

# Minster Bethel Congregational Church (MBCC)

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16/05/2021 -- James Disciples in Question 5

## James the son of Zebedee



Today is "Church & Chat"

A short church reflection with a hymn, reading, (children's activity), prayer, "thought for the week" and then a time to chat. If you need help to join please ask any deacon

All lockdown services can be found at: [www.mbccs.co.uk](http://www.mbccs.co.uk)

The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.  
Revelations 22:3

**Good morning and welcome to this week's thoughts.**

Our first hymn for today is: "Lord Make Me a Mountain"

[LORD MAKE ME A MOUNTAIN - Song & Lyric - YouTube](#)

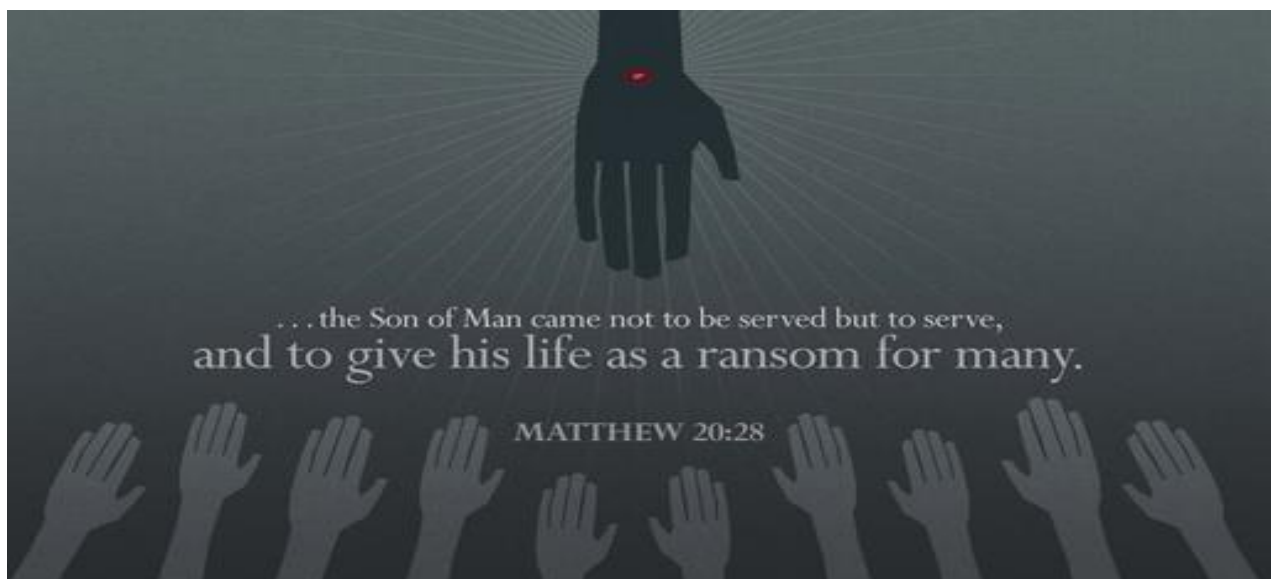
Lord Make Me A Mountain, Standing Tall For You  
Strong And Free And Holy, In Everything I Do  
Lord Make Me A River, Of Water Pure And Sweet  
Lord Make Me The Servant Of Everyone I Meet

Lord Make Me A Candle Shining With Your Light  
Steadfastly Unflickering Standing For The Right  
Lord Make Me A Fire Burning Strong For You  
Lord Make Me Humble In Everything I Do

Lord Make Me A Mountain, Strong And Tall For You  
Lord Make Me A Fountain Of Water Clear And New  
Lord Make Me A Shepherd That I May Feed Your Sheep  
Lord Make Me The Servant Of Everyone I Meet

**The reading today is Matthew 20:20-28**

[Matthew 20:20-28 NIVUK - A mother's request - Then the mother - Bible Gateway](#)



## **Lessons from James the son of Zebedee**

Today we are looking at the disciple James, the Son of Zebedee, who was among the most prominent disciples within the circle of Jesus. There were two disciples with the name James which can be confusing, but this James was the fisherman the brother of John.

There is very little detail of James life and personality in the bible and whenever he is mentioned in the gospels he's always tied together to his younger and better-known brother, John. However, there is much we can learn from this disciple.

One of the greatest lessons we learn from James is his readiness to answer the call of Jesus. We read in Matthew 4:21-22:

*“Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.”*

James, along with his brother, was more than willing to follow Christ. He could have thought of a thousand reasons to decline the call of Jesus. James could have thought of his job, family, prior commitments, and personal ambitions in life. But no... his response was of that of a sure man. He didn't think twice, but instead, he immediately left the boat and his father to follow Christ!

James showed us that there's no better time for us to answer God's calling, but now.

### **So our first lesson is to follow Jesus as soon as you can.**

In the same verse, Matthew 4:21-22, we read the response of James to the call of Christ. He left the boat, which represented his source of living. He also left his father, which represents his family.

Now, this does not mean that if you are going to follow God, you should automatically give up your job, your family and all that you have. The situation for James here was unique. Christ was preparing him for something greater than anything he hoped for. Jesus wanted James to be his full-time student along with the rest of the Disciples.

It isn't necessary to leave everything behind but when needed we must be willing to give 100%.

We read in Matthew 19:29:

*“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.”*

### **Our second lesson then is for us to be ready to give up things that get in the way of our relationship with God.**

James had character flaws like being brash, bragging who'd be the greatest, wanting to call down fire on people and asking to sit on a throne next to Jesus. In Mark 3:17 Jesus named James and John Boanerges, which mean 'sons of thunder'

Christ named them Boanerges, because of James is naturally an enthusiastic and energetic follower of Christ. Because of his burning passion for doing God's work, James is among the first Disciples to be martyred (Acts 12).

One instance where James displayed his enthusiasm is in the story where Christ and His disciples entered a village of the Samaritans. The problem was that the villagers didn't like the Jewish group.

We read in Luke 9:54:

And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?”

James has a great confidence in the power of Christ. He has the faith that if Christ would only allow it, they can summon great fire from heaven and consume the whole village!

James definitely had a great zeal for which he should be commended. However, Jesus had a different perspective in this situation. Jesus’ response was to rebuke them. He lovingly corrected James and John. He told them that in this case, mercy should be shown. Their main goal is not to destroy people and villages but to save them. For this, James learned a vital lesson that he will never forget for the rest of his life.

### **To make sure we do not mis-place our enthusiasm for God.**

The next thing James teaches us is about our relationship with God.

James is known to be one of the closest companions of Jesus along with John and Peter.

James was present at the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law, at the raising of Jairus’ daughter, at the transfiguration of Christ, in Gethsemane and in other occasions mentioned in the Gospels.

There’s no doubt, James is a close, intimate, and cherished friend of Jesus.

Just like James, we must seek a close relationship with God. To have a closer relationship with God, we must always pray to Him, read His Word, obey His laws, and keep His commandments. Making God as our top priority will lead us nearer to Him.

### **The fourth thing we learn is we must seek a close relationship with God.**

Through James in our reading today we hear Jesus talking about service Matthew 20:20-28.

There came a time when James felt that he deserved a great recognition because of his perceived closeness to Christ. James and John, wanted to sit on the right and left hand of Christ in the kingdom of heaven! However, the response of Christ is not what they expected. Jesus said:

‘You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father.’

All of this caused upset within the group of disciples and Jesus used this opportunity to teach the disciples one of the greatest lessons, He said to them:

‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’

This must have surprised the disciples who still thought that greatness was measured by how much authority you had. However, Jesus showed them that Greatness is measured in how much you are willing to serve.

This remains as important today as it was then, it doesn’t matter who you are or how important your position, it is in serving others without expecting in return which will bring us greatness in the eyes of God.

### **So our final lesson from James is that greatness is found in serving others.**

## Our second hymn for today “Servant King”

[From Heaven You Came \(The Servant King\) with Lyrics - YouTube](#)

From heav'n You came, helpless Babe  
Entered our world, Your glory veiled;  
Not to be served but to serve  
And give Your life that we might live

This is our God, the Servant King  
He calls us now to follow Him  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King

There in the garden of tears  
My heavy load He chose to bear;  
His heart with sorrow was torn  
'Yet not my will but Yours,' He said

This is our God, the Servant King....

Come see His hands and His feet  
The scars that speak of sacrifice;  
Hands that flung stars into space  
To cruel nails surrendered

This is our God, the Servant King....

So let us learn how to serve  
And in our lives enthrone Him;  
Each other's needs to prefer  
For it is Christ we're serving



### Today's Pray:

Dear God. We thank You for all we learn from James. Help us to follow you, by giving up the things that get in the way. Help us to strengthen our relationship and not put our enthusiasm to waste. We pray that You'll show us how we can serve others. – Amen.

# Matthew 20:28



just as the Son of Man  
did not come to be served,  
but to serve,  
and to give his life  
as a ransom for many.



MAY GODS BLESSING SURROUND YOU  
EACH DAY  
AS YOU TRUST HIM AND WALK IN HIS WAY;  
MAY HIS PRESENCE WITHIN  
GUARD AND KEEP YOU FROM SIN.  
GO IN PEACE, GO IN JOY, GO IN LOVE.