

True Greatness

Mark 10:35-45

- I. A writer by the name of Simran Khurana once said,
I do not know whether people are born great, or whether they have greatness thrust upon them. I do know that great people demonstrate certain characteristics that distinguish them from others.
- II. For most of us here, I don't believe greatness is an issue. That is to say, I don't believe most of us are seeking after greatness or that which might be considered greatness.
- III. Yet, if we consider the life of a disciple we find characteristics which demonstrate true greatness.
- IV. As Simran Khurana said "*great people demonstrate certain characteristics that distinguish them from others.*" This is certainly the case for the Christian. Christians possess certain characteristics which distinguish them from others.
- V. In our lesson today we are going to consider the greatness of the Christian.
- VI. What we will find is that "***true greatness is realized through great sacrifice***" It's this characteristic demonstrated in the Christian life which shows our true greatness.
- VII. In Mark 10:35-45 Jesus provides two facts concerning greatness.
1. **The means to achieving greatness**
 2. **The cost of achieving greatness.**

VIII. Let's read **Mark 10:35-45**

Trans: Now let's consider our first point.

1. **The means to achieving greatness**

- A. In this discussion Jesus has with His disciples it's clear that they do not understand the nature of His kingdom.
- B. In Mark 10:32-34, Jesus just told them he was going to Jerusalem to be killed, yet He would rise again in three days.
- C. James and John decide to jockey for positions of greatness in His Kingdom.
1. Matt. 20:20-28 states that their mother was involved in this.
 2. Their mother makes reference to a specific position in His kingdom
 3. James and John ask that they may "sit in His glory," **Mark 10:37**
 4. This phrase "Sit in your glory" is an acknowledgment of Jesus royalty and implies a request for a royal decree.
- D. The rest of His disciples show their lack of understanding by their reaction to the request made by James and John, **Mark 10:41**
- E. In His address Jesus provides for them the means to the greatness they are seeking.
1. Jesus doesn't tell them it's wrong to seek greatness.
 2. But it's not in the manner they suppose, **Mark 10:42,43**
 3. Jesus says true greatness is achieved when one chooses a life of servitude.
 - a. In vs 43 Jesus uses the word "diakonos", servant,
 - b. In verse 44 He uses the word "doulos," which is slave

4. **Mark 9:30-35**

5. **Matt. 23:1-12**

Illust: Three days ago I stood with the three elders of this congregation, around the bed of a sister who's body is devastated by cancer and listened to each one pray for her and her family.

Yesterday Jason Janeway spent twelve hours digging a ditch.

Last night and for the past several months Allan Davis gathers the youth together for Bible Bowl practice.

Today many here taught Bible classes

Appl: When we consider these acts and a hundred others like them, we in no way see them as that which would be the characteristics of greatness, Yet Jesus says that's exactly what they are.

Greatness is not found in being one who exercises authority over others, but it is found in a life of service to others.

This is why the Christian lives a life of greatness. Because *“true greatness is realized through great sacrifice”*

Trans: Having showed how true greatness can be achieved Jesus now turns His attention to the cost of such achievement. This is our second point.

2. The cost of achieving greatness.

A. When James and John asked for their respective positions of greatness they didn't understand what achieving that greatness would cost them.

B. Jesus says that one who seeks greatness must accept suffering, **Mark 10:38,39**

1. The expression “drinking the cup” is a symbol of suffering

2. This suffering is not something to be taken lightly,

3. Jesus uses the word “baptism” to show how overwhelming it is.

4. **Mark 10:28-31**

C. Jesus also states that one who seeks greatness in His Kingdom must not seek to be served.

1. He is not saying that we don't ask for help when we need it.

2. But there are some Christians who are need of baby-sitting. Those who seem to think that the rest of the congregation needs to serve them rather than looking for ways to serve.

3. Only babes need life long service, those who are mature no longer need constant care but seek to serve others who are truly in need.

D. The ultimate price to be paid for greatness is found in laying down ones life for others.

1. This is the example Jesus left for us.

2. **Mark 10:45**

Appl: In any profession, if you seek greatness you will pay a price. Long hours, less time with family, fewer days off, even our service to God can be affected

In seeking greatness in Christ Kingdom there is also a price to be paid. Ultimately you give up your life to serve others, **1Cor. 6:19,20**

The life we have is ours to do what we will, yet for the Christian we choose to enter into a life of slavery and service.

We sacrifice our life for the glory of God and the needs of others. In doing so we achieve true greatness,

As Jesus demonstrated in His own life, ***“true greatness is realized through great sacrifice”***

Con: I know that those I mentioned earlier do not do what they do for recognition sake. They are all very humble in their service. But is that not a characteristic of greatness?

Lets us remember.

1. The means to achieving greatness is found in servitude
2. The cost to achieving greatness is servitude,

Ultimately ***“true greatness is realized through great sacrifice”***