



## January 12 – Greatness

We all want to be great or at least great at something. A great sports player, a great teacher, a great actor, a great piano player. We are taught from an early age that greatness is what we should seek. In his sermon on February 4, 1968, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, reminds us of what Jesus has taught is true greatness. Join us this weekend as we discover anew what it takes to be “great” in Jesus’ world.

### Scripture:

**Galatians 5:22-26 The Message** But what happens when we live God’s way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely. <sup>23-24</sup> Legalism is helpless in bringing this about; it only gets in the way. Among those who belong to Christ, everything connected with getting our own way and mindlessly responding to what everyone else calls necessities is killed off for good—crucified. <sup>25-26</sup> Since this is the kind of life we have chosen, the life of the Spirit, let us make sure that we do not just hold it as an idea in our heads or a sentiment in our hearts, but work out its implications in every detail of our lives. That means we will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse. We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original.

**Mark 10:35-45** Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came over and spoke to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do us a favor.” <sup>36</sup> “What is your request?” he asked. <sup>37</sup> They replied, “When you sit on your glorious throne, we want to sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left.” <sup>38</sup> But Jesus said to them, “You don’t know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink? Are you able to be baptized with the baptism of suffering I must be baptized with?” <sup>39</sup> “Oh yes,” they replied, “we are able!” Then Jesus told them, “You will indeed drink from my bitter cup and be baptized with my baptism of suffering. <sup>40</sup> But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. God has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen.” <sup>41</sup> When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. <sup>42</sup> So Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. <sup>43</sup> But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. <sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

### Questions:

- What do you long to be great at? Is it something attainable? Is it something you already are great at? Does it give you any joy or satisfaction?
- When you hear the words “serve someone” what picture comes into your head? Is it positive or negative? Be honest!
- This week – read this quote from Martin Luther King, Jr each day and see what it does for your soul: *“If I can help somebody as I pass along, if I can cheer somebody with a word or song, if I can show somebody he’s traveling wrong, then my living will not be in vain. If I can do my duty as a Christian ought, if I can bring salvation to a world once wrought, if I can spread the message as the master taught, then my living will not be in vain.”* (except from *The Drum Major Instinct* sermon given on February 4, 1968, at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta, Georgia)

### Reading for the Week:

**Monday:** Romans 12:2

**Tuesday:** Romans 8:28-30

**Wednesday:** 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

**Thursday:** Ephesians 5:2

**Friday:** John 3:16-17