

INTRO

- As a child, what did you want to be when growing up?
- Why do you think people want to be great at what they do?

READ

Mark 9:33-35 & 10:35-45

REFLECT

OUR CONDITION: PRIDE & COMPARISON

The arguing among the disciples about who was the greatest and their request for positions of honor reveal an issue deeply rooted in our hearts: our proud nature is always drawing comparisons between people and we are only satisfied if we come up ahead. This was the sin of Adam & Eve and the sin behind many other sins ever since.

Qu: Do you ever feel uncomfortable being complimented or rebuked? Why?

THE WRONG SOLUTIONS

The world's solution to the problem of pride has been to erase all differences that make people "great" at things. It is believed that if everyone is equally great at all things, people won't assert themselves over others. There would be no comparisons and no evils arising from pride.

Qu: Have you ever seen this strategy in practice? Why do you think it might not work?

JESUS' OWN SOLUTION (10:40-45)

Jesus' own answer to this evil is very different from the world's solution. He first **endorses** the idea that not everyone is equally great at everything (v.40). Ignoring differences simply won't work to rid the world of pride.

But before this idea of various levels of greatness can be abused, Jesus **exposes** the sin that would exploit it (v.42). He shows how our pride would use the good things we're given to gain power and

serve our own interests. The issue isn't the greatness itself, but pride and selfishness in using it.

Qu: How has "greatness" been abused in the past? Do you remember a time you used something you're good at solely for your benefit?

But Jesus doesn't leave it at that. He also **explains** the only true solution for this problem: whatever greatness we're given must be used for service (v.43-44). In the line of people who get to benefit from our greatness, we must come last.

And Jesus not only explains it, but he **exemplifies** it for us (v.45). By reconciling us to God through his death and suffering Jesus gave us the greatest picture of service possible: He, who had the greatest power, chose not to use his power but gave it up so we, the least deserving people of all, could be saved.

Qu: How does Jesus' death on a cross change the way we see and understand greatness?

Qu: In what practical ways can we imitate Jesus in his humility and service?

His is the perfect example because it really happened, and it really accomplished our salvation. To imitate His humility is not just a project to make the world a better place, but the inevitable response to His amazing grace.

RESPOND

- What encouraged and challenged you the most out of today's discussion?
- How can you practically apply what you're learning to your personal life?

PRAY