



The Gospel of Matthew

"Greatness in the Kingdom"

Matthew 20:17-28

"And as Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them,

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and will deliver him to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised."

Matthew 20:17-19

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, bowing down, and making a request of Him.

And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left."

But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink? They said to Him, "We are able."

He said to them, "My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father."

And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers.

But Jesus called them to Himself, and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them."

"It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;

just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life a ransom for many.

Matthew 20:17-28



Greatness in the Kingdom

1. The blindness of selfish ambition

- the disciples were blind to the necessity of suffering before glory
- the disciples' selfishness blinded them to the true nature of kingdom greatness



Greatness in the Kingdom

2. The greatness of lowly service

- in the world “*great ones*” are those who rule; in the kingdom “*great ones*” are those who serve
- greatness in the kingdom consists of selfless serving of others



Greatness in the Kingdom

Application:

- *husbands* – lead your wife by serving her as Christ did for the church
- *leaders* – view your position as fundamentally one of service not authority
- *Christians* – make it your ambition to selflessly serve one another



Greatness in the Kingdom

3. The example of Jesus

- Jesus is the supreme example of selfless serving of others
- the culmination of His service was giving His life for others



Greatness in the Kingdom

More than an example...

1. “*a ransom for many*”

- His death was the payment to release us from the bondage of sin and death
- His death was a substitution – in place of us



Greatness in the Kingdom

More than an example...

2. “*not to be served but to serve*”

- in order to be a selfless servant of others, we must first be served by Jesus in His ransoming, life-giving death