

Who's The **GOAT?**

|| Group Discussion Guide ||

Mark 10:35-45

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1

What do we know about James and John? Consider the nickname Jesus gives them—Sons of Thunder (Mark 3: 17) and the “thunderous” inclination they exhibit in Luke 9:54. Also, consider the kind of relationship they had with Jesus as part of his inner circle (along with Peter) and what they witnessed as a result—see Mark 9:2-3, Luke 8:49-56, and Matthew 26:36-38. What picture emerges of these men?

2

How might we respond if someone told us “we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you”? Why do you think James and John phrased their request this way? What does it indicate about their intentions?

3

Do we approach God with a “whatever we ask of you” attitude? When or on what topics are we most inclined to frame these kinds of requests?

4

The request that James and John make is: “Grant us that we may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left hand in your glory” (v. 37). How does this request (on the one hand), indicate that they actually do have some insight into who Jesus is? (cf. Daniel 7:14).

5

On the other hand, the request that James and John makes shows a persistently misguided understanding of Jesus’ kingship. What vision do they have of what Jesus’ authority means? Have you ever had a misunderstanding of Jesus’ mission? How was it corrected?

6

The request for seats at the right and left hand of Jesus is an open desire for self-glory. This is an inclination that Jesus has already had to correct in Mark 9:33-37. What does Jesus' response to their request indicate about the reality of discipleship?

7

What do the cup and the baptism here indicate? Note that Jesus is likely not speaking of the Christian practice of baptism—the Greek word baptizō means “immerse, plunge, or overwhelm.”

8

How does the request that James and John have made become all the more ironic when we consider the context? Jesus had just been speaking to them about his death, foretelling for the third time that he would be condemned to be mocked, beaten, and killed (Mark 10:32-34). Do we ever have a tendency to ignore difficult truths?

9

The other disciples are indignant that James and John have been trying to edge them out in the competition for glory. How does a spirit of envy and striving choke ministry among Christians?

10

How does Jesus' statements in v. 42-45 overturn our notions of greatness? What does it mean to be the greatest of all time in God's economy? How is Jesus the ultimate representative of this kind of greatness?

