



LIKE HIM

A 90 DAY STUDY OF MARK

Upside Down

February 25- March 2, 2024

90 DAY MEMORY STATEMENT

I am His child, deeply loved, totally forgiven, fully pleasing and complete in Christ.

MAIN POINT

In Christ we learn to take the form of a servant.

INTRODUCTION

What does greatness look like in the world today?

In what ways does this idea of greatness contrast God's idea of greatness?

What reasons might the world have for serving others?

Conversely, what reasons does God urge us to serve others?

In Christ's kingdom servanthood is the key to greatness, not position or influence. This varies greatly from the idea of greatness in our culture. In the business world, for example, greatness comes from ambition, drive, energy, or ability. Jesus, however, said the truly great in heaven—the servants—will be those who are humble.

UNDERSTANDING

READ [MATTHEW 20:25-28](#).

In God's kingdom, what is the path to greatness?

Do you believe that Christians today have a proper understanding of servanthood? Explain.

According to this passage, who is our example for servanthood?

Why might the world hold a low view of servanthood nowadays?

At the center of the mind of Christ is the servant mind. We have difficulty understanding the real meaning of servanthood today—primarily because we associate it with subjection to authority and our pride pushes back against it—but many people in the Bible were called servants because they chose to worship the one true God. Although servanthood is not a hot commodity in our culture, the Bible gives us two reasons why we should be a servant. First, it is a command. Second, we are to become like Christ. Christ perfectly modeled servanthood, therefore we too must model servanthood.

In what ways are you currently serving your community?

READ [ISAIAH 57:15](#), [EPHESIANS 6:5-7](#), [LUKE 16:13](#), AND [1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-2](#).

According to Isaiah 57:15, what does our humility free God to do?

What characteristics of a servant mind do we find in these passages?

The fundamental servant characteristic is humility. *Humility* frees God to manifest Himself in our lives. Jesus showed a humble spirit of servanthood when He washed the feet of His disciples. The second servant characteristic is obedience. *Obedience* is an attitude that draws no limits on what the Master can order. We obey God because He is God, regardless of consequences, because we recognize His authority. The third servant characteristic is *willingness*, which we see in Ephesians 6:7. We can be weak-willed, strong-willed (self-willed), or God-willed. To be God-willed, a person identifies his will with God's. We see this wholehearted willingness in Christ, who continuously served the will of the Father. The next characteristic is *loyalty*, which means you have an undivided heart. God demands loyalty, for we cannot serve two masters. Lordship, by definition, cannot be partial. We cannot say no and call Him Lord. The fifth characteristic is *faithfulness*. We must be faithful in both small and great matters. Faithfulness cannot be a one-time act.

READ [PSALM 123:2](#), [2 TIMOTHY 2:24](#), [MATTHEW 25:21](#) AND [MATTHEW 7:24](#).

What characteristics of a servant mind do we find in these passages?

Of these characteristics, which do you believe is most lacking in our culture today?

Watchful: This is the sixth servant characteristic. Psalm 123:2 speaks to the expectancy and alertness that the Lord desires. Watchful means you want to know what God says or what He wants you to do.

Not Quarrelsome: This characteristic, and the five that follow it, are all presented in 2 Timothy 2:24. Servants of the Lord must not be quarrelsome, because we are often assigned to work together for the kingdom of God.

Gentle: This characteristic suggests congenial and mild. Some of our tasks as servants will require gentleness. Jesus possessed a gentleness that grew from great strength. Similarly, gentleness frees God to strengthen us.

Able to teach: The ability to communicate God's message is expected of all servants of the Lord, not simply pastors and bishops.

Patient: We are to become like God, who is patient with us. This servant characteristic teaches us that we must wait on the Lord and be patient with others. Patience frees the Lord to answer prayer in His way and in His time. Waiting on God allows Him to provide the best answer.

Meek: Only Moses and Jesus are referred to as meek in the Bible. This is good company to keep! The word indicates lowliness, which is not to be confused with weakness. Only strength voluntarily submits. Meekness frees the Lord to guide you.

Good: A good servant accomplishes Kingdom work. Goodness frees the Lord to produce fruit in us. It proves we really are the servants we were redeemed to be.

Wise: The servant must use good judgment, keen discernment, and at times intelligent discrimination. Wisdom frees God to invest you with authority. Wisdom establishes that you are a disciple, learning from the Master and becoming like Him.

APPLICATION

In what ways are you emphasizing God's idea of greatness in your home, church, workplace, etc?

When are people most interested in serving others?

How can we use these opportunities to teach others about the servant mind of Christ?

PRAYER

Thank the Lord for coming to us as a servant. Pray that He will help you understand the level of love and service displayed by Christ so that you can imitate Him as you love and serve others.

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 20:25-28

20:25. Jesus called His students for another session in His classroom. He first showed them that their attitudes were like the Gentiles. "You know" drew on their own experience or common knowledge. In the unbelieving world, it is assumed that power and authority define greatness. The rulers and high officials were examples of worldly greatness. The way they demonstrated their "greatness" was to lord it over others and to exercise authority. Jesus was not criticizing authoritative or hierarchical structure but the "strutting." Such behavior is born out of insecurity and pride. The person who "bosses" others around is trying to prove to himself that he is as great as he hopes. It is only an illusion, for such a person is actually fearful and weak.

20:26-28. Jesus transitioned into the contrasting truth of kingdom greatness with His words, "Not so with you," implying, "You are sons of the Almighty. What are you doing dabbling in these puny efforts at worldly 'greatness' when you could be experiencing true greatness." In 20:26-27, Jesus phrased His words in a parallel structure, a kind of poetry. The pronoun "whoever" leaves the door to true greatness open to anyone willing to follow the path Jesus prescribes. "Among you" brings to mind the family of God. Just as in [Matthew 18](#), Jesus was speaking of relationships within the believing community.

The "great" and "the first" bring to mind Jesus' previous teachings in [18:2-4](#); [19:30-20:16](#). Jesus had compared the humility of a true follower to that of a child; here He compared such humility to that of a servant (diakonos) or a slave (doulos). The possessive pronoun your in both cases is plural, implying that the great believer is servant or slave of all fellow believers. This is equivalent to saying, "The first will be last" (19:30; 20:16), but Jesus' words here were more graphic. The person who is truly great, by heaven's definition, is the one who chooses an attitude of submission to others in the family of believers.

Not everything another believer might ask of us is for the good of all. We are to serve the genuine good of other believers, not simply do what they want us to do. This means that the truly great believer will sometimes encounter misunderstandings from others and disappoint and even anger others by right choices. Some believers might even begin to take pride in their "humility." Our hearts are so self-deceptive that we must always remain open to examination by the loving scrutiny of the Lord. We are accountable to brothers and sisters whose discernment we trust.

All of Jesus' teaching assumes that true humility is based on a healthy self-image. Only the person who is at peace with his true worth in God's eyes is able to act toward others without

trying to prove his or her worth. Convinced of one's self-worth, the believer is able to move on in an attempt to demonstrate the worth of others.

Jesus could provide no better model than Himself. Here He used the title "the Son of Man" to avoid the use of the pronoun "I," which might have been construed by the disciples as boastful. Although the Messiah-King came with every right to be served, His purpose was to serve them. He gave up His rights and took on a responsibility He was not obligated to take. This responsibility would extend ultimately to our eternal souls, purchased by the sacrifice of His life as a ransom [a substitute] for many.