

“Jesus’ Teaching on Deacons”

The Lord wants every believer to great in the coming Kingdom of God.

I. Jesus clarifies that only servants shall be the greatest. (Capernaum)

Mark 9:33–35 — ³³ They came to **Capernaum**; and when He was in the house, He began to question them, “What were you discussing on the way?” ³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which of them was the greatest. ³⁵ Sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, “If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.””

A. Disciples wrongly believed that greatness was achieved by having first place -v34.

B. Jesus clarifies two things: -v35

1. The desire for greatness is not a bad thing,
2. True greatness before God requires one to become the least.

II. Jesus teaches that only servant-leadership shall lead to greatness in the Kingdom of God. (Traveling to Jerusalem)

Mark 10:42–45 — ⁴² Calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, “You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. ⁴³ “But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; ⁴⁴ and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”” (**parallel at Matt 20:25-28**)

A. Jesus dismantles the old thinking on greatness: (v42)

1. God does not hand out positions of greatness by decree or request.
2. The follower of Christ is to no longer follow the world’s template of greatness.

B. Jesus defines greatness as one who meets the needs of others.

III. Jesus restates that disciples must strive to become servants of one another. (At the Lord’s supper)

Luke 22:24–27 — ²⁴ And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest. ²⁵ And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called ‘Benefactors.’ ²⁶ “But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant. ²⁷ “For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.”

A. Commands to follow:

1. Important brethren must become like the lowest -v26a.
2. Spiritual leaders must become like the servant -v26b.

IV. Jesus demonstrated greatness by example.

A. He washed the disciple’s feet at the Lord’s Supper:

John 13:12–17 — ¹² So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ “You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ “For I **gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.** ¹⁶ “Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ “If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

B. Lessons:

1. If the Lord washes our feet, how much more should we -v14.
2. The Lord’s example is something we are to imitate -v15.
3. Doing this will bring great blessing -v17.

C. Conclusion: Every believer is to strive for greatness as a servant.

V. Great servants should especially shine in the office of deacon.

1 Timothy 3:13 — ¹³ For those who have served well as **deacons** obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.”

NEXT WEEK: We will study this passage more fully.

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