

Summary

In this sermon drawn from Mark 9:33-35, the pastor explores what it truly means to be great in the Kingdom of God. Jesus catches His disciples arguing about who among them is the greatest, and rather than scolding them harshly, He reframes greatness entirely: the one who desires to be first must become the servant of all. The pastor uses this passage to challenge the congregation to examine both their motives and their methods when it comes to seeking significance, influence, or recognition in the church and in life.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today with open hearts and willing spirits. As we gather together, we ask that You would quiet the noise of our own ambitions and desires, and help us to hear clearly what You want to speak to each of us. Give us eyes to see ourselves honestly, and give us the courage to embrace the kind of greatness You call us to. May Your Holy Spirit move freely among us today, breaking down walls and drawing us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

Think of someone in your life who served others quietly and without recognition. What is one thing about that person that has stuck with you?

Key Verses

- Mark 9:33-35
- Matthew 20:26-28
- 1 Corinthians 13:1-3
- Matthew 5:16
- Hebrews 12:2

Questions

- The disciples were arguing about who was the greatest while walking right behind Jesus. In what ways do you think we do something similar today, even as followers of Christ?
- Jesus said that whoever wants to be first must be the servant of all. How does that standard challenge the way our culture defines success and greatness?
- The pastor pointed out that it is not a sin to want to be great in the Kingdom of God, but that wrong motives and wrong methods are the real problem. What do you think are some of the most common wrong motives people bring into church life?
- The sermon mentioned that comparison, strife, division, and reputation-damaging talk are all signs that we have lost a kingdom perspective. Which of these do you think is most damaging to a local church, and why?
- The pastor shared that many revivals began not with the people on stage, but with quiet intercessors praying behind the scenes. How does that idea challenge the way you think about your own role in the church?
- First Corinthians 13 reminds us that even powerful spiritual gifts mean nothing without love. Can you think of a time when you did the right thing but with the wrong motive? What did you learn from that experience?
- The pastor described humility not as thinking less of yourself than you are, but as not thinking more of yourself than you are. How does that definition change the way you approach serving others?
- Matthew 5:16 calls us to let our light shine so that others glorify our Father in heaven. How can you practically make sure that the good you do points people to God rather than to yourself?

Life Application

This week, identify one area of your life, whether at home, at work, or at church, where you have been focused more on your own position or recognition than on serving others. Choose one specific, practical act of service you can do for someone else without drawing attention to yourself. As you do it, pray and ask God to align your heart with His, and reflect at the end of the week on what He revealed to you through that experience.

Key Takeaways

- True greatness in the Kingdom of God is defined by servanthood, not by position, title, or recognition. Jesus Himself modeled this by washing his disciples' feet and giving His life as a ransom for many.
- Wrong motives such as comparison, strife, the pursuit of power, and division not only harm individuals but can undermine the mission and witness of the entire church.
- Love is the foundation of everything. Without love as the motive behind our actions, even our most impressive spiritual gifts and sacrificial deeds count for nothing before God.
- Humility is not self-deprecation. It is an accurate and honest view of yourself that also genuinely values and celebrates the worth and contributions of others.
- When we serve others with the right heart, God's grace empowers us, joy sustains us, and the ultimate result is that God receives the glory He deserves.

Ending Prayer

Lord, we thank You for the reminder today that Your Kingdom operates by a completely different standard than the world around us. Forgive us for the times we have sought our own recognition, stirred up strife, or compared ourselves to others in ways that dishonored You. We ask that You would plant a servant's heart deep within each of us. Help us to love genuinely, to serve sacrificially, and to find our greatest joy in bringing glory to Your name. As we leave this time together, may the way we treat one another reflect the Jesus who lives inside of us. In His name we pray, amen.