

**The Heavenly Kingdom**      St. James, apostle      Tuesday, July 25, 2017      8:15 AM  
2 Cor 4:7-15;      **Mt 20:20-28**      (In the heavenly kingdom there love is service, there primacy is slavery, there is no lording over anyone, and those with authority are the servants of all.

**“Command that these two sons of mine, sit one at your right and the other at your left, in your Kingdom.”**

This story of the sons of Zebedee and their mother is a very good one because it reflects the **problem everyone has understanding what Jesus was talking about when he we talked about a kingdom.** They assumed he meant some sort of place. They assumed he was implying some sort of authority structure, government if you will, with someone at the top, apparently Jesus himself and then—and then what? So this request was for the sons of Zebedee to be coregents, exercising authority and power in this new kingdom, **thought of as actually an earthly type of thing, but maybe better.** And that’s how **people use their imagination in dealing with the hidden dimensions of life.** They think of them as like the visible ones, but maybe better. So when they hear the word “kingdom,” they think in terms of an earthly kingdom but better: no evil, no injustice, and so on.

But this was not what Jesus was talking about. **He was talking about the potential that God has placed in every human being to be like God,** the image and the likeness of God. He was talking about releasing that potential so that human beings would become truly united to God, thus taken up into a unity and a harmony in which there would be **complete communion of love and peace.** However that does not include something like an earthly kingdom or better. It is totally different because **in the heavenly kingdom love is service, there primacy is slavery, there is no lording over anyone, and those with authority are the servants of all.** In fact, in a way, you could say they have no importance except that they really do because love is the most important thing and service is from love. So, yes, there’s great importance, but it’s not like what

human beings organize in their own societies because **human societies are all based upon delusions about who we are, hallucinations about what life is really for.**

And James and John did us a great service by going along with their mother in this scheme because **we all need to learn the same thing they did.** What is really what in the kingdom of God? And what we are supposed to be living for? And what consists of actual and true happiness? These are all very important questions. **The answers are right in the gospel.** And what we have to do is let them teach us without trying to distort them by comparing them to the world we know already.