

City on a Hill



LIVING OUT YOUR FAITH

From Status To Service

MARK 10:35-45

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached him and said, “Teacher, we want you to do whatever we ask you.” 36 “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked them. 37 They answered him, “Allow us to sit at your right and at your left in your glory.” 38 Jesus said to them, “You don’t know what you’re asking. Are you able to drink the cup I drink or to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” 39 “We are able,” they told him. Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink, and you will be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with. 40 But to sit at my right or left is not mine to give; instead, it is for those for whom it has been prepared.” 41 When the ten disciples heard this, they began to be indignant with James and John. 42 Jesus called them over and said to them, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions act as tyrants over them. 43 But it is not so among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first among you will be a slave to all. 45 **For even the Son of**

Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

We shine as a city on a hill when we follow Jesus' example of humble service and sacrificial love.

① From Status-Seeking to Selfishness (35–41) : Chasing status always turns us inward.

- Self-Ambition : "Give us the best seats!"

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached him and said, "Teacher, we want you to do whatever we ask you." 36 "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked them. 37 They answered him, "Allow us to sit at your right and at your left in your glory." 38 Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you're asking. Are you able to drink the cup I drink or to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

The danger of status-seeking:

Blinds us to the needs of others.

Tempts us to use people.

Blocks our light.

Leaves us empty

They wanted the crown, without the cross (v. 38).

Following Jesus means denying self and taking up the cross. (Luke 9:23)

- Self-Confidence : "We've Got This!"

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The danger of self-confidence:
Overestimates our strength
Underestimates our need for God
Leads to pride and failure

Here's the truth: a city on a hill doesn't shine because of its own power — it shines because it reflects the light.

Our lives don't draw people to Jesus when we rely on our own strength, talents, or abilities.

But when we depend on Christ, His light shines through us.

Self-confidence says, 'I can handle it.'
Christ-confidence says, 'He will sustain me.'"

Our role is not to chase status, but to simply do the will of God. (v. 40)

- Self-Interest : "Not Fair!"

41 When the ten disciples heard this, they began to be indignant with James and John.

Rivalry and comparison poison community.

Breeds jealousy
Stirs comparison
Creates division
Distracts from mission
Destroys joy
Closes our witness

When our goal is status, our hearts turn inward, but when our goal is service, our hearts turn outward.

When do I find myself craving recognition or a "seat of honor"?

How do I respond when others are praised or promoted instead of me?

Where am I more concerned with being noticed than being faithful?

"Am I dimming my light by focusing on myself rather than others?"

② From Status-Seeking to Serving (42-44) : In God's kingdom, greatness is measured by humble service, not status.

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- The World's Way: Self Serving (42)

The world's way of greatness—using power to rise above others, to be recognized, to be served.

- The Kingdom's Way : Serving Others (43)

In His kingdom, the path up is always down.

Greatness wears an apron, not a crown.

- The Disciple's Call : Serving All (44)

Jesus raises the bar—it's not just about choosing to serve when it's convenient (diakonos), but about living as if our lives are not our own, fully surrendered to God.

In God's kingdom, greatness isn't occasional acts of service, but a whole life lived as a servant to all"

Jesus with the Towel (John 13)

When you give up serving self to serve others, you are becoming more like Jesus!

Serving others is like turning on a visible light.

Who am I tempted to overlook or avoid serving?

How would my daily routines change if I approached them with a servant's heart?

What opportunities has God given me recently to serve "all kinds of people"? Did I take them or ignore them?

③ From Status-Seeking to Sacrifice (45) : Jesus shows that the greatest act of service is sacrifice.

45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

While the disciples wanted honor & status, Jesus chose humility & sacrifice—JESUS didn't just serve, HE GAVE HIS LIFE.

If Jesus, the Son of God, laid down His life, then as His disciples we must also lay down our rights, comfort, and preferences for others.

We follow Him by giving ourselves for others. Our service reflects His sacrifice and shines His light to our city. We reflect Him when we serve and sacrifice for others.

Where do I struggle to sacrifice comfort, time, or resources for others?

How does Jesus' sacrifice challenge the way I view "greatness"?

Where is God calling me to lay something down so that others might be lifted up?

Greatness in God's kingdom is found in serving and sacrificing, so that our lives shine like a city on a hill, pointing others to Jesus.

NEXT STEPS

How do we live this out?

First, examine your heart.

Second, choose daily service.

1— Serve someone different : Let your light reach beyond your circle.

2— Do a hidden act of service : Even unrecognized acts shine for God's glory.

3— Pray for servant eyes : Ask God to show you where He wants your light to shine this week.

Following Jesus means shifting from seeking status for ourselves, to serving and sacrificing for others, so that His light shines through us.