



CHAPTER 9

Who is the Greatest?

MARK 9:33-37

- * In the Kingdom, if you want to be FIRST, you have to be PREPARED to put yourself LAST ... which is not something your FLESH wants.
- * John Wimber: "GET LOW & STAY LOW."
- * Greatness doesn't work itself out in the same way in the KINGDOM as it does in the WORLD.

→ *Why does the flesh want to be first not last? Why does Jesus tell us to go last rather than first? If we do so (either way), what happens to the relationship between our flesh (selfish, worldly impulses) and spirit?*

WHAT DOES THE WORLD CONSIDER GREAT?

- * Probably the BEAUTIFUL, RICH, POPULAR & POWERFUL.
- * Greatness is often a synonym for FAME, WEALTH & STATUS ... Unusual TALENT, strong PERSONALITY, large FOLLOWING.

→ *What do you think are the attributes / characteristics that cause culture to bestow about someone the title 'great?' Do you take exception to the perceived 'greatness' of anyone the world has exalted / crowned as such?*

WHAT DOES GOD CONSIDER GREAT?

- * Greatness is an ADMIRABLE TARGET though paradoxically if we GO AFTER IT for ourselves, we're UNLIKELY to achieve it and in Kingdom terms, it isn't to be FOUND where we'd EXPECT.

→ *Why is it true that if we set off to achieve what the world considers greatness, we're unlikely to be considered great in the Kingdom of God?*

→ *Should we, therefore, aim for greatness, and if so, how?*

→ *Which historical or modern-day Christians would you consider 'great' and why?*

7 NEW TESTAMENT ENDORSED CHARACTERISTICS OF GREATNESS

1. Great HUMILITY (Matthew 18:1,4, 23:12)

→ *What is humility and what is it not?*

→ *"Greatness inevitably produces pride." Discuss!*

2. Willingness to SERVE (Matthew 23:11, Mark 10:45)

→ *How did Jesus exemplify this and why does He call us to follow His example?*

3. Deep LOVE (Matthew 22:36-39, Luke 6:35)

→ *"Deep love is a powerful indicator of greatness; just make sure to use scriptural measures and definitions of what love really is." Discuss*

4. Extreme SELF-SACRIFICE (Matthew 19:28-30)

→ *What you've given up is what is measured in Matt 19:28-30, rather than what you've accumulated. Why?*

→ *Why is 'importance' not necessarily a fair measure of greatness in the Kingdom?*

5. Faithful OBEDIENCE (Matthew 5:19)

→ *"Can you be considered truly great outside of faithful obedience of God's Word? This would seem to exclude many the world would consider great." Discuss!*

6. Selfless DEFERENCE (Luke 22:24-27)

→ *What does it functionally mean to defer to or prefer others? Do you do that naturally? Why is it hard to do? Is doing so an indication of maturity? How does parenthood help?*

7. Strong and resilient FAITH (Hebrews 11:32-40)

→ *"These remarkable people did remarkable faith deeds and were commended both in triumph and tragedy, because it is the faith that is measured as great, not the outcome." Discuss!*

→ *"These 7 attributes of greatness are read about often in Scripture, but sadly not so often in the Daily Mail." Do you agree with that statement? Are there any of these characteristics that culture would consider great? But are they truly and frequently celebrated?*

→ *How do we go about pursuing Kingdom greatness? What counter-intuitive steps does it take? How do we 'get low and stay low?'*

→ *What could God do with a people who really looked like the above?*