

# Real Greatness

“They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them,  
‘What were you arguing about on the road?’  
But they kept quiet because on the way  
they had argued about who was the greatest.”

Mark 9:33-34 (NIV)

**T**here are many ways to measure greatness but the Christian way of measuring greatness is not even used by many Christians. Some believers think that someone like the evangelist Billy Graham is a great man. No one doubts the man’s personal godliness. In an age when TV evangelists have publicly disgraced themselves Billy Graham stands out from the crowd. Certainly he has preached to countless millions that Jesus is the Saviour. Yes, there is a way in which Billy Graham is a great man.

But how does the Lord measure greatness? What is important in God’s sight? The context of our verses today tell us the answer. Jesus had recently taken Peter, James and John to the Mount of Transfiguration and allowed them to have that remarkable experience of hearing Him talk with Moses and Elijah about the coming cross.

As our Lord and the disciples journeyed from the Mount of Transfiguration back to Caper-

naum He continued to teach them about the necessity of the cross (Mark 9:31-32). On that journey, when they had opportunity, the disciple argued among themselves concerning which of them would be counted the greatest (Mark 9:34).

The disciples had missed the point that before there is a crown there must be a cross. There can only be an Easter Sunday after Good Friday. Scripture teaches that we must not measure greatness by how many people serve us but by how many people we serve. The one who would be considered great is the one who serves others the most.

Mark 12:41-43 tells the story of a poor widow who gave the last two bits of her money into the temple treasury. As Jesus and the disciples stood by watching, the Lord told them that the destitute woman had given more than all of the rich people put together.

The Lord does not measure our giving by how much we

give but by how much we keep for ourselves. The Lord does not call us to do great things as the world measures greatness. All the Lord expects from any of us is faithfulness. So the poorest, least gifted among us may some day be reckoned the greatest simply because of faithfulness to what God gave them to do.

Cease from your anxious thoughts concerning how little you may have accomplished for the Saviour. Do well what you do in His name. Occupy yourself with what the Lord has given you to do and do not be concerned to do greater, more public things. Pride can cause us to wish to be noticed by others in our area of service. As long as the Master sees us it should be enough. Satisfy yourself that your Father’s loving eye is always on you. Then you will be great in God’s eyes.

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