

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

September 4th

Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)

1. What are your plans, or what did you do over Labor Day weekend?
2. What is the first thing that you think of when you hear the word “great?”

Bible Study Questions

1. Read Matthew 19:13-15. Pastor Michael explained that children were viewed as the lowest of statuses. What does it mean to you for Christians to embrace a low status? Are you someone who is naturally ambitious or do you prefer to stay behind the scenes?
2. Read Matthew 20:16-30. What do you notice about Jesus in this story?
3. Pastor Michael talked about us living in a consumeristic culture in which we are taught to think that we are central and should be served. What examples have you seen of this in the culture or the media?
4. How would you change your life to shift from a “me” mentality to an “others” mentality? Where are you currently living this out?
5. What does it look like when the church takes the call to serve the community seriously? How can you or your small group live this out?
6. How did Jesus act like a servant? Make a list of all that comes to mind.

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Who Is the Greatest?

Labor Day was started a hundred years ago as a day to give attention to the laborers who make our country happen. Toward the end of the 20th century, it was business owners such as Andrew Carnagie and John Ruckerfeller that were considered to be great. Labor day though gave the workers a chance to get the spotlight. Today, greatness is something that we continue to struggle over. In Matthew 20, Jesus talks about greatness and once again presents a clash of values between the world and the kingdom om

- I. World Value: Seek high status:** The world features a constant competition of people seeking to raise themselves up in the world to a higher status. People want to be in a position in which they are respected and deferred to.
- II. Kingdom Value: Embrace low status:** Both in Matthew 18:1-4 and in 19:13-15 Jesus states that anyone who wants to enter into the kingdom of heaven must be like a child. In the ancient world, one's status was based on their ability to contribute and children were regarded as being on the bottom. A Christian is to embrace a life in which they may never get the attention and fame of other people, but they will constantly have the attention of God.
- III. World Value: Great people are served:** In Matthew 20:20-18, Jesus talks with his disciples about greatness. He admits that in the world, great people are served. In our own culture, our consumeristic culture appeals to our own desire for greatness. The result is that we often internalize the idea that we are the most important people in the universe. It is the job of other people to serve us.
- IV. Kingdom Value: Greatness requires a life of service:** Jesus told his disciples that if they wanted to be great, then they must become a servant. They were to take a major shift in thinking. **The world regards "me" as most important. The kingdom of God views "others" as more important.** They were to live in such a way as to always elevate the needs of others above themselves. We can also think of this in a corporate way. There are many who believe that the answer to our culture ills are for the church to gain power. However, Jesus did not call his disciples to dominate. He called them to serve. In Acts, the early church did just this by serving the needs in Jerusalem. We are told in Acts 2:47 that because of this, they gained the influence of all people.

Conclusion

Jesus didn't just tell his disciples to do this, but he did it himself. Jesus, the greatest man who ever lived, demonstrated how to be great.

And he did so by giving up his glory in heaven, becoming human, and then laying down his life on the cross. He invites each of us to follow in his footsteps by embracing his path to greatness.