

GREATNESS IS SERVING

²⁰ It was about that time that the mother of the Zebedee brothers, [James and John] came with her two sons and knelt before Jesus with a request. ²¹ “What do you want?” Jesus asked. She said, “Give your word that these two sons of mine will be awarded the highest places of honor in your kingdom, one at your right hand, one at your left hand.” ²⁴⁻²⁸ When the ten others heard about this, they lost their tempers, thoroughly disgusted with the two brothers. So Jesus got them together to settle things down. He said, “You’ve observed how godless rulers throw their weight around, how quickly a little power goes to their heads. It’s not going to be that way with you. Whoever wants to be great must become a servant. Whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave. That is what the Son of Man has done: He came to serve, not be served—and then to give away his life in exchange for the many who are held hostage.” ~ Matthew 20:20, 21, 24-28 (MSG)

“The world defines greatness in terms of power, possessions, prestige, and position. . . . Jesus, however, measured greatness in terms of service, not status.” – *The Purpose Driven Life*, Pastor Rick Warren p.254

Jesus’ example shows us how to be great.

True greatness is serving others.

“If anyone wants to provide leadership in the church, good! But there are preconditions: A leader must be well-thought-of, committed to his wife, cool and collected, accessible, and hospitable. He must know what he’s talking about, not be overfond of wine, not pushy but gentle, not thin-skinned, not money-hungry. He must handle his own affairs well, attentive to his own children and having their respect. For if someone is unable to handle his own affairs, how can he take care of God’s church?” ~ 1 Timothy 3:1-5 (MSG)

Your serving needs to start at home.

“You obey the law of Christ when you offer each other a helping hand.” ~ Galatians 6:2 (CEV)

“But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; ³³ but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife.” ~ 1 Corinthians 7:32-33 (NASB)

Great serving is helping friends in need.

The most meaningful serving is simply helping out people who are already in your life.

If you need help with anything ask your small group.

Serve in a ministry through your church.

God gave us a design for achieving greatness in our lives. The first step is developing attitudes of humility and service to those in our family, small group and church.

Greatness is not flaunting your authority.

“So Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. ⁴³ But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.” ~ Mark 10:42-45 (NLT)

Flaunt → exercise authority over → katakyrieuō : *to lord it over, gain dominion over, subdue; in some contexts there is an implication that this exercise of authority is harsh – lord it over, lording it over, overpowered.*

What does it look like to simply be content with yourself?

“Do you want to stand out? Then step down. Be a servant. If you puff yourself up, you’ll get the wind knocked out of you. But if you’re content to simply be yourself, your life will count for plenty.” ~ Matthew 23:11-12 (MSG)

Great serving starts with those closest to us. Think of some ways to start serving someone within your family circle.

“People who don’t take care of their relatives, and especially their own families, have given up their faith. They are worse than someone who doesn’t have faith in the Lord.” ~ 1 Timothy 5:8 (CEV)

What is one of the ultimate expressions of love? Sacrifice. We might think of the direst of examples, like laying down your life for someone else. But maybe it’s the mom who loves and cherishes her kids so much that she makes sure they are fed, even if she is hungry. Olaf, the snowman from the 2013 Disney movie Frozen, said it best: “Love is putting someone else’s needs before yours.”

Jesus’ example of serving is that of the lowest servant, the one who washes feet. How can you serve others like Jesus’ example demonstrates?

“After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? ¹³ You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. ¹⁴ And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. ¹⁵ I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.” ~ John 13:12-17 (NLT)

Our generosity is pleasing to God. It puts us in a place where God will supply all our needs. Ask God to show you where you can be generous this week.

“At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹

And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.” ~ Philippians 4:18-19 (NLT)

Position yourself for a harvest of blessing by planting into that area today.

“You will always harvest what you plant. ⁹ So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.” ~ Galatians 6:7b, 9, 10

- Everything starts with a seed. *Every idea, every dream, every achievement is a seed.*
- Nothing happens until the seed is planted. *Planting is an act of faith; no deposit-no return.*
- Whatever I sow is what I reap. *Whatever you plant is what you will get back.*

Burdens are lightened when we share. Ask God to show you someone you could share them with.

“Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.” ~ Galatians 4:2 (NLT)

As believers, we are to live just like Jesus by choosing the same mindset and attitude as Jesus. “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:4–5). Whenever we put our self-interest before others and consider ourselves more important than others, then we create disunity and do not stand together for the kingdom upon this earth. The path for every follower of Jesus is the way of humility.

All Eyes On Me

Have you ever tried to draw attention to yourself? Like a child who acts out in order to get attention from their parents, or maybe a teenager who really wants to impress someone, so they act a little crazy or outrageous to get the attention of their crush. Sometimes we see this desire for attention in the church. We want people to recognize us for the ‘spiritual’ things we do like serving, fasting, giving, etc. What we have to remember is everyone has a part to serve in the church. If we have a view that the focus should be on what can be seen, we will only view those who have a public ministry (worship team, teaching, or otherwise being onstage) as being important. God wants our service, no matter what it is, to be for others and the attention that we seek to be from him.