

SERMON NOTES: October 18, 2026

Kingdom Greatness?

Matthew 20:20-28

Greatness: WORLDLY ATTEMPT - 20:20-25

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus 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, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?”

Matthew 20:20-22a

Greatness: LOWLY CONTRADICTION - 20:26-28

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. 26 It is not this way 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 to give His life a ransom for many.”

20:26b-28

Life Group Study Questions

Kingdom Greatness?

Matthew 20:20-28

1. Have you ever experienced humility and service from someone who outranked you? What happened and what was that like?

2. Have you ever witnessed someone (or been someone) using personal connection to gain advantage? How is Salome (the Mom) doing this in the passage?

3. How is it that James and John could ask for something so incredible? Do you ever ask for preferential treatment from God? What drives this?

4. When Jesus asks, "can you drink the cup I will drink," what is He referring to? What does the disciples answer reveal about their blindness and ambition?

5. Jesus exposes the ugly desire for power that accompanies the world's pursuit of greatness (lord it over everyone else). Have you ever desired greatness for the wrong reason? What did you want to do with it?

6. Jesus declares that these worldly attempts at greatness will not ever work in His Kingdom. Is there an area in your life where you need to repent of chasing greatness through worldly means? What does it look like?

7. Is it wrong to want to be great in God's Kingdom? What is the difference between self-seeking greatness & the desire to be useful?

8. Jesus is "God with a towel." How is Jesus the ultimate example of greatness?

9. What does it mean that Jesus became a "ransom?"