

PROMOTED TO BECOME A SERVANT

Luke 22:24-30

Old story: Persian shepherd promoted to Prime Minister. Others, jealous that one of lowly origin should be honored, sought to accuse him. Watching him closely, they found nothing except that every week he entered a little locked room and shut himself in for an hour. They informed the king, surely he must be up to something. The king doubted it but gave permission to search the room. Inside they found a small bundle containing a pair of worn shoes and an old robe. Asked why he kept them, he replied, "I wore these when I was a shepherd. I look at them regularly **lest I forget what I once was and how unworthy I am of the honor your majesty has bestowed upon me.**"

Jesus is continuing preparation of followers for events which are about to transpire.

He's on His way to the cross.

In a few hours it will all be over.

Every time our Lord talks about the cross, His followers debate their greatness.

They don't get the point.

They don't understand the plan; nor road to greatness!

THEIR DEBATE 22:24 WHO'S THE GREATEST? *Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.*

Even at this critical hour,

the disciples debate who is the greatest.

Discussion may have developed from speculation who will betray Him.

Wording: debating who seems greatest

—who gives best *appearance*.

Dealing with appearance—who's *considered* greatest

—who *looks* best!

We don't know what started it. Any excuse would do.

When you're into promoting self,

it doesn't take much to start an argument.

HIS TEACHING 22:25-26

Greatness among followers is measured by service to others, not personal advantage.

WORLDLY RULERS 22:25 *Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.*

They're acting like pagans, not like God's children.

Romans vie for honors and do all they can, legally and illegally, to win promotion and recognition; they're not our model.

Kings RULE over their subjects

Those in authority called "BENEFACTORS."

Common title for kings: *Euergetes* = "Benefactor"

(lit., "doer of good")

People acknowledge all they own is theirs because of king's goodwill and mercy. He lets them have it.

Daniel's test: *king prohibits asking anything of anyone, man or God. Everything is from HIM! He's the "Benefactor."*

World leaders like to get credit for what they do.

In contrast, **"There's no limit to what a person can accomplish, if they don't care who gets the credit!"**

Earthly rulers enjoy power, prestige and respect

—honored because of position.

[BUT!] **YOU 22:26** *But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.*

Jesus' followers:

not characterized by that kind of thinking.

Lust for position and power inconsistent with Jesus' disciple.

Greatness is shown by lowly service.

Greatest should consider himself youngest

Age gave privileges.

Youngest is, by definition, lowliest.

Nathan comes to David's house seeking a king

No one thinks about David. He's the kid brother.

You've heard expression: "**pecking order**" I'm told that in hen yard, rigid society exists. Top bird struts around and pecks its "sisters" without retaliation. In descending order the rest do the same. A hen holding low position is often more cruel with the few she controls than the "queen."

As to "pecking order" among God's people, Paul says:

Philippians 2:3 *"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."*

[The second rule our Lord presents is that . . .]

The leader should consider himself a servant

True greatness means to be like Jesus,

and that means servant to others.

Elizabeth Elliot: One night boys in a college dorm were rowdy, smearing walls with shaving cream, peanut butter, and jelly. When the Dean heard, he debated what action to take. He could force them to clean it up, or just have the janitor do it. Instead, he decided to clean up the mess himself. Doors began to open; before long the guilty ones were helping him wash walls. He was willing to take the role of a servant.

"Servant leadership" has caught on in business world.

Popular to talk about "servant leadership" in & outside church

Problem's living that way.

We don't mind being servants *UNTIL* people treat us like one!

The essence of servant leadership is the attitude.

It's natural outgrowth of "considering others better or more important than self—being more concerned about interests of others than our own interests.

A servant is dedicated to caring for others.

Forgets about self, thinking of others

Doesn't expect others to wait on him. He's a servant.

Servant doesn't do what he wants to do. He does what his master tells him. In this case, "others" are the master. We do what we're told! This puts us under everybody!

Most people I know don't think we can live that way.

NOT a phase endured on road to greatness—to get there.

Jesus is NOT saying that if you want to rise to great heights in the kingdom you must start out in a lowly position.

Faithfulness in lowly position is the *essence of greatness!*

Jesus has nowhere else to go.

This isn't just a *phase*. It's *the essence* of Who He is.

He came "*to seek and save the lost.*"

He came to give Himself.

Rather than try to be greatest, followers imitate Him
and desire to be "one who serves."

HIS EXAMPLE 22:27 *"For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves."*

Thought-provoking question about Himself:

Who's greater—one seated at banquet being served,
or the one serving?

ANSWER FROM HIS ATTITUDE

Who fulfills which role in this picture?

Who IS the greatest here?

He isn't trying to put on a show.

Nor is he trying to get one of them to do the work.

He wants them to see His attitude, to imitate the model.

He's the greatest. He's the servant

Jesus has been that way with them.

He's among them as "one who serves."

The disciples should imitate Him.

Servants don't argue over who is the greatest

—they know they're least.

All God's children are servants; there's no reason for us to compete with one another for
honor and recognition.

THEIR REWARD 22:28-30

They'll have places of honor with Him
because they're with Him in trials.

Their loyalty to Him 22:28

"You are those who have stood by me in my trials."

They've stood by Him in His afflictions.

They've neither avoided the difficult, nor the lowly place.

Therefore, they'll enjoy kingdom and blessings with Him.

Their inheritance 22:29 *"I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me"*

He'll dispose of estate—distribute possessions—in kingdom

Just as the Father has arranged things for Him

Their exaltation 22:30

"So that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

They'll eat and drink at His table in the kingdom

They'll sit on thrones, judging 12 tribes of Israel.

= "ruling" as in Judges.

**We're not to seek honor for ourselves; we'll be honored because we've identified
with Him in His suffering.**

In spite of failure, the disciples stand by Jesus.

God will honor faithfulness.

Because of faithfulness, they're appointed positions in kingdom.

They'll be honored with Him.

Positions will be determined by service,

not by covetousness—*NOT* by what we want.

All will fellowship with Him
and sit on thrones judging Israel's 12 tribes.

Matthew 19:28 *"I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

So, *WHO IS THE GREATEST?*

HOW DOES CONCEPT APPLY TO MY LIFE TODAY?

People elders believe are right for leadership
never *think* they're qualified.

That doesn't mean there are no volunteers.

The question is, who has God called?

Who's learned lesson of serving others?

Who reflects the Christ-like quality of living for others?

That's what God wants us to look like —

Husbands/wives—How's your marriage coming?

Have you learned what it means to **live for spouse's good, rather than yours?**

I spend majority of counseling time trying to convince couples to stop thinking of "my needs"/"your responsibilities;"

to reverse that and concentrate on "your needs"/"my responsibilities"!

That's another way to say

"Godly people live with a servant's attitude."

Until we stop focusing on whether mate does what God wants them to do, concentrate on serving unconditionally,

we'll never be people God wants *US* to be.

I have to concentrate on being the person God wants me to be, whether anyone else comes along or not!

Employers—Are you investing your energy in seeking your employees welfare, or your profits?

Leaders—Are we ***giving up our rights, for good of others?***

That's what Christlike character is all about!

That's how God wants us to live!