

A Weakness in the Apostles

- *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.** 35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “If **anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.**” Mk. 9:33-35*
- Not wrong to want to be great.
- The problem is our understanding of the basis
- What we use to see ourselves as great
- If we our service as making us great ... we are on the right path.

The Truth about Greatness

- *For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?*
1Cor 4:6-7
- We don't really have anything that is our own.
- Intelligence, money, success, acclaim, etc.
- It is not ours!! Nothing we possess can make us great!
- *whoever **desires to become great among you shall be your servant.** 44 And whoever of you **desires to be first shall be slave of all.** 45 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. 10:41-45*
- Only our attitude as being a servant can make us great
- Jesus was made great because He came to serve.

A Practical Application

- *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 truly great in His kingdom.
- This is the only path. We don't have anything else!!
- There is a word that captures all of this! Meekness
- It is the most important thing in the path to greatness

Will Lowly Service Really Make us Great?

- *he **humbl**ed himself, becoming obedient (even) unto death, yea, the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore also **God highly exalted him**, and **gave him the name which is above every name**; 10 that **in the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, of (things) in heaven and (things) on earth and (things) under the earth, 11 and that **every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father. Phil 2:8-11*
- There is no question or doubt!
- Jesus humble service allowed God to make Him Great.
- Can we believe this?
- It goes against everything we have ever learned.
- It will take great effort (1) to accept it. (2) to do it.
- We will never turn the other cheek until we see this.
- Everytime we are called upon to serve we feel demeaned

Our Biggest Obstacle

- *One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." 13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, Titus 1:12-14*
- Preaching must be based on cultural norms that are wrong
- What about Americans? Americans are always ...?
- Americans are proud, wanting to be first, their self-esteem based on possessions, attributes, and superiority.
- If these are taken, we feel demeaned, lessened, weakened.
- This is among the biggest hindrances we have today.
- There is a word in Scripture that captures what is needed to be a great servant.
- “meekness of wisdom”

Greatness of Serving: Path to Wisdom

- *Who is wise and understanding among you? **Let him show** by good conduct **that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom**. Jas. 3:13*
- *What Jesus taught the disciples is the “**meekness of wisdom**”*
- *But **the wisdom that is from above** is first pure, then **peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy** and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. Jas 3:17*

Prautes - Meekness

- The meaning of *prautes* “is not readily expressed in English, for the terms meekness, mildness, commonly used, suggest weakness and pusillanimity to a greater or less extent, whereas *prautes* does nothing of the kind.
- It must be clearly understood, therefore, that the meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of power.
- The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was ‘meek’ because he had the infinite resources of God at His command. Described negatively, meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all. (Vine’s Expository Dictionary)

Meekness – The Path to Greatness

- *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for **I am meek and lowly in heart**: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Mt 11:28-30*
- Jesus is more concerned about our welfare than anything he can gain by enslaving us. When we become His slaves, we are lifted to greatness by his meekness and lowliness.
- The very things we must remove in ourselves:
- *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**.*

A Practical Application

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An Incorruptible Beauty

- *rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with **the incorruptible beauty of a meek and quiet spirit**, which is **very precious in the sight of God**. 5 For in this manner, in former times, the **holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands**, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. 1 Peter 3:4-6*
- Not just for women:
- Now the **man Moses was very meek**, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth. Num 12:3
- Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for **I am meek and lowly in heart**:

- *Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. I Pet 5:5-7*

Without Meekness & Humility

- There are passages we will never understand or do:
- *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. Matt 5:43-48*

Meekness – Creates Greatness

- *Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness (meekness) looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Gal 6:1*
- *Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; Col 3:12*
- *And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, 25 in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, 2 Tim 2:24-25*
- *Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom. Jas 3:13*