



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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Kingdom Principles

Focus Verses: Mark 10:43-44 - ⁴³But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: ⁴⁴And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

Lesson Text: Mark 9:33-37; 10:35-45

Truth About God: God promotes those who do not promote themselves.

Truth For My Life: I will follow Jesus' example and serve others.

When Jesus asked His disciples about their argument, they were embarrassed. *"They had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest"* (Mark 9:34). Jesus addressed this basic human desire when He told His disciples, *"Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister"* (Mark 10:43). This presented Jesus with a prime opportunity to share an important Kingdom principle with His closest followers. They were imitating Gentile rulers by seeking after power and position. Jesus said, *"They which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them"* (Mark 10:42). But in God's kingdom, the path to power is not flexing your muscles and stomping on anyone who get in your way. Jesus corrected them, *"But so shall it not be among you"* (Mark 10:43).

Jesus explained the road to true greatness does not run along the path of self-promotion or the exercise of unfettered authority. True greatness comes when one person humbly serves another, even when no one else notices. Greatness is volunteering to teach the Sunday school class no one else wants to teach. It is blisters and callouses at the all-church workday. It is showing up for prayer meeting after a long day at work when you really just want to go home. It is driving out of your way to pick someone up for church. It is faithfully serving on the job even when your boss does not seem to notice. It is responding to hate with kindness and choosing reconciliation over retaliation. **Greatness is having a servant's heart.** Jesus' contemporaries did not recognize His greatness until after they crucified Him.

Concern about social standing is an inborn human trait. We want to be known for making the best grades, being the most athletic, or being the most physically attractive. Even in adulthood, we do not shake this obsession. It has been widely observed that we will spend money we do not have to impress people we do not even like. Even people of faith are not immune to this sort of social posturing. We debate among ourselves about the most gifted preacher, singer, or musician, or which church or conference is at the top of the list. We work hard so our church or ministry will be highly regarded by our peers. Like the disciples, we want to be in the conversation when people are discussing greatness.

Many people are guilty of seeing only the perks of certain positions while conveniently overlooking the sacrifices and struggles that happen behind the scenes. People want to be the leader until a crisis arises. It is easy to become frustrated when it seems God is overlooking us while promoting others. **But He knows what we can handle, and He loves us too much to give us everything we think we want when we want it.** God know whether we are ready for the pressure that will come at the next level of service. He knows when we are ready, and when the time is right, the right door will open. In the meantime, let us serve the Kingdom by serving others.

Serving others means telling them about Jesus. Like the Book of Acts believers, we are also called to turn our world upside down. The world is in a terrible mess, but we must remember that God does not hold us accountable for what we cannot control. He simply calls us to take responsibility for what happens within our sphere of influence. Making a difference for the masses begins with being a difference for an individual. It begins with serving a friend or neighbor in need.

One of the greatest illustrations of servanthood is found in John 13 at what Christians usually call the Last Supper. After sharing a meal with His twelve disciples, Jesus surprised them all by taking of His outer garments and wrapping a towel—the attire of a common household servant—around His waist. He poured water into a basin, stooped down, and begin to wash His disciples' grime-covered feet. *"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet"* (John 13:14).

May you be willing to go and do the same!