

THINGS I WISH JESUS NEVER SAID

PART THREE: I WANT TO BE GREAT

Competing to be the best is not a foreign desire or pursuit to us today, and Jesus' disciples felt the same way two thousand years ago. When left to our natural desires, we all tend to gun for number one. Everybody wants to be 'great' and most of us spend a surprising amount of time trying to find it. But where can we find true greatness? Jesus says something crazy when He tells us that our pursuits are best when they are to be last. Jesus sees what we don't. Our greatest opportunity to be great is to take a posture of service and think firstly of the needs of those around us. According to Jesus, true greatness is not found in how many people serve us but in how many people we are serving.

BIG IDEA: Greatness isn't about position—it is about posture.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Name all the things in our culture that we rank. (*examples*: restaurants, television, movies, hotels, cars, sports teams, etc.)
2. Why do you think our culture is obsessed about ranking things? Who is the best? Who is the greatest? Who is the fastest? Who is the prettiest? Who is the sexiest?
3. How does social media play into the way we rank and determine how popular we are?
4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Mark 9:35-37.*

Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

Mark 9:35-37 (NIV)

5. How much do you struggle with Jesus' statement that "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all" in Mark 9:35? Why?
6. Christian leader John Maxwell says, "To be truly great—to be a success means having those closest to me love and respect me the most." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
7. Kim said, "When we're fighting for a position then everyone is our competition. And that keeps everyone from becoming our friend." How has not taking on a posture serving others kept you isolated? What would it look like for you to strive to serve rather than to compete?
8. How immersed would you say that you tend to be in your own pursuit of greatness on a typical day? Why is that?
9. Who do you feel that you tend to 'push to the back of the room' in life? Why do you think that happens?
10. In what ways has God blessed you with the *position* or *potential* of being able to bless others?
11. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Mark 10:35-45.*

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask." "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 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."

Mark 10:35-37, 41 42-45 (NIV)

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12. Do you think of Jesus as a ‘meek and mild’ teacher? What might happen if you spent more time letting Jesus offend you?
13. Describe a time when someone truly served you. How did that make you feel—and how did you end up feeling about them?
14. In the message Carey said most people are more interested in what God can do for them than they are interested in God. How have you seen that dynamic in your own life...and in the lives of others?
15. What is so shocking about Jesus teaching in [Mark 10:35-45](#)?
16. What would it take to reverse your wiring from wanting to be served...to being willing to serve others?
17. What is the context of Jesus’ statement in Mark 10:45? What made the other disciples indignant or angry?
18. What do you think motivated the disciples to ask a favor of Jesus? What were the disciples really wanting when they asked if they could “sit at your right and at your left?”
 - a. A close relationship with God
 - b. Power and position
 - c. Special recognition
 - d. Parental approval
 - e. Spiritual security
19. How does Jesus use this uproar to convey new insights into what greatness is?
20. How does Jesus practice what He preached? (*see John 13:1-17*)
21. What are some of your specific ideas for ways that you could serve those around you?

MOVING FORWARD

Mark 10:45 reminds us that even Jesus didn't come to this earth with the intent to be served, but to serve others—even to the point of giving his life so that others could have life. It was the ultimate act of selflessness. Similarly, our prayer should be to wake up everyday, dress in the realization of Jesus' model for us in service, and walking out our door with new eyes to see and hands to serve those all around us. It is what Jesus modeled for us. It is what He calls us to do and be.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.” Mark 9:36-37



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