

Notes

Please note that this document contains 3 different versions of the "Exploring the Word" worksheet. Each version contains the same Gospel texts, Reflection and questions, but with a different configuration of "alternative views". The suggested activities are applicable to a variety of age ranges. Some activities may not be suitable in all circumstances.

Activities

- Explore the concept of 'Servant Leadership' by using a graphic model (e.g. Frayer Concept Model). Use the model to name: Characteristics of servant leadership; Examples of servant leadership; Non-examples of servant leadership; and, finally, use this information to develop a personal or group definition of servant leadership.
- Build up a 'Leaders Wall' with pictures of people who practise servant leadership. Below each picture provide a brief description of what the person does and why they have been chosen for the Leaders Wall.
- Identify those charity or welfare agencies that work to 'empower' the people they assist rather than simply provide short-term handouts.

Gospel Journal

Why do you think the disciples struggled to understand Jesus' mission when they watched it unfold?

What aspects of your life are challenged by Jesus' demand to be a servant, or 'slave', to all?

Where do you see the needs of others being put first?

How is it possible to challenge poor leadership with a model of servant leadership?



Reflection

James and John are effectively calling 'shotgun' on the best seats at the table! When they ask to sit at the left and right hand of Jesus, they are asking Jesus to name them as his deputies. They're looking to secure for themselves positions of power and authority. The only problem is that they have a completely messed up idea of what it means for Jesus to enter into his glory. For several weeks now, we have been exploring a theme from the Gospel of Mark that follows a physical journey towards Jerusalem as well as a symbolic and theological journey towards what is going to occur in Jerusalem – Jesus' arrest, crucifixion and resurrection.

Throughout this journey, Jesus has been trying to prepare the disciples for what is to come and educate them about what it really means to be a disciple of his. Three times Jesus tells the disciples explicitly what lies ahead. Each time the disciples fail to grasp what Jesus tells them. Despite occasional glimpses of insight, the disciples still believe that Jesus is going to rise up as a political or military figure. In a complete dismissal of this sort of thinking, Jesus declares quite forcefully that leadership of this sort is not what he intends for himself, nor for those who follow him.

Leadership in the Jesus model is about being of service to others; it is not about prestige and acclamation. Many of the best leaders are those who do not have any title of leadership or authority. Their leadership and authority come from what they do and how they do it. They inspire others to follow their example. They don't demand it; they don't bully; they don't play power games. People simply want to follow their example.

- Q. *Why do you think the disciples struggled to understand Jesus' mission when they watched it unfold?*
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Have you Thought?

Integrity

Who do you really admire? Who would you really like to be like? Aside from sports stars, models and actors whose particular skills you might admire or even envy; who is a person who lives their life in a way that you would like to emulate? Perhaps it's not that you want to do exactly what they have done but rather it's the way they've gone about living their life. I would bet that there is a close match between what they hold to be true and the way they live their life – integrity!

Living the Gospel

Servant Leadership

What does it really mean to practise servant leadership? It means placing the needs of others before your own desires for prestige or authority. We've all known people who have been given a position of leadership and they really only wanted the job as recognition of their popularity; a thank you for previous work done; an opportunity to demonstrate their strength of will or cleverness with words. Servant leadership is about collaborating; it's about empowering people to do their best; it's about trusting others and about rolling up your sleeves and getting on with the job.

Gospel Mk 10:35-45

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached Jesus. 'Master,' they said to him, 'we want you to do us a favour.' He said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' They said to him, 'Allow us to sit one at your right hand and the other at your left in your glory.' 'You do not know what you are asking' Jesus said to them. 'Can you drink the cup that I must drink, or be baptised with the baptism with which I must be baptised?' They replied, 'We can.' Jesus said to them, 'The cup that I must drink you shall drink, and with the baptism with which I must be baptised you shall be baptised, but as for seats at my right hand or my left, these are not mine to grant; they belong to those to whom they have been allotted.'

When the other ten heard this they began to feel indignant with James and John, so Jesus called them to him and said to them: 'You know that among the pagans their so-called rulers lord it over them, and their great men make their authority felt. This is not to happen among you. No; anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be slave to all. For the Son of Man himself did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'



Reflection

James and John are effectively calling 'shotgun' on the best seats at the table! When they ask to sit at the left and right hand of Jesus, they are asking Jesus to name them as his deputies. They're looking to secure for themselves positions of power and authority. The only problem is that they have a completely messed up idea of what it means for Jesus to enter into his glory. For several weeks now, we have been exploring a theme from the Gospel of Mark that follows a physical journey towards Jerusalem as well as a symbolic and theological journey towards what is going to occur in Jerusalem – Jesus' arrest, crucifixion and resurrection.

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Scriptural Context

Mark's Gospel

Despite appearing second, Mark's gospel is now recognised as being the first written of those that appear in the Bible. The shortest of the four gospels, it begins with Jesus' entry into public life and, in its original form, ends with the discovery of the empty tomb. It is sometimes called a gospel 'in a hurry' as the movement between events is almost abrupt. The gospel writer identifies almost immediately that Jesus is God's 'beloved Son' and then spends the rest of the gospel describing the gradual revelation of this fact and the disciples' growing awareness.

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