

Southside Baptist Church
Wednesday Night Worship – 1-14-26
Matthew Chapter 20 Part 4
Who is chief among you?

1. Introduction:

a. Taking a look back:

- 1) Matthew recorded for us that James and John, along with their mother, came to Jesus to ask a specific question.
- 2) Remember the difference in the narrative of Matthew versus Mark.
- 3) Jesus is speaking to James and John and asked, "Are ye able"?
 - a) "cup" – speaks of bitter suffering.
 - b) "baptism" – fully immersed in suffering.
- 4) James and John learn they will indeed suffer.

b. Taking a look ahead:

- 1) As we continue, we learn that the other disciples were listening.

2. An important lesson about what is important. Matthew 20:24

a. Verse 24 –

- 1) What did they hear?
- 2) Their response – "indignation" – they were angry. But why?
- 3) Their anger – directed toward James and John.
 - a) Is there an underlying reason for this kind of response?

b. Were they struggling with their identity?

- 1) I do believe their struggle with identity is a part of their response.
- 2) Understanding what gives someone value, significance and worth from the world's perspective is very different from what God says.
- 3) Do you see your identity in:
 - a) Who someone says you are?
 - b) Who you say you are?
 - c) Who God says you are?
- 4) Why is this important?
 - a) If your identity is based on -
- 5) Identity – self-worth, self-esteem, your value, your worth, is a sense of self-respect and a feeling of satisfaction with who you are. It is not based on performance or the opinions of others.
- 6) The danger of not knowing this truth.
 - a) False beliefs shape your thinking.
- 7) When you encounter various life situations, your mind draws out what you believe about it.
 - a) "When it comes to your identity, life situations will expose what you believe about who you are thus exposing false beliefs at work in your mind that are producing destructive thoughts, that result in troubling emotions and that can result in actions that you may regret." The Search for Significance by Robert McGee.

3. Jesus challenges the worldly view of greatness. Matthew 20:25-28

a. Verse 25 –

- 1) Jesus points out the norm of their day.

- a)“rulers oppress their people.”
- b)The man who has power makes it felt by others.
- 2)In their society, the mark of greatness is the exercise of authority.
- 3)“they that are great” – “great” speaks of rank, being eminent for ability, authority, power.
- 4)Here is the point:
 - a)Moments like this have a way of creating questions in our minds, “Am I enough?”

b.Verse 26 –

- 1)Once again, we will see that words matter.
 - a)Jesus uses a different word – “great” – eminent, distinguished – But how?
 - b)By being a “minister” – the servant of a king, of the person served.
- 2)This cannot be the way that it is among you.
 - a)Rethink and retune your minds –

c.The Bible reveals what the servant’s heart is grounded in:

- 1)The servant’s heart is one that is humble before the Lord.
- 2)The servant’s heart is one that listens and obeys.
- 3)The servant’s heart is one that seeks the interest of others.
- 4)The servant’s heart is one that sees serving as an act of worship.

d.Verse 27 –

- 1)Jesus states the principle again but uses a different word.
 - a)Instead of “great” He said “chief”.
 - b)“chief” – first in rank, influence, honor, chief, principal.
- 2)Jesus uses the word “servant”.
 - a)“servant” – slave – devoted to another to the disregard of one’s own interests.
- 3)“Greatness with God is not found in popularity, power, money, authority, being first, or having the most. Those are the things the world counts as important and there are many pursuing those very things and trying to validate their own significance, worth and value by them.” The Search for Significance by Robert McGee.
- 4)With God, it is the opposite.

e.Verse 28 –

- 1)Jesus does not need anyone to wait on Him.

4.Tonight’s Take Away:

- a.Why do you think the disciples were angry with James and John?
- b.Let me ask you since I brought this up, how do you see your identity?
 - 1)Is it who someone says you are?
 - 2)Is it who you say you are?
 - 3)Is it who God says you are?
- c.Do you have a servant’s heart? Is it ok with you to be devoted to another to the disregard of your own interests? Remember what the servant’s heart is grounded in:
 - 1)The servant’s heart is one that is humble before the Lord.
 - 2)The servant’s heart is one that listens and obeys.
 - 3)The servant’s heart is one that seeks the interests of others.
 - 4)The servant’s heart is one that sees serving as an act of worship.