SCENE 3

THE STAGE: Read Mark 10:46-52

1. Where are they? Who is with Jesus?

THE SCRIPT:

2. Note: "let me see *again*."
3. Why might Mark have inserted v. 50? Might the cloak be a metaphor for something?
3. Note v. 52, Bartimaeus moves from the "way" side to follow Jesus on "the Way."

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE:
(Parallel Gospel Accounts)
Matt 19 & 20
Luke 16:18; 18:15-43

Next Week:
"Messiah On Mission"
Scriptures:
Mark 11

[1] Mark G. Vitalis Hoffman, Working Preacher ©2020 Luther Seminary
[2] 1 C. Clifton Black, Working Preacher, Commentary on Mark 10:32-52, March 8, 2020
[3] Sarah Hinlicky Wilson, Working Preacher, Commentary on Mark 10:17-31, October 14, 2018
[4] Edward Jones television commercial 2024

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LESSON #10

"The Upside Down Way"

Mark 10

Focus Scripture:
Mark 10:31

"But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first."

Food for Thought

Have you ever been "put in your place?"

Brief Historical and/or Cultural Context:

"Divorce is a symptom of human failure contrary to God's intentions in creation." Please do not read this in a 21st century context. Jesus is speaking to the patriarchal Hebrew community where a woman's husband was chosen for her, when she was young, for financial, business, or political gain. She was her husband's property and if he divorced her she was out on her ear, unless her family would take her back. These practices remain in many cultures even today. For Jesus to say marriage was a union of two becoming one, and inseparable, was revolutionary, and salvation for women. [1]

Jesus' message all along has been: *Think differently. This is how the Kingdom works - if you want to be first, you have to be last, and servant of all.* The uncomfortable fact in ancient Semitic culture is, except for the first born male, children were the lowest of the low. They had as much power as a slave. They were the unseen and unheard, the "least." For Jesus to draw attention to a child as someone important in God's kingdom was incomprehensible to his audience.

SCENE 1

THE STAGE: Read Mark 10:1-16

1. Where is Jesus?
2. Who are the players in vv. 1-9?

THE SCRIPT:

1. To whom did Jesus refer in his response? v.3
2. What was Jesus' opinion of Moses' command?
3. Extra credit: Where is the scripture reference Jesus used for his answer?
4. Consider the plight of 1st century divorced women, also considered "the least"– who is putting a snare in the way of the woman?

SCENE 2

So far, Jesus has spent most of his time in the northern area of Palestine; Galilee, north east in Tyre and north west in the Decapolis. Now he is south, in Judah and much nearer Jerusalem. He has set his sights on going to the Holy City, and is certain of his future there. Jesus is under pressure to reveal his mission and teach how to live in God's Kingdom. Last week's scriptures taught us we're not only to become servants of all, but woe to us if we do anything that would cause another to stumble in their journey on "the Way."

This week Mark's implied motto for the Twelve is "if at first you don't perceive, fail, fail again." [2] Something to note: Jesus doesn't ask for an "altar call," or for anyone to "become" something, or say the "sinner's prayer," or even to be baptised. He says "follow me."

THE STAGE: Read Mark 10:17-31

1. YOU ARE THERE. Who is with you?

THE SCRIPT:

2. What clues does the "rich" man exhibit that would lead one to believe he was sincere in his request? What do you make of the man's unabashed answer to Jesus' answer?
3. What feelings can you infer of the moment between these two men?
4. Concerning Mark's wording of the man's question: "What must I do to inherit...?" What is Jesus' two-fold answer?
5. How might the words "give to the poor" as opposed to "give to the temple" represent a relational form of generosity?
6. What do you make of the man's response?
7. Discuss the response of Jesus and the disciples, especially verses 30-31

"How terribly shocking to discover that, after all, you love your stuff more than you love eternal life." [3]
"The Key to being rich is knowing what counts." [4]

SCENE 3

THE STAGE: Read Mark 10:32-45

1. Where are they? Who is with Jesus? What are they feeling?
2. Where is Jesus in relation to his followers? Consider why.

THE SCRIPT:

3. Why do you think they are amazed and afraid?
4. What does James' and John's request, and their response to Jesus' question, reveal their egregious lack of understanding?
5. Who were two men who eventually found themselves on Jesus' right and left hand?
6. Discuss "ransom" v. 45