

Take-Home Sheet | Session 10

On the Way (Mark 10)

A Ransom for Many: A Catholic Journey Through the Gospel of Mark

What We Found

The road-to-Jerusalem chapter put discipleship's price tags on the table: marriage, children, money, power. On marriage, Jesus went past Moses' concession to "the beginning of creation": one flesh, joined by God, protected by "let not man put asunder", not a burden laid but an inheritance restored, made livable again by grace (Genesis 1:27; 2:24; CCC 1614-1615). On children: the kingdom is RECEIVED, like a child, never earned. On money: the rich man is the only individual in Mark whom Jesus is said to have LOVED, and the only person in the Gospels to walk away sad from a direct call; the camel stays enormous, salvation is impossible for men, "but not with God."

James and John asked for thrones and were offered a cup, the prophets' cup of wrath (Isaiah 51:17), and a baptism into death. Then the sentence this study is named for, spoken on the road: *"For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* Ransom: the price that frees captives, Exodus language, and the price is himself. "For many": Isaiah 53's Servant, who bore the sin of many, and "many," in the Church's reading, sets no limit: Christ died for all (CCC 605). File the phrase "for many" somewhere safe; this Gospel is not done with it. And the chapter closed with Bartimaeus: blind, begging BESIDE the way, shouting "Son of David" while the crowd shushed him, and Jesus, days from Jerusalem, did not silence the title. Asked "What do you want me to do for you?", he answered better than two apostles had an hour earlier: mercy, then sight, and then he threw off his cloak, plausibly his coat, coin-catcher, and bed in one, "and followed him ON the way." From beside the road to on it: that is the whole Gospel's picture of conversion.

Voices of the Church

Voices of the Church: St. Gregory Nazianzen (Second Oration on Easter)

To whom was the ransom paid? Not to the devil, God owes the robber nothing, and not to a Father who craved blood. The Father accepts the Son's offering not because he demanded it, but because man had to be sanctified by the humanity of God. The fact of our redemption is certain; its inner mystery we adore rather than flatten.

Voices of the Church: St. John Paul II (Theology of the Body, opening catecheses on Matthew 19, 1979)

When the Pharisees asked about divorce, Christ twice appealed to "the beginning," and the Theology of the Body takes the Lord's method as its own: returning to Genesis to recover what the body and the spousal union meant before hardness of heart. Christ, appealing to the beginning, does not lay a burden; he restores an inheritance.

Voices of the Church: St. Clement of Alexandria (Who Is the Rich Man That Is Saved?)

The Lord's command strikes not at possessions but at the passion of possession: wealth damns when it owns the soul and sanctifies when a detached soul wields it for the needy. The rich man went away sorrowful, one might add with him, because he was asked for the one thing he had never

considered selling: his grip.

Live It This Week

- Memorize 10:45 cold, the study's title verse, and pray it once each morning: "Lord, you came to serve and to ransom; make my day look like your sentence."
- Serve invisibly once this week, in a way that cannot be repaid or noticed.
- Pray for one marriage by name daily this week, asking Christ who restored "the beginning" to restore it.

Scripture Memory Verse

"For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45, RSV2CE)

Before Next Session

Read Mark 11-12. The Son of David enters his city. The Son of David enters his city.

Catechism References

CCC 601, 605, 608, 1614-1615, 2382, 2544-2547