

WARM-UP

- What's the first thing that comes into your mind when you hear the word "serve"?
- Is there a leader you admire or look up to? Tell us about him or her.
- Tell us about an opportunity you had to serve someone. What happened?

WORD *²⁶... But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, ²⁸even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

MATTHEW 20:26-28

The mother of two of Jesus' disciples came to ask if her sons, James and John, could be given positions of authority and power in the kingdom of God. Jesus told her and the rest of the disciples that greatness in the kingdom of God does not work that way. It is not dependent on wealth, power, authority, connections, or reputation. Rather, anyone who wants to be great must serve. How are we to serve others?

1 | Surrender your ambition.

*²¹And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom."²²Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able."**MATTHEW 20:21,22***

The mother of James and John asked for positions of authority for her sons because it was seen as a path to greatness. However, Jesus made it clear that following Him does not mean an easy life, and position and greatness cannot be earned or asked for. Was there ever a desire for a position of power or authority that you needed to surrender to God?

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2 | Surrender your power.

*²⁵But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ²⁶It shall not be so among you. . ."**MATTHEW 20:25,26***

Jesus made a contrast between the way positions of authority and power normally work, and the way it would work in His kingdom. Those who hold authority and power often *lord it over* others, and *exercise authority over them*. However, we should surrender our power to the final authority, who is Jesus, and serve others. What is one thing you have surrendered to Jesus so that you can serve others better?

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3 | Surrender your comfort.

26" . . . But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 27and whoever would be first among you must be your slave . . ." **MATTHEW 20:26,27**

Jesus described the path to greatness to His disciples as a life of service. Instead of lording it over others, Jesus' disciples are meant to surrender their comforts and serve each other instead. According to Matthew 20:28, whose example of service are we following?

APPLICATION

- Are you trying to earn a position in the kingdom of God? Do you want to surrender your ambition, power, and comfort and accept His free gift of salvation today?
- Have you surrendered your ambition, power, and comfort to the will and the purpose of Jesus, the final authority in our lives? What is one thing you can do this week to be even more aligned to God's will in your life?
- Is there a person, group, or organization that you feel you need to serve the way Christ came to serve us? How can you start to do this by this week?

