

A True Servant in God's Kingdom

- Apostles did not yet understand the nature of true service Jesus would expect of them.
- *Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, “What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?” 34 But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. Mk. 9:33-35*
- We don't know what they used as proof of greatness.
- We do know what Jesus taught them about it.
- *If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.*
- How much do we understand about this?
- In our eyes what makes us great in the kingdom?

Service in God's Kingdom

- Later, Jesus continued to teach them about this after James & John had sought to sit on His right hand and His left hand in glory and the remaining 10 who were indignant about that request:
- *whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. Mk. 10:42-45*
- Have we learned what it means to be servants and slaves of one another?

Rebuke Against the Rulers in Israel

- *But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. 6 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, 7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' 8 But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. 9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. 11 But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*
Mt. 23:5-12

After all this They Didn't Understand

- On His final night, still disputing about greatness
- *Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. 25 And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ 26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. 27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.” Lk. 22:24-27*

Jesus Gave His Own Example

- *Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, 4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. Jn. 13:1-4*
- Jesus knew He was departing from this world.
- God given all things into His hands (Mt 28:18)
- Knew He had come from God
- Knew He was going back to God

A Lesson to Learn

- *4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, John 13:4-5*
- Jesus was giving them a clear example of His words
- *For even the Son of Man did not come to be **served**, but to **serve**, and to **give His life** a ransom for many.*
- This was the work of the servant. None of the others had thought of it and so their feet were still dirty.
- The towel and basin were there.
- There was no one willing to become last of all and servant of all.

A Lesson to Learn

- Peter still didn't understand.
- *And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" 7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." 8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" 13:6-8*
- Peter still believed the greater was served by one who was less.
- He could not allow Jesus to serve him in this way because Peter felt it was demeaning to Jesus
- Peter thought he was honoring Jesus when he said you will never wash my feet.

Jesus' Warning to Peter

- *Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"*
John 13:8-9
- This is Jesus final night... it was now or never to learn the truth about serving in the kingdom of God.
- Peter is warned: If you can't or won't learn this you can't be my disciple and you have no part with me.
- Peter still doesn't understand.
- Thinks it is just the washing and since he wanted to be fully washed, he offers what he thinks is the proper response.
- He understands the washing but not the principle.

The True Spiritual Meaning

- *Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean." Jn 13:10-11*
- This was serving a need. Not an act of symbolism.
- Their feet were dirty and that was the only reason Jesus was washing them.
- He took the opportunity to reveal His knowledge of what Jesus had done and was preparing to do.

The True Spiritual Meaning

- *He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.*
- The question demands a deeper answer than “yes Lord you washed our feet.”
- Jesus is the Teacher and the Lord. His expectations must be met.
- I have washed you feet ... to give you an example.

The True Spiritual Meaning

- *15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.*

John 13:12-18

- As I have done ... Not what I have done.
- This is not a ceremony! It is an act of service.
- Just as Jesus has served them He demands that we serve others as well.
- Can't argue that we are too good for such a task when Jesus has already done it.

He has taught this before

- *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Mk 10:45*
- *“For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.” Luke 22:27*

The Beauty of True Submission

- *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant Phil 2:3-8*
- If we ever want to be seen by Jesus to be great in His kingdom we must set aside all previous understandings of greatness and accept His.