Redefining Greatness

# Pastor Shaun McDonald

## Mark 10:32-45 (ESV)

**32**And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, **33**saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. **34**And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.”

**35**And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” **36**And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” **37**And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” **38**Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” **39**And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, **40**but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.” **41**And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. **42**And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. **43**But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, **44**and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. **45**For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

1. **They wanted greatness through appointment (v 35-37).**

Matthew 4:1-11 (ESV)

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But he answered, “It is written,

“‘Man shall not live by bread alone,  
    but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

“‘He will command his angels concerning you,’

and

“‘On their hands they will bear you up,  
    lest you strike your foot against a stone.’”

7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”10 Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“‘You shall worship the Lord your God  
    and him only shall you serve.’”

11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

1. **They believed they had greatness within themselves (v 39a).**

# John 15:1-5 (ESV)

**15**“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. **2**Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. **3**Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. **4**Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. **5**I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

1. **Jesus redefines the meaning of greatness on the cross (v 45).**

# Philippians 2:1-11 (ESV)

**2**So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, **2**complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3**Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. **4**Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. **5**Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6**who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7**but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. **8**And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **9**Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10**so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11**and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Seeing the way Jesus redefines greatness impacts:

* The motivation we have for serving
* The way we view our position
* The way we process our ambition
* The way we manage our expectations
* The way we set an example