

Greatness Through Service  
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Mark 10:43-45: "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus is preparing the disciples for the end that he is facing. Three times in the Gospel of Mark we see Jesus predicting his death and each time he is giving more detail. This time he includes the mocking and scourging. The disciples were looking for an earthly kingdom of power and might and even vengeance for the Roman conquest of the Jews. They were looking for a restoration of the glorious kingdom of David. They did not get it. Jesus presents a very different view of greatness. It is not about power and might, big armies, lots of money, a lavish life style. Greatness in Jesus' vocabulary is humility and service.

Jesus presents a concept of greatness which is quite the opposite of what we might consider greatness. We do not see in Jesus' teachings anything about getting vengeance, getting even, or being on top. We hear him say things like, "Love your enemies," "Blessed are the peacemakers," and, "The meek shall inherit the earth." It is not easy to look at life for its opportunities to serve and not only for its opportunities to be served. What a different world this would be if our focus in life was not how can you help me but how can I help you. Jesus came not to be served but to serve. Thank God He served to forgive us our selfishness of the past and to show us true greatness.