

**The road to true greatness**  
**Servants, not Superstars**  
**Last place wins**  
**Cut it out**  
**Salted for Service**

Mark 9:30-50

30 Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it.<sup>31</sup> For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

Jesus is getting closer and closer to the cross and as he gets closer to the Cross

- He seeks to prepare his disciples for his death
  - and this is the second time now that he has revealed to them
    - I'm going to be betrayed & killed
- but I'm also going to rise from the dead the 3<sup>rd</sup> day

the Jews were expecting the Messiah to come onto the scene

- but the problem was they were looking for a different kind of Messiah
  - to come onto the scene to conquer & deliver them from Rome

but Jesus didn't come to be a conquering King at His 1<sup>st</sup> coming

- he came to be a suffering servant to die for his sheep

this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3 times that Jesus will prophesy of his suffering, death & resurrection.

- the resurrection of Jesus is the Cornerstone of Christianity

it is by far the single most important aspect of Christianity

and this is one thing that separates every single religion on the face of the planet today

- from Biblical Christianity the resurrection of Jesus Christ

<sup>32</sup> But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him.

they didn't understand that the suffering, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus

- was God's plan all along to save us

they didn't want to talk about his death but they were busy talking about other things

<sup>33</sup> Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?"<sup>34</sup> But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest.

this seems to be the favorite topic of conversation among the disciples.

- they wanted to get down to who was greatest among them

When we play family games, I say I'm going to beat you all, I'm the greatest, I'm going to win

- and they so no dad I'm going to win I'm the greatest & we go back and forth

in their mind they thought Jesus was going to Jerusalem to rule and reign

- And establish His kingdom and they wanted a nice job in Jesus's kingdom.

They thought Jesus was going to be the new king of Israel

- So their arguing I'm going to be the VP, no I am

Peter prob said well of course I'm going to be the greatest I walked on water

- and by the way he also changed my name

and maybe one of the other disciples said well he also called you Satan

- and told you to get behind him

Then Peter said well Jesus gave me the KEYS to the Kingdom

- James & John said well we were at the transfiguration also

- they're going back and forth who's going to be the greatest

they were disputing amongst themselves and this was getting heated

- and Jesus calls them out on it

the Lord is aware of our conversations what we speak when nobody else is around

- the Lord hears what we say & talk about w/ other people

he desires in **Psalm 19:14** that **the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart** **Be acceptable in His sight**, that our words would be pleasing to him

these guys were arguing & comparing themselves among themselves

- which is not good

- then we sometimes put other people down to somehow build ourselves up

- and the Lord wants us to avoid that

Who's the greatest? well Jesus reveals this truth to his disciples in verse 35'

**<sup>35</sup> And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."**

when Jesus sat down, they all gathered around. Jesus is going to teach them something.

Jesus says, "**If you want to be first, be last of all and servant of all.**"

- and this completely turns around the worldly way of thinking

- that we swim in every day.

He's telling us to allow others to be preferred before us.

**Phillippians 2:3-4** **Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.**

Jesus said that true greatness is displayed by not how many people serve you,  
• but by how many people you serve.

Instead of the ambition to have things done for us,

- true greatness is to have the ambition to do things for others.
  - Jesus was saying, "I want you to be an others centered person."

That's where true JOY comes from= Jesus Others Yourself

in the worldly idea of power, the great man or great woman is distinguished

- by how many people serve them.

in ancient China it was fashionable for very wealthy and influential men

- to grow their fingernails incredibly long 7 8 10 12 inch long
  - and when they would grow that long they would become curved
- and then they would encrust them with jewels and all these different things.

Now when you've got fingernails that long you can't even brush your own teeth.

- you'd be breaking a nail every day and so what do you do?
  - You have to have a servant brush your teeth for you.

And that's why they grew their nails that incredibly long because it was a way of saying,

- "I don't have to do anything for myself. Nothing. Other people do everything for me."
  - That's how wealthy and influential I am.

Jesus says that kind of thinking is completely wrong.

- The world might think of that as greatness, but God doesn't.

The greatest of all is the person who willingly puts others before himself

- Jesus put the world's needs before his own and he died in our place
  - this is what greatness looks like

the perspective of Heaven versus the perspective of Earth is so different

HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE SEEN MONSTER JAM they were at BSU this weekend

- We have a shirt that says "**Anything but first is dead last.**"

**Matthew 20:26** Jesus said whoever desires to become great among you let him be your servant and whoever desires to be first among you let him be your slave

- interesting the word servant is translated Minister
  - the word Minister means servant & it's the example that Jesus set for us

in **Matthew 20:28** Jesus said the son of man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many

I love how it says in **Joshua 1:1-2** that Moses was **the servant of the Lord**

- God called Moses, **My servant** in vs. 2
  - 5 times in Joshua Ch. 1 God referred to Moses as His Servant

A true man or woman of God will be a servant of God

Jesus was the GREATEST SERVANT Who has ever walked this earth!

When Jesus washed the disciples feet in the upper room Jesus said in, **John 13:15**  
“I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you”

**Why do we serve Jesus?** The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:14 “the Love of Christ compels us”

I am so thankful for all that Jesus has done for me

- His Love & Grace he has shown towards me & He saved me from hell
  - Compels me to want to serve Jesus & Give Him my life

When we understand how much Jesus **loves us** & What He has done for us

- We will want to serve Him with our life

**2 Corinthians 5:15** says “Jesus died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.”

I want to hear Jesus say to me the day I die, and see Him face to face:

“Well done good and faithful **servant**; Enter into the joy of the Lord.”

Moses “The servant of the Lord” kept charging for Jesus till the day he died = 120yrs old

- He never retired till the day he died!

We should never retire from serving the Lord either! We have work to do!

- There is so many people who need to be reached 4 Jesus

<sup>36</sup> Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them, <sup>37</sup> “Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me.”

there were times when the disciples tried to stop the mothers

- from bringing their children to Jesus
  - and Jesus rebuked his disciples

and here he's reminding his disciples if you receive one of these little ones

- Jesus said even if you just minister to a little child
  - you're receiving me = Your doing ministry!
    - and in that the Lord will be glorified

Jesus says the truly great person embraces little children

<sup>38</sup> Now John answered Him, saying, “Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.”

there was a larger group of followers of Jesus more than just the 12 disciples

- There were other people who followed Jesus also

And one of these followers of Jesus took the example and the teaching of Jesus seriously

- and was apparently attempting to minister to people who were possessed

- of demons and was successfully casting demons out of people.

John saw that and he said, " You've got to stop this. You're not one of the 12.

- You're not one of our inner circle.

John has a real competitive spirit, and bad attitude in his heart.

But look at the heart of Jesus in response.

<sup>39</sup> But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. <sup>40</sup> For he who is not against us is on our side.

remember in verse 28 the disciples could not cast out that unclean spirit

- but these guys apparently were casting out demons and they were jealous
  - so they said look stop doing that because you are not one of us

Jesus said do not forbid him = he's with us he's not against us

- if he's doing a work in my name then praise the Lord

if God's using them to do a work then we should rejoice in that

- the Apostle Paul when he was in prison wrote to the Philippians
  - and he talked about this specifically and he said that

I'm going to choose to Rejoice in the fact that the gospel is being preached & advancing

so Jesus exhorts John Hey it's okay we're on the same team we're both serving the lord

<sup>41</sup> For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

something as simple as giving somebody a cup of cold water

- in the name of Jesus is a big deal in the eyes of Jesus & is serving Him

Jesus notices even the small things that we do to serve people for Him

- things that we do behind the scenes that nobody else knows about
  - things that you do in secret for the glory of God

maybe you think I don't feel like I'm really making a big impact for the kingdom of God

- but you're doing things as unto the Lord = he sees
  - he is mindful of that and you will not lose your reward
    - so keep that in mind this week

Shawna told me and Harley yesterday that my mom would watch him

- while we did youth ministry Wednesday nights

<sup>42</sup> "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.

I do believe that anybody that causes a child to stumble anybody that leads a child astray

- that the Lord is going to hold them accountable

I think this is a very sobering warning for anybody who leads somebody else astray

- they're going to be held accountable for that

this is a warning to not make others stumble in their walk with the Lord.

The Greek word for stumble literally means to cause to fall or to be thrown off course.

- So Jesus is saying, "If you cause one of these little ones to question me
  - or to be thrown off course in their walk with me,
    - it will be better if a millstone will tie it around your neck."

the millstone is that large stone that they used to use to make flour.

- If you've seen any movies dealing with Samson, you've seen that stone,
  - he was pushing it around.

Rome used to use these stones as a form of execution.

- they would take that criminal out in the middle of the sea,
  - tie a millstone around his neck and just toss them into the sea.

to stumble someone is a serious, serious thing

We're called to be examples and when we put a stumbling block in people's way,

- we're not walking in love.

<sup>43</sup> If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to **hell**, into the fire that shall never be quenched— <sup>44</sup> where "Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched." <sup>45</sup> And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into **hell**, into the fire that shall never be quenched— <sup>46</sup> where "Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched." <sup>47</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into **hell** fire— <sup>48</sup> where "Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched."

Jesus is giving us an illustration if there's something in your life that is causing you to sin

- causing u to stumble leading you astray it's talking about dealing with it drastically because the fact is you could pluck your eye out but you still have your mind to deal with
  - it's an inside job Jesus is referring to a matter of the heart.

Jesus was speaking figuratively because if you steal with one hand and you chop it off,

- you can steal with the other.

If your feet are taking you places that cause you to sin and you chop them off,

- you can hop to the next place or get a wheelchair and get rolled to the next place.

The same is true for our eyes. If we lust with one eye and we pluck it out,

- we can lust with the other.

We would all be pirates if we were to take this literally and not spiritually

if there is anything in your life right now that is a consistent stumbling block

- you keep going back to it you know that it's wrong God's warned you
    - God's told you this is a hindrance
- and yet you just keep returning to it = deal drastically with that
- get rid of it cut it off = don't pursue it any longer = stop it now while there's still time

Jesus said it's better to deal with it drastically now than to just go on & experience Hellfire

- Jesus mentions hell 3 times here

### **Jesus preached more on Hell than he did on Heaven**

- **and the reason I believe is because he didn't want anybody to go there**

the truth is anybody who doesn't deal drastically with sin

- what happens is sin comes back and deals with you drastically
  - so these are sobering exhortations that we want to take to heart
    - and apply in our lives & may God help us to remove anything
      - that would stand in the way of us Faithfully serving the lord

Jesus tells us about the eternal consequences of us failing to cut things out of our lives

- Jesus tells us three characteristics about hell.
  - Number 1 that its hot like fire
  - Number 2 He also tells us that hell is eternal
  - Number 3 Hell is creepy like a worm crawling on you.

So, what do you do when you're tempted to sin? FLEE like Jospheh

- turn the other way and run

**2 Timothy 2:22** Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

1 John 1:9

<sup>49</sup>“For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and<sup>[a]</sup> every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. <sup>50</sup>**Salt is good**, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.”

Now, I want you to notice a contrast between two verses: verse 48 and 49.

- Look at verse 48 where it says, "And the fire is not quenched,"
- and then compare that with verse 49, "For everyone will be seasoned with fire."
  - In verse 48, it's the fire of punishment;
  - in verse 49 it's a different kind of fire, this is the fire of purification.

this word seasoned is only used three times in the entire Bible

- it means to prepare to arrange to make something tasty

here Jesus says that everybody will be seasoned with fire

- it's interesting that so often the trials that we go through
  - they can be referred to as fiery trials
    - and so often when the fiery Trials come
- the purpose of them is to refine us to burn away the things that need to be removed

someone said that when God puts us through a trial it's like a refining fire

- like gold when it is refined they heat up the gold
  - and what happens is all of the impurities actually rise to the surface
    - and then they remove all of the impurities
      - until the Goldsmith can see his reflection in the gold

and so often what I found in my own life

- is that when God allows me to go through something that's difficult
  - he allows a trial into my life that there are things within me
    - that rise to the surface & things need to be removed

like impatience, selfishness

maybe you're in a fiery trial today and maybe you're asking the question

- why is this happening? when perhaps the question we ought to be asking is
  - God what do you want me to learn through this?
  - God what are you teaching me through this?

there is a purpose for salt and Jesus said in The Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 5:13**

- that **the church is called to be the Salt of the world**
  - salt has a preserving influence

They did not have refrigeration back then so they would salt the meat

- to preserve the meat and also to kill the bacteria to keep the meat from rotting.
  - Salt has a medicinal influence of healing
- If good for your cuts to go into the ocean it helps heal up your skin
  - salt also has a thirst creating influence

that's what we're called to be we are to preserve against the decay of this world

- we are to cause people to be thirsty for what we have
  - and also to provide a healing for people through the words that we share
    - that the ministry that God allows us to be involved with

but if the salt stops being salt then that is not good

as a Christian you don't want to lose your saltiness b/c that's your purpose

so if you're in that place ask the Lord to make you salty again to be used for His glory

maybe there's people in your workplace that they're pursuing the things of this world

- and they're thirsting for something & ultimately they're thirsting for the Lord
  - but they just don't know it and they're trying to fulfill
    - and quench The Thirst that they have in things
      - that could never ultimately satisfy

and God has brought you into that workplace it's your mission field

- you're not there just to get a paycheck
  - you're there to be Salt and Light
    - and the Lord wants to use you in that environment

may God help us this week as we continue to walk with the Lord to be salty

- that people would see in US Jesus they would desire what we have
  - and we would be able to tell them here's how your thirst can be quenched

salt creates pathways also, as they would take salt and they would throw it out on the snow

- on the ground and as people walked on it, it created pathways through the fields

We think this world is bad. We turn on the news, we think it's bad.

- We look around the world. It is bad out there,
  - but it's not as bad as it going to be because we're here.

and we're keeping the world from rotting to the core

- because whenever something gets too crazy, it is Christians who are rising up
  - saying, "No, no, no." So can you imagine when we're taken out of here
    - the salt is gone. The light is gone.
- So we're keeping the world from rotting to the core

and our job is to create a pathway for people to come to Christ.

God wants us to bring the good news/life saving message of Jesus to others

- And be His witness & help others find & follow Jesus!

**Pray**

**Share Gospel**

**Take Communion**