

EVEN THE SON OF MAN DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED

Mark 10:32-45 (Key verse 45)

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

As usual, I want to start with a question. Do you think it is wrong to want to be a great man or woman in this world? If I say great I mean, to be an important or distinguished person? It is not a trick question..... ☺ Think carefully....No, there is nothing wrong with wanting to be great.....In fact, God made us in His image and therefore we naturally want to be a great man or great woman. But today.....the main question.....is what should we do to be a great man or woman? We find the answer by looking at Jesus!

Jesus incarnate is the ultimate example of a great man. In fact, He is the greatest man to have ever walked on the face of the earth..... Because Jesus' greatness is different from worldly greatness.....GREATNESS according to worldly standards are defined by how many people a person rules and exercises authority over. Yet Jesus' GREATNESS is directly linked to the..... extraordinary selfless way..... by which He served people.....especially.....by giving His life on the cross.....as a ransom for many..... I pray that through today's passage, we all accept God's way to becoming a great man and woman in this world. Which is to **SERVE people....just like Jesus! Amen!**

Look at verse 32. At the time, Jesus and His disciples were on their way up to Jerusalem, Jesus again took the Twelve aside and told them exactly what was going to happen to him.....there in Jerusalem. Look at verse 33 - 34 "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of Man will be..... betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law..... They will [then] condemn him to death..... and will hand him over to the Gentiles [that is the Romans], 34who will mock him..... and spit on him..... flog him..... and kill him. Three days later he will rise..... This is the third time Jesus told his disciples about these terrible things that was going to happen to Him in Jerusalem. According to verse 32 the disciples were astonished, while others were afraid.....yet, as we see in the rest of the passage – they did not want to hear about Jesus's suffering and death. Because they were dreaming their own dreams.

We see this with James and John. Look at verses 35-37. "Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. 'Teacher,' they said, 'we want you to do for us whatever we ask.'"..... "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." Here a synonym for "glory" can be "greatness." It is interesting, that despite what Jesus told themmoments earlier.....about what was going to happen to Him in Jerusalem..... that James and John....dreamt about Jesus sitting on a political throne.....in glory....and in greatness.....like a worldly king!! The question is, even if this would become true (which it never would) why did James and John each want to sit next to Jesus in His glory.....in his greatness? It was because, they wanted to become like the great men in the world.....men with high renown and honour. As we said earlier, there is nothing wrong with us wanting to become great men and women! Yet, we must know what true greatness means.....and exactly how to achieve it.

James and John, still had the wrong idea! They thought to become great men they needed high positions next to Jesus as a political king.....where they would have power and authority.....to lord it over

others and tell people what to do.....And they were so eager to obtain these positions, that they bravely told Jesus, 'we want you to do for us WHATEVER we ask.' According to Matthew's gospel, they EVEN brought their mother to Jesus for their request (Mt 20:20).

What about the other 10 disciples; how did they respond when they found out about James and John's request to Jesus? Look at verse 41. "When the ten heard about this, they became indignant angry and annoyed with James and John. In other words, they were angry and annoyed with James and John. This tells us that all of them had a strong desire to sit at Jesus' right and left. Because, like James and John, all of them wanted to become like the great men in this world. Just like the political rulers of the world - who lord it over their people, and their high officials who exercise authority over others.

Actually, like the disciples, we all crave the power and authority that the rulers and high officials enjoy in this world. To be able to lord over other people....telling them what to do.....how to do it.....where to do it andeven when to do it. Isn't it wonderful to being served? Yes, it is so wonderful that everyone wants to be in a position of power and authority.Yet what did Jesus tell the disciples about this? Look at verse 43a. Jesus said, "Not so with you." Jesus did not want the disciples to think and behave like the rulers, the high officials and people of the world. They had to be different.....which means.....WE must be different! We must have a different view of Greatness.....and how to become a GREAT man and woman in this world.....Then who should we look at as an example of GREATNESS?.....Yes.....JESUS! Look at verse 38. You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" Jesus' greatness is different from worldly greatness.....because Jesus' greatness is directly linked to the..... **extraordinary selfless way**..... by which **He served people**.....especially.....by giving His life on the cross.....as a ransom for many.....If James and John wanted to sit next to Jesus.....and share in His greatness and glory.....then they too would have to **serve people**.....in an **extraordinarily selfless way**.....even lose their lives.....just like Jesus.

Look at verses 43b-44 ".....whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all." What is the fundamental difference between what a servant and slave do in life from what the rulers and high officials of the world do in life? The rulers and high officials lord it over people. Whereas a servant and a slave...has to **selflessly..... serve people**.....In other words.....selflessly perform duties or service for someone else.....regardless if the person is a so called good person or a bad person.....a rude person or a kind person.....a servant and slave selflessly serve these people! According to Jesus, these kind of men and women.....who **serve** otherslike a servant or slave.....are the TRUE great men and women of this world.....NOT the rich and powerful men and women who lord it over others. This is revolutionary stuff!! This is completely different from what we were taught as we grew up. It is also completely contrary to what we aspire to in this world. In fact, it is a fundamental change in **the manner** by which we should pursue greatness in our lives!!! Amen

The question is, why does God regard someone who serves others,....like a lowly slave or servant.....as great? Because, it is the MOST difficult thing to do. In fact, it is much easier to become rich and powerful.....than to selflessly serve another sinful human being.....someone with sin and shortcomings and things that just irritates us.....That is why, at that time, the disciples of Jesus, were not thinking of serving....even one another.....but actually struggled for a position

of power.....They rather competed for a higher position to become great.....than selflessly serve....because competing comes more natural than serving. Yet Jesus says that what makes a man great is not his position but his selfless service to those people who least deserve it.

Look at verse 45. Can we all read today's key verse together? "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

This is why God exalted Jesus' name above any other name. Jesus was in very nature God...the holy, glorious, and great God...worthy to receive our praises. But **EVEN** He had to follow God's way of becoming great.....EVEN He, who is in very essence, God the Creator..... did not come to be served, but to serve..... then how much more should you and I also serve, to become great men and women.

Jesus served all kinds of people..... He served a smelly, skinny paralytic who was sick with sin..... He served selfish and worldly tax collectors who betrayed their own people for money.....He served a demon possessed man who looked more like a monster than human.....Jesus bore with and served his disciples who were full of worldly dreams and a competitive spirit.....He even served the stubborn and unrepentant Pharisees; who eventually executed him.....If this is how Jesus served people.....and this is how Jesus became the **GREATEST** in the world.....then what about you and me?

Some believers think, that the way Jesus lived has nothing to do with how they should pursue greatness in their lives. To them, obtaining salvation through Jesus is enough. And that is as far as they are willing to go after Jesus. Then they simply pursue greatness like all the unbelievers. However, if we regard ourselves as Jesus' disciples we too must serve smelly sinners.....like Jesus.....we too must humble ourselves like Jesus.....and serve anyone..... whether the result is good or bad.....it doesn't matter.....what matters is.....**SERVING ITSELF!**

Look at verse 45 again. Notice the last part of this verse: it reads "to give his life." While Jesus served people, He did not hold anything back, but served them with the spirit of giving His life. And finally on the cross, He literally gave His life as a ransom for many. Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name (Phil 2:9).....Do you want to be a great man or woman? Then, as a disciple of Jesus, give your life to serving others.....just like Jesus. Amen!

But as we said before, this is very very difficult. We easily get upset when our own opinion or authority is undermined..... or we get angry when our pride is hurt..... or we still struggle to secure a higher position..... or we are sensitive to a title and fame.....This is our sinful nature.....and this is what we must fight against and overcome.....in order to live a great life of service- just like Jesus! Amen!

The question is, practically what does it mean to serve others? In short, it means to serve anyone in need of help. Our blood brothers and sisters, our needy neighbors, husbands and wives, parents and children. Also each other and university students. We should patiently serve each of them, one by one, as if we are serving Jesus. This means we should listen to them, wait for them, bear with them, encourage them, support them, pray for them, give our time and resources to them, admonish them.....we should do to others everything Jesus did to all kinds of people while He was on earth. But what happens when they do something that offends or upsets you.....do you stop serving them? Did Jesus stop serving us even when we offend Him with our dirty sins? No, He did not. Therefore, neither should we.....**Here we can learn that remembering the grace we received from Jesus our Lord, is the only way we cancurb our pride.....give up our selfish ambitions..... and serve**

others.....as Jesus commanded us.

Personally, I have been serving my sick younger brother now for two months. It really has not been easy, because I disagree with almost everything he says and does. But I have tried patiently serve him, listen to him, bear with him, encourage him, support him, give him my time and resources, admonish him...This week, he did something that deeply offended and disappointed me. I have not spoken to him for the last two days.....in fact, I have stopped serving him and actually can't wait for him to leave my house. I have struggled deeply with this over the last two days.....because I know he needs my help.....yet I am so upset with him that I do not even want to see him. But through this passage, I am reminded of Jesus who **CONTINUALLY** serves me.....even though I deeply sinned against Him....over and over again.....If this is how Jesus never gave up on me, then I too must not give up on my brother but servejust as Jesus served me on the cross and every single day of my life. It does not matter if my brother ever changes or not.....what matters is that I do not stop serving him. May the **LORD** have mercy on me....so that I can reconcile with my brother and once again serve him with Jesus' love and grace! Amen.

In conclusion

If even Jesus, who was in very nature God, did not come to be served, but to serve – how much more should you and I (mere humans) make it our goal to serve those around us?! Whether these people change or not.....whether they offend us or not.....whether we like them or not.....it does not matter.....what matters is that we pursue greatness by serving them.....endlessly and continually, just like Jesus.

I sincerely pray that we are a ministry of people, who are moved by Jesus serving love.....so that we in turn can serve....one another.....and those around us.....with the same love. Then we will indeed be a ministry of **GREAT** men and women! Amen.