greatest in the kingdom as the one who is humble as a child.

Matt 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

What is meant by being humble? Webster's Dictionary states "humble: having a consciousness of one's defects or shortcomings." What is wrong with that definition?

Jesus described Himself as humble (Mt 11:29) and chose to humble Himself in becoming the Sacrifice for sin, but He had no shortcomings or defects. Humbleness has to do with your attitude and your actions. It is symbolized or pictured by someone kneeling before God, desiring whatever God wants to do- to him, for him, with him, by him. Some churches have kneeling benches, so that their members can "humble" themselves before the Lord.

Being humble is recognizing who you are in comparison to God Almighty and seeing your abilities in contrast with God's. Take a minute to think of and thank Him for His greatness.

Humbleness is realizing God's great compassion towards us, and His bestowing great grace, salvation, and blessings on us. Humbleness is having a heart of continual thankfulness for Him and what He has done, is doing, and will do in our lives. This should lead you to trust God more and more, because you recognize He truly loves you. The more you thank Him, the more you'll trust Him.

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