

Mark10:35-45

As long as I can remember I was told and convinced that it is good to climb up the ladder.

In school I was constantly told to better myself. I had four older siblings and one of them always was better in something.

I do have to confess I failed English in almost every year of my school career.

Off to nursing I went. There also was a ladder to climb. There always was more to learn, status to gain.

Then came college and university and it seems the only thing that never changed were the ladders in front of me that needed to be climbed.

More and more higher up Taking the setbacks well or not so well .. Off it went ... new ladders to climb.. and so on!

What is the goal? Sometimes I wasn't sure about that one ... anyway .. Next, more and higher up!

That was somewhat the case for James and John; they begged Jesus to sit at his right and left hand in the kingdom of God.

They had just heard for the second time that there might be some unpleasant things coming up for Jesus and they had decided to follow Jesus; so they wanted to make sure that they were properly rewarded for all their service to Jesus / to God.

They are indeed willing, as we hear in the following verses. They think themselves ready to drink Christ's cup and to be Baptized with him.

- 4 chapters later in Mark we hear that they all abandoned Christ.

But right now they want reward for services rendered. They preached the good news, they cast out demons and healed many.

So where is the reward?

Jesus answers them in 2 ways:

He makes it crystal clear, that its not up to him to distribute glories in the kingdom of God. This God will do, God alone.

The second point he makes is, that he talks about power and status. Jesus came to serve and not to be served, and whoever wants to be great needs to be servant.

Now this turns everything upside down about what I have learned in my whole life about being a leader. All those leadership seminars and the likes talk about all aspects of leading, but I have not heard of one that would teach something about: how to serve how to be a servant.

The ladder Jesus puts in front of the disciples is not one to climb up on; it is rather one to climb down on.

To climb down from status, power and might ... to climb down to be a servant.

The place where Jesus demonstrates this quite uncomfortably for me is the foot washing in Holy Week ... Jesus washes the feet of the disciples.

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(I don't have a problem with foot washing, Twice I had a pedicure and I tell you, it feels great! But I also paid a good sum of money.)

Christ doing this for free is a different story. Even if I had to pay a lot It should be the other way around.

Is not Christ the king? Is not He incarnate Love!

Shouldn't we be the ones to wash his feet I mean He saved us .. not the other way around.

I think; the for us so strange thing is that Christ's love is unconditional without obligation and does very unconventional things.

We are so used to pay for goods or services received. The concept of unconditional love is hard to grasp.

We want to be rewarded for services... we want to be acknowledged .. we want our pay ... we earned it. To love ... - we all know how difficult it sometimes is ... to love for free, without expected or deserved return.....

Christ is Love, God is Love and Love will continue to love each and every one .. this has nothing to do with rewards or deserving. God loves because God is love.

And that is something we can feel the moment we open ourselves to that love. The moment we lower our resistance to that love, it enters us more and more.

Lowering our resistance is like climbing down a ladder to become servant of God which means in Christ's words: slave of all!

Slave of all meant for Christ to love us all. (unconditionally! w/o Obligation) Almighty God; open our hearts for your love and let us feel you!