

Serving Others

true greatness

Start Here

Think of someone that you highly respect. What are the qualities you admire in them? How do they show those qualities in daily life?

Think of someone that is publicly respected. What are the qualities that make them great in so many people's estimation?

Explore the Word

There's an impulse within us all to be respected and valued. We want others to think highly of us. But what are the things that make us honourable? What makes us great?

Read Mark 9:33-35

- The disciples did not want Jesus to know what they were discussing. Why?
- How do you become 'first' according to Jesus?
- Was Jesus upset with them for the desire to be great?

Apparently, the disciples still struggled with this idea. Shortly after this passage, we find them arguing again.

Read Mark 10:42-44

- What marks the difference between 'rulers' and those who want to be great in Jesus' kingdom?
- What are the reasons this text might be hard for us to hear, just as it was for the disciples?

Discuss

The tasks of a servant aren't usually very fun – often they are boring. They certainly aren't glamorous – often they are quite dirty. And doing them does not usually solicit immediate praise. The chef at a meal gets lots of praise, but the one washing the dishes rarely is even noticed. We, too, like the disciples, can struggle with serving others. Yet Jesus says this is the path to greatness.

- Think of four or more jobs we usually assign to 'servants.'
- Why do we resist serving?
- What is your instinctive evaluation of the person who cleans the toilets?
- How would you feel if you were asked to do a 'servant's job'?

Main Idea

Jesus shows us that we are great when we are servants.

Jesus wants us to be great! He invites us to pursue greatness in his kingdom. And he not only instructs us how, he shows us. The greatest person himself, Jesus, served in the way he asks us to serve (Matthew 20:28). He engaged in some of the most menial tasks – tasks so low that sometimes his disciples were embarrassed that their master was caring for them in this way! But Jesus did not hesitate.

And in choosing this downward path of humility, the Father honoured Jesus. The Father glorified him.

Jesus asks us to follow his example. He invites us to take the path of the servant and let the Father be the one who lifts us up.

Greatness through serving doesn't come naturally – we have to pursue it. It does not require money, it does not require skill. But it does require intentionally taking action. And it requires on-going practice. Believers in all stages of life are called to continue serving. We never outgrow serving, we only grow into serving more, becoming more and more like Jesus.

Practice Together Now

You will never grow as a servant without serving.

1. Brainstorm: Think about the many different ways that you can serve others.

Come up with two ideas for each category.

- Your family
- Someone in your church
- Someone you don't know

1. Choose one: Commit to one of your ideas.
2. Plan it: How and when you will do this act of service this week?

Pray for one another to grow in the greatness of serving.

Review your Practice Daily

- Do the act of service you committed to doing. Call each other afterwards and debrief the experience.
- Read John 13
 - Honour Jesus for his example of greatness.
 - As you think on Jesus's life, what motivates you to serve in the same way as he did?