

Introduction:

1. Describe a time when someone thought they could lord it over you. How did you react?
2. When are you most likely to feel competitive with other people?

Understanding:

3. Pastor Dave mentioned that James and John had Chutzpah in the way they asked for something outrageously bold. But the bible often says to ask and pray boldly. How do you reconcile that command with Jesus’s rebuke of James and John?
4. Read Genesis 4:3-8. How did Cain react? Why? How does that serve as a warning to us?
5. Read Genesis 11:1-9. Do you ever try to make a name for yourself? How might this passage encourage you to repent of that?
6. Read 1 Samuel 18:6-9. Saul was quite a warrior in his own right. But why was he unhappy anyway? What does that show you about the effects of competition in our own lives?
7. A well-known Christian author paid to have many copies of his books bought in bulk in order to move higher on the best seller list. How do we resolve our own contradiction between our competitive drive wanting to be #1 and our wish to live for Christ consistently before others?
8. James and John were the Sons of thunder. Read Luke 9:51-55. As young disciples what was their attitude when the Samaritans did not welcome them? Read Acts 12:2 to see what finally happened to James and Revelation 1:9 for John. What differences do you see? How do you account for them? How does that relate to your own walk in Christ?
9. Pastor Dave mentioned how Jesus’ Spirit enables us. Read Ephesians 5:15-20. How much depends on you? How much depends on the work of the Spirit in you?
10. Read Mark 10:40. Jesus is God, yet he tells James and John it’s not up to him to decide who receives positions of honor. Why does Jesus say this even though he is God?

Application:

11. There is a mindset that says “Jesus is here to give me what I want; to fulfill my wishes; to make me happy.” Indeed, bestselling books say Jesus wants you to have your best life now. You might even think it can’t be God’s will if you are suffering. Now read Romans 8:16-18 and compare its answer to “your best life now.” How is this an encouragement in the midst of suffering?
12. Try one or more of the 5 serving acts that Pastor Dave mentioned in his conclusion.
 - First, **give** your time and attention to someone from whom you have nothing to gain
 - Second, **perform** an act of secret service.
 - Third, **celebrate** the success of your “competition.”
 - Fourth, **stop** being a slave to your social media image.
 - And fifth, **serve** your church
13. Memorize Mark 10:45: For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.