

Mark 9:30-37

30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; 31 for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." 32 But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. 33 Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" 34 But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. 35 He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "**Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.**" 36 Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, 37 "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

Jesus calls out his disciples ... and us to have a second look at our actions and what we expect in life. "Okay, boys, reign it in, think about what you are saying ... no fighting amongst yourselves, ... be humble," He says.

hum·ble *adjective* 1. having or showing a modest or low estimate of your own importance.

"he was humble about his stature as one of rock history's most influential guitarists"

synonyms: meek, deferential, respectful, submissive,

Humility means "the state of being humble." Both words humility and humble have their origin in the Latin word *humilis*, meaning "low." ... When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with **humility** comes wisdom. — Proverbs 11:2.

- Today's message is personal. It about how you choose to live your life as a Christian.

Terms like "best" or "first" or "most important" are not a part of how the Christian defines his or her life ... because in our individual (spiritually) we are nothing without God.

Perhaps these three short prayers sum up the Christian life. They are incredibly helpful to pray when we consider Jesus' teaching about humility. They remind us that we are not in charge, but God is. We owe everything to God.



- The first is in response to Jesus' counter-cultural command that the first must be last and that true greatness lies in service. It is as short as it is simple: "**Lord, help us.**"
- The second comes when we fall short of our ideals, giving in to insecurity and fear and looking out for ourselves first: "**Lord, have mercy.**"
- And the third is when we realize that even as we fall short, yet Jesus still died for us, still lives for us, still loves us more than anything: "**Thanks be to God.**" God's grace is unending.

Jesus does not give up on his disciples and He does not give up on us. He offers us a different vision of greatness that can lead us to imagine and work toward a whole different world.

Think about this:

What if we acted on what Jesus taught about the first being last, what if he is right? What if we imagined that greatness wasn't about power and wealth and fame and all the rest, but instead we measured greatness by

- how much we share with others,
- how much we take care of others,
- how much we love others, how much we serve others.

What kind of world would we live in? Imagine if people were regularly trying to out-do each other in their deeds of kindness and service?

- What if there were nationally broadcast competitions to see who was willing to be last so that others could go first?
- What if there were reality TV shows that followed people around as they tried to help as many people as possible?

What kind of world would we live in if humility, humbleness, were the driving dynamic? I think it would be a pretty *great* world.

Humility as a virtue is a major theme of both the Old and New Testaments. Why do qualities such as courtesy, patience and deference have such a prominent place in the Bible? It is because a demeanor of humility is exactly what is needed to live in peace and harmony with all persons. Humility dissipates anger and heals old wounds. Humility allows us to see the dignity and worth of all God's people. Humility distinguishes the wise leader from the arrogant power-seeker.



Acting with humility does not in any way deny our own self-worth. Rather, it affirms the inherent worth of all persons.

Do you consider humility to be a psychological malady that interferes with "success?" Wealth, power or status gained at the expense of others brings only anxiety -- never peace and love.

Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth. Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips. (NIV, Proverbs 27:1-2)

When pride comes, then comes dishonor, but with the humble is wisdom. The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the falseness of the treacherous will destroy them. (NAS, Proverbs 11:2-3)

Humility means putting God and other persons ahead of your own selfish interests. Humility comes with the knowledge that God's creation as a whole transcends our own narrow interests. As with other aspects of wisdom, humility will gain us much more than we sacrifice.

A humble demeanor is not a denial of our worth as individuals. Rather, it is the tool that allows us, insofar as possible, to be on good terms with all persons as we walk in faith.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

