



**DESCENDING
INTO GREATNESS**

**SERVANT LEADERSHIP:
ADOPTING THE ATTITUDE OF CHRIST**

AUGUST 20, 2017

How many of you want to
be Great?

What is Greatness?

The World's Definition of Greatness

- * Power
- * Position
- * Respect
- * Money
- * Education

The World's Pecking Order



Earthly Kingdom Values

To lead, you must dominate.

To live someone else may have to die.

To succeed you must work harder than anyone else.

To be strong you must leave behind the weak.

To be promoted you must step on others.

To be rich you must scrimp and save.

To win you must be first.



**WE ARE CITIZENS OF A KINGDOM THAT OPERATES ON
RADICALLY DIFFERENT VALUES**

Upside Down Kingdom Values

To lead, you must serve.

To live you must die.

To succeed you must cease your labors.

To be strong you must be weak.

To be promoted you must promote others.

To be rich you must give everything away.

To win you must be last.

How do we achieve greatness in the Kingdom?

- Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)
- Blessed are the **meek**, for they will inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5)
- Unless you **change and become like little children**, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:3)
- Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever **loses his life for my sake** will find it. (Matthew 10:39)
- **Humble yourselves** before the Lord and he will lift you up. (James 4:10)

Greatness in the Bible

- * Jesus' disciples, James and John, desired greatness. More than that, they craved fame and status. This is evident by a bold question they asked Jesus in Mark 10:35—

“Teacher,” they said to him. “We want for you to do whatever we ask from you. Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory” (Mark 10:35-37).

Greatness in the Bible

- * Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.” And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John.

Greatness in the Bible

* Jesus *didn't* rebukes James and John's *desire* for greatness. Instead, he gives them a new *definition*:

v. 42 “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But **whoever would be great among you must be your servant**, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Greatness in the Bible

“As the world defines it, pursuing greatness looks like this: Individuals motivated by self-interest, self-indulgence, and a false sense of self-sufficiency pursue selfish ambition for the purpose of self-glorification. Contrast that with the pursuit of *true greatness* as biblically defined: *Serving others for the glory of God*. This is the genuine expression of humility; this is true greatness as Jesus defined it. So it’s not the desire that’s bad, per se, but the definition. And Jesus completely redefines what greatness is, which is **serving others to the glory of God**. In a word, true greatness is about *humility*.” (C.J Mahaney)

The Paradoxical Commandments

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered.

Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish
ulterior motives.

Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you will win false friends and
true enemies.

Succeed anyway.

The Paradoxical Commandments

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.

Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.

Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas
can be shot down by the smallest men and women
with the smallest minds.

Think big anyway.

The Paradoxical Commandments

People favor underdogs...but follow only top dogs.

Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building...may be destroyed overnight.

Build anyway.

People really need help...but may attack you if you do help them.

Help people anyway.

Give the world the best you have...and you may get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world the best you have anyway.

Jesus' Example of Servant Leadership

John 13: 1-17– Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper.

He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet."



Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"



Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

- * Jesus knew that it was the night of His betrayal and that the very next morning He would suffer on a cross for the sins of the world. He would have had every reason to be preoccupied with His imminent sufferings.
- * Yet Jesus took time to tend to a duty—that of washing the feet of guests—that was usually left to the lowest servant in a household.

What is the motivation for servant leadership?

1. Identity:

- *v. 3—Jesus, knowing that he had come from God and was going back to God...*

2. Love:

- *v. 1—Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.*

3. Faith:

- *v. 3—Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands...*

- * It was not in spite of His greatness but **because** of His greatness that Jesus served His disciples on that evening.
- * Through His own attitude toward serving others Jesus taught us that true greatness in the Kingdom of God consists not in position or authority but in serving one another.

Acts of mundane service are not inconsistent with authority and greatness, but rather, part of it.

Jesus' Attitude

Philippians 2:1-11 — So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus' Descent into Greatness!

Relinquished ALL his rights. Gave up the perks and privileges of divinity.

Became a man, subject to all the limitations and trials of being mortal.

Modeled servanthood in every respect.

Chose to sacrifice his life and experience alienation from his Father.

Went through humiliation and torture of the cross.

And because of that, EXALTED to the HIGHEST PLACE.

How many of you want to
be Great?



JESUS
THE
SERVANT
KING