



## THE GOSPEL OF POWER.

Our culture glorifies personal power and influence in a myriad of ways. Whether it's climbing the corporate ladder, having political influence, or growing a social media following, gaining power is applauded & rewarded at nearly every turn. Jesus, as usual, invites us into something totally different. He invites us into an upside-down Kingdom, a different way of life - a life where we take the back seat & instead live humbly, compassionately, and in active pursuit of Him.

Jesus isn't just throwin' out big words here either. He lived it first. He submitted himself to his Father, washed his disciples feet, ultimately gave his life on the cross. If we want to become more like him, we need to learn to set aside our desires for power & recognition and focus instead on following Jesus & loving our neighbor - our actual neighbors, our online neighbors, our workplace neighbors, our neighbors who voted differently, our fill-in-the-blank neighbors.

It's not necessarily easy & it's certainly not the norm in our culture, but Jesus promises that it will be good. It will be worth it. So this week, let's take the back seat, lean into this counter-cultural calling, & see how God begins to work.

# IN THE BIBLE.

## MATTHEW 20:20-28

Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him.

21 "What is it you want?" he asked.

She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom."

22 "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"

"We can," they answered.

23 Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father."

24 When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. 25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

## JOHN 3:27-30

John replied, "No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven. You yourselves know how plainly I told you, 'I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him.' It is the bridegroom who marries the bride, and the bridegroom's friend is simply glad to stand with him and hear his vows. Therefore, I am filled with joy at his success. **He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.**

# QUESTIONS.

*Feel free to talk through some or all of these questions*

- 1.) What sticks out to you in the verses above?
- 2.) In what ways do you see America's culture elevate power?
- 3.) Practically for you, what does it mean to "take the back seat" this week? Or in the words of John, how can you become less so Jesus can become greater?
- 4.) What has been one or two main takeaways from the American Gospel series?

## TAKE TEN:

- How did you see God work in your life this week?
- What has God been teaching you in His Word?
- What kind of conversations are you having with your pre-Christian friends?
- What good can you do around here? (in your life/circumstance)
- How can we help you in prayer and what do you want us to ask you about next week?

**Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:**

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?