

Who is the Greatest?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 September 2024

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] You can take your Bibles and open with me to Mark chapter 9. Mark chapter 9, we'll begin reading in verse 30 as we continue in our sermon series through the gospel according to Mark.

Mark 9, beginning in verse 30. This is the word of the Lord. They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were because he was teaching his disciples.

He said to them, the Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise. But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

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.

Sitting down, Jesus called the twelve and said, if anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last and the servant of all. He took a little child and had him stand among them.

[1 : 07] Taking him in his arms, he said to them, whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.

Well, we're blessed to have the word of God in our hands this morning. Why do we need God's word? Well, there's many reasons, but God says through Isaiah, because my thoughts are not your thoughts.

And neither are your ways my ways. And the difference is not small. But rather, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

You call evil good and good evil. You put darkness for light and light for darkness. You put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

You call bondage freedom. You call lust love. You put glitter for glory and lies for the truth.

[2 : 21] And nowhere is this vast difference between God's thoughts and our thoughts clearer than in the way we define greatness.

Greatness. What is it to be great? And how do we pursue it? Well, the world has its definition, and that's the atmosphere in which we live.

It's the air we breathe. And so we come to our great high priest, the Lord Jesus, to have his words define for us what true greatness is, that we might seek it with all of our hearts.

So we're coming through Mark chapter 9. We've seen Jesus up on the Mount of Transfiguration, and there all the glories of that mountaintop experience before coming down to the mess below.

Much like Moses, when he had been up on Mount Sinai for 40 days, and the glories of meeting with God, hearing God speak to him, giving to him the Ten Commandments written with the very finger of God, glory upon glory, and then coming down to the mess below.

[3 : 38] 40 days later, Israel running wild and dancing before a golden calf that Aaron, no less, had made. What an unbelieving generation of Jews that was.

And so at the bottom of the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus found the same unbelief. What an unbelieving generation he found as he came down from the Mount.

And not only in the generation of the Jews, but even in his own disciples, he found unbelief. And an unbelief that gave rise to other sins, as a mother sin always does.

And so he comes down to the mess of their impotence, their ignorance, and their arrogance. So we have just two points in our passage this morning.

It's an argument about who was the greatest, and then our Lord's definition of true greatness in the kingdom of Christ. So we start with an argument about who was the greatest.

[4 : 53] God's word tells us, doesn't it, children, to do everything without complaining or arguing? But here in Mark 9 and verses 33 and 34, we read, they came to Capernaum, and when he, that is Jesus, 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. And we've been told that Jesus, at this point in his ministry, about six months, less than six months from the cross, he withdraws from much of his public ministry to spend time alone with his disciples to prepare them for his upcoming death that would shatter their hope.

So he's preparing them in private. And he's told them, just told them for the third time about his suffering and death, that he must be betrayed and killed.

And when they got to Capernaum and entered the house, he then asked them, what were you arguing about on the road? They must have been lagging far enough behind him because they didn't want him to hear what they were arguing about.

And often that was the case. The master would walk up front and the followers, his disciples, would walk behind. But though they didn't want him to hear, Luke's account in chapter 9, 47 says that Jesus knew their thoughts when he asked them, what were you arguing about?

[6 : 33] Boys and girls, you might be able to talk behind mom and dad's back so that they don't know what you're saying. But the Lord Jesus knows every word that you've ever spoken and will call it into judgment according to the Lord Jesus' teaching.

He even knows the words that you've only thought about saying. Psalm 139, you perceive my thoughts from afar. And before a word is on my tongue, you know it all together, Lord.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. John 2 and verse 25 says of Jesus that he did not need man's testimony about him because he knew what was in a man.

He knew the very thoughts, the discussions that were going on behind him. So Jesus' question was not asked out of ignorance to find out the answer.

He already knew in this case. He asked in order to give them the opportunity to confess their sinful pride in arguing.

[7 : 42] But we read, they kept quiet. They kept quiet. No one was quick to respond, not even Peter this time.

They were ashamed of their pride and unwilling to own it before their humble master. They knew pride was an abomination to God. Proverbs had taught that.

And yet here they were arguing. The word is reasoning, where you put forth reasons for your side of the argument.

So they were putting forth reasons to each other about why they should be the greatest. Peter might have said, well, I was the only one of us that ever walked on water.

And Andrew would say, but I was the one who found Messiah first and brought him to you, Peter. And you didn't last very long on top of the water, but started to sink like lead.

[8 : 41] Nathaniel might say, well, Jesus said, I am an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile. Philip would say, but I was the one who brought you to Jesus. Remember what you said when I said we have found the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

You said, can anything good come out of Nazareth? You're not much. And then James and John. Well, Jesus took us with him up on top of the mountain where we saw and heard things that we can't even speak about.

We're the greatest. Now, we're not told what the reasons were that they put forth why each of them was making a case for their greatness. But whatever it was, it was ugly.

It's always ugly, isn't it, to hear someone bragging about how great they are. It was just plain wrong in so many ways.

You know, our pride is unreasonable. Our pride is foolish. We're able to boast when we should be hanging our heads in shame. so forgetful of our thoughts, so exaggerating of our greatness, and our pride can feed on anything.

[9 : 53] You know, kids, you might be picky eaters, but pride is not a picky eater. It will feed on anything. It'll even feed on your humility, and you'll become proud of how humble you are or think you are.

But remember what had just happened. These disciples had just suffered a great defeat. They were not able. They were impotent before this demon, unable to cast it out of this boy.

And on top of that, they were publicly humiliated by the teachers of the law who were rubbing it into them. And then they were privately rebuked by Jesus for not having enough faith, even though faith the size of a mustard seed could move mountains and cast out demons.

And Jesus then rebuked them for their prayerlessness when they asked, why couldn't we do this? And he said, because this kind can only go out by prayer. And you didn't pray.

You just took it for granted. You could go on doing these things, not trusting in my power. And their most recent, so their most recent failures of faith and of prayer should have humbled them to the dust.

[11 : 10] They had all been losers. And who would think that losers would be arguing with each other about who's the greatest? It's kind of like a little league baseball team that just got beat 10 to nothing.

In fact, the game was called off in the fourth inning because of the 10-run lead rule to spare the parents of the pain of watching more of this drubbing.

And yet, immediately, upon losing and the losing team getting into their dugout before the coaches arrived, they're all arguing with each other about which one of us are the greatest.

So with the 12, all of them losers, arguing about who was the greatest disciple, would have been far more fitting for them to be all confessing their sins and arguing about who was the least of all the apostles, like Paul calls himself.

No, no, not you. You're not the least. I am worse. But no, they're bragging about who's the greatest.

[12 : 23] And the worst thing about it is that this seeking greatness for themselves comes right on the heels of their master's announcement of his own great humility in being betrayed and killed.

He will stoop so low to save them as to be willing to suffer and die for them. For along the way, he had just told them for the third time in verse 31, the Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.

They will kill him and after three days he will rise. So Jesus keeps repeating this. They must know this because this is the great, you know I'm Messiah, but you don't have a clue why I've come.

And this is the great end for why I've come. I've come to die. And unless I die, there's no salvation. So he keeps repeating it. I'm coming to die. And he will die as a substitute to atone for their sins.

And even as he repeats it, they continue in unbelief and slowness to believe it. Verse 32 says, they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

[13 : 35] Perhaps afraid that he just means what he says, that this is what's really going to happen. Or maybe they're afraid because they saw when Peter said, Lord, this will never happen to you, they saw that Peter got rebuked.

Or maybe just too proud to ask as it would be to acknowledge their ignorance of the word of Christ. So a couple lessons about their arrogance.

First of all, their arrogance is the result of their ignorance. They didn't know why Messiah had come. They had imbibed the spirit of the age that expected the Messiah to come and to free them from the Romans and to bring in the glory days for the nation of Israel.

They were expecting Jesus, now that they know he's the Messiah, they were expecting him to immediately set up his kingdom. And that's all they could think about was what important positions of status and honor that they would have in his political kingdom.

Each thinking they were the greatest and deserved the highest place. We'll see in the very next chapter, chapter 10 of Mark, James and John privately making a move, jockeying for the two highest seats in Christ's kingdom.

[15 : 01] Let one of us sit on your right and the other on the left in your glory. When the other ten apostles found out about it, they were furious.

So Calvin asked, if the apostles could so quickly forget their Savior's humble sufferings and instead seek their own honor and greatness, what will become of us if we dismiss for a long period any meditation on the cross of Christ?

This is one of the reasons we need the Lord's Supper regularly, to do this in remembrance of him, his sufferings, his death, his humbling himself, and becoming obedient even to the death of the cross.

That will keep us from seeking our own honor, from arguing and jockeying for position and rank and importance and praise when Christ alone is to be praised as we sang, all glory be to Christ.

So I wonder, will you make it a priority to be here next Sunday evening as we together remember our Lord's death in the way that he's commanded? Do this in remembrance of me.

[16 : 26] So a verse is proud flesh to suffering that the twelve ignore the words about suffering, about his death. And instead, here they are considering their own personal advancement in this coming kingdom of glory that they expect to be just around the corner.

It was ignorance of Messiah's mission of humble service dying and suffering on the cross that fed their arrogance and their desire for greatness.

So devoted is the flesh to our own advancement that we must get to Calvary often. Jesus, keep me near the cross. Keep me near the cross.

I'm only healthy as I'm thinking about what my Savior has done for me and my sins. So pride is our root sin. Pride is that sin that troubles us all the way to heaven, Ryle says.

So let's weaken the root of that sin by keeping near the cross of Christ. So that's the first thing. Their arrogance is the result of their ignorance about Messiah's mission. And secondly, this arrogant seeking of personal honor led to this quarreling and strife among them.

[17 : 44] Pride always genders strife. Always. Whether it be in marriages, churches, networks of churches, missionaries, mission fields, competing against one another instead of striving together for the glory of Christ and the advancement of His kingdom.

So James asks in chapter 4, what causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. What did they want? They wanted the greatest, to be the greatest.

And they wouldn't, they couldn't get it. Somebody else would put them down and put themselves up. And so that caused fights and quarrels. James says in chapter 3, verses 13 and following, who is wise and understanding among you?

Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. Pride is foolish, humility comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, don't boast about it or deny the truth.

Such, quote, wisdom comes not down from heaven but is earthly, sensual, and devilish. For where you have envy and selfish ambition to put ourselves up, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

[19 : 13] You trace it back to this selfish ambition, this pride of life. It's devilish.

It's devilish because that was the cause of the devil's fall from heaven, wasn't it? And that's why one of the qualifications for elders is that, for an elder is he must not be a recent convert or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.

1 Timothy 3.6 He must have walked with Christ long enough to have learned something of humility from him. Lest he falls into the same temptation that Satan himself fell in.

Not being content with the place that God had put him in. But rather, saying, I will make myself like the most high.

And so the devil who fell because of his arrogance and pride now uses the same selfish ambition for honor and greatness to stir up disorder and strife among the followers of Jesus.

[20 : 29] Yes, even among his closest followers, the twelve. Here they are, arguing about who's the greatest. How devilish. And if this superiority complex was allowed to continue among the twelve, it would destroy the whole mission of Christ to build his church on the earth.

And so the Lord Jesus calls a time out to rebuke them and to teach them. And that leads us to our second point. True greatness in the kingdom of Christ.

Verses 35 to 37. Notice 35 says, Sitting down, Jesus called the twelve. This is a sit-down moment. Moms, you know what I'm talking about.

There's a lot of moments that aren't sit-down moments. But then there are those sit-down moments. Stop. Stop what you're doing. Gather around.

Class is in session. These future leaders of the church must learn what leadership in Christ's church looks like. What true greatness is.

[21 : 39] And so when they're gathered before him, he says, if anyone wants to be first, and that's what they were all arguing about, he must be the very last and the servant of all.

You see how different Jesus' definition of greatness is from the worlds and the way the disciples were carrying on. Just as his kingdom is not like the kingdoms of this world, neither is greatness in his kingdom like greatness in the kingdoms of this world.

No, his view of greatness is revolutionary. It is absolutely counter to human nature. It is the opposite of the world's way of thinking. So greatness in the world, what is it?

Well, it's to climb the ladder to the top and to step on anyone who gets in your way on the way to the top. To have the highest status and rank where you don't need to serve anyone, but you're in a position where others are actually serving you and waiting upon your every command.

This whole pecking order of rank and status was a very common thing there, perhaps not as common in our country, but you go over to England or to India and you'll see it, all the ranks of how they've ranked people and you've got the high people up in rank at the top of the ladder and then you've got those people in the bottom rung that are despised.

[23 : 16] So at the top was the king and who was down at the bottom? Servants who lived to serve others, their master's needs, their master's desires, not their own.

And so the aim of greatness is to move up the ladder away from serving others to being served and serving self, having them serve you.

That's greatness according to the world. And Jesus takes the ladder and he turns the whole thing upside down. If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, the servant of all.

Wow. You see, the servant is last in the world's estimation, but the servant is very first in Christ's estimation.

True greatness then is not a race to the top but a race to the bottom. It's a race to servanthood where each finds joy in serving others. So true greatness puts all others above oneself, the servant of all.

[24 : 38] it puts them above and serves them. And you can see why there's so few real great ones in the world because everyone looks out for his own interest and honor, not taking a genuine interest in the good of others, Philipians 2, 20 and 21.

That's what marked Timothy out from the rest of the pack. And Paul says, I have no one like him because he takes a genuine interest in the interest of others, not like everyone else, self-serving.

Now, we need to be careful here because some people will take this passage and distort it completely out of the meaning that Jesus is giving us in it.

Contrary to the teachings of some, Jesus is not here attacking the role of leadership as if we shouldn't have leadership positions in the home, in the church, in the nation.

No, rather he's showing how the authority of leaders should be exercised. He's not even attacking the idea of seeking greatness, but rather redefining what true greatness is.

[25 : 50] And this becomes the pattern for positions of leadership in the home, in the church, and in the nation. In the homes, husbands, you are head, you are leader, and it is to be carried out with the self-sacrificing love for your bride, even as Jesus gave himself for his bride, the church.

That's how you're to carry out leadership, putting yourself beneath her and serving her. The church, leadership in the church, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4-5, Christ Jesus is Lord, not us.

We are your servants for Jesus' sake. Again, greatness in leadership in the church is servanthood to all.

And it's the same thing in the nation. You know, our politicians used to be called public servants.

I haven't heard them called that in a long time. Have you? Public servants to serve those they represent. Not to use them for selfish aims and ambitions.

[27 : 06] Not to have the people and their money serve them. You see, Jesus isn't saying we shouldn't have politicians. He's not saying we shouldn't have elders.

He's not saying we shouldn't have headship in the home. He's saying, no, but real great husbands and great elders and great politicians are those who are on the bottom rung servants of all.

There is true greatness. So he's not attacking all leadership positions. And neither is it wrong to seek true greatness. I believe it's in our nature to seek greatness because to seek greatness is to seek to be like Jesus.

None greater than him and none more humble servant than him. The eternal son of God, king of kings, lord of lords. But that did not hinder him from becoming the suffering servant of the Lord who came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Yes, to serve the very worst of sinners. Follow him through the gospel. That's what we're doing in Mark. What do we find? We find him serving a servant of all.

[28 : 26] They come to him at night and he's way into the night wearing himself not sending one away that came to him seeking mercy for their bodies, for their souls.

This greatness is to be our supreme pursuit. Conformity to his likeness. So go for greatness, men and women, boys and girls.

Go for greatness, Christ-like greatness. This is true glory to be sought, to be the servant of all even as our savior. Indeed, we're told in Philippians 2.5 to let this mind be in you.

Let this attitude be in you that was in Christ. Who though he was God, no less than the father as we've been singing, yet he humbled himself and became man, became a servant, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

And so if you're following Christ's example, this will mean that you do nothing, as Paul says in that passage, do nothing out of selfish ambition to put me up. Nothing out of selfish ambition and vain conceit, but in humility, consider others better than yourself.

[29 : 41] When you're on the bottom rung, everybody's better than yourself. That's how you're to take on the attitude of Christ. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others, Philippians 2, 3, and 4.

This is what Christ did with us. When the choice was between him and us, to save myself or to save them, he chose to save us and lay down his life on the cross for us instead of himself, saving himself, looking after our interests instead of his own immediate interests in honor to prefer one another better than ourselves.

Well, Sinclair Ferguson helps us in that score. How can I consider others better than myself when I really don't think that they're better than me? Well, one thing is we can remember all of our sins.

We don't see all of their sins. We see the ones that are obvious, but we're more aware of our own thoughts and evil desires, and so we examine ourselves rather than just seeing their outward sins.

And another thing that's Ferguson, one thing that Ferguson said is that we remember where we started from. We might have had far more advantages raised in a Christian home, in a good church where we heard the words of Scripture early and we learned spiritual disciplines and it almost came second nature to us as the Lord blessed his word to our hearts.

[31 : 18] And so we're way out here. But some didn't start where we started. Some started way back here, unconverted home life, broken home perhaps, no church, no instruction in the word of God.

And so they're not as far as we are. And Ferguson is helping us by saying, remember, some did not have the advantages that we did. And it will give you a better perspective on how to prefer others above yourselves.

Well, our Lord not only taught his disciples what true greatness is, he exemplified it, didn't he, in his life, his ministry, his death. And so pleased was his heavenly father that he exalted him to the highest place.

He gave him a name that's above every name that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, is God to the glory of God, the father.

And so in honoring him, the heavenly father is saying this is true greatness. Look at him. This is the thing for which he is forever praised in heaven. And worthy is the lamb that was what?

[32 : 33] That was slain. That became man that he might die because God cannot die. The divine nature cannot die. The lamb who was slain worthy because you were slain and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

So in Christ's kingdom, the greatest is the servant of all. In his kingdom, the way up is down, willing to take the lowest place, the servant place, doing the lowliest service to others.

And Jesus said more than once, whoever humbles himself will be exalted just as he was after his humbling himself. And that the resurrection, ascension and coronation, the father said, amen to that.

Whoever humbles himself. I will exalt. He exalted his son. So Calvin says, it is humility alone that exalts us. You want to boast about seeking greatness?

Okay, see how low you can get and how many you can serve. The way of humble service is the way to glory.

[33 : 49] Now, it's not hard to see then how how this kind of greatness maintains maintains the peace and unity of the marriage, the church, the network, the nation.

And so having defined true greatness as being a servant of all, our Lord now gives his disciples an object lesson. Verse 36 says, he took a little child and had him stand among them.

Why a child? Well, because in the world's valuation, a child was in the same category as the servant. He's down there on the lowest rung of importance.

In the social status of many, many nations, the world's way of assigning value to people was based on their rank and their position, their power or their usefulness to society.

After all, what could weak little children do or contribute? They're totally dependent upon others. They're a drag on society, not a contribution to it. As one commentator says, a child was one to be looked after, not one to be looked up to.

[34 : 59] They were down on the bottom rung with servants. Dismissed is unimportant in ancient times. And this was also true in Jewish society, sadly.

We see this very attitude in the 12. In the next chapter, we'll see it in Mark 10, when people were bringing their little children to Jesus to have him take them in his arms and bless them. What did the disciples do?

They rebuked the parents. We're too important to give our time to these little nobodies. Stop bringing them. Stop bothering the master.

And it's one of the rare times in the gospels that we find Jesus indignant. But that will do it. Considering the lowest, the least, as unworthy of your service.

Did you not hear what I said? To be the greatest in my kingdom is to become the servant to all. Yes, even the least among us.

[36 : 05] Children who have nothing as children to contribute that are just needy of us. Well, that's why he sets the boy before them.

There he is. This lowest member of society. Men, this is what I'm talking about. This is what greatness is, serving such a one as this.

And then taking him in his arms, verse 36, Jesus said to them, whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me. Whoever welcomes me does not welcome me alone, but the one who sent me, the heavenly father.

So true greatness is being the servant of all, even to those the world does not give the time of day to like little children. Their big egos were making them overlook the little unimportant people in the world.

But as Francis Schaeffer said in a book he wrote, to Jesus, there are no little people. There are no little ones that don't deserve our time.

[37 : 17] This is why we love you Sunday school teachers willing to pour time in preparing that message and and praying for those little ones and then pouring it out to them week by week.

Wednesday night, Sunday morning. This is why we we we want us to to get this this atmosphere of we don't want to neglect this mission field right under our noses.

These children. And why we love it, parents, to see you taking your responsibilities seriously to bring them up in the nurture. Yes, these children, they're precious and greatness.

Moms is serving those little ones. Great in the eyes of the Lord. Well, because these little people, the world discounts were poor and needy children.

They're they're in fact more important than you may realize. These little ones. Not only is Jesus speaking of children themselves, but he's he's using them as a type of his little children, his young ones in his family.

[38 : 27] The lowly and despised Christians, the weakest, the neglected, those most needy in his family. They're mine, he says.

And they're actually. Royalty children. Of the living God united to me by faith. And there's such a close bond between me and these little ones among you.

These who believe in me that are mine. That when you serve them, you actually serve me. When you serve me, you actually serve my father who is in heaven, the one who sent me.

So this is the greatness. We are to seek. Treat the least and the lowest as you would treat me. Because that's how I'm taking it.

And when we're thinking highly of ourselves, well, we're missing those opportunities, aren't we? To serve. And so we're to forget ourselves out of concern for others. Every person, even little children, even children in the womb.

[39 : 39] Have the dignity of being made in God's image. And that gives importance to them. And yes, these young ones that have put their trust in the Lord Jesus, they too are precious to the Savior.

So let's forget about ourselves out of genuine concern for them. So who will you serve this week? What least and last will you serve?

True greatness. We'll see it next time. But the day of judgment is going to be full of surprises about who was truly the greatest in God's kingdom.

I know there will be many that we've never heard their names. They're not great preachers. They're little, old widows, bedridden, but who are serving the Lord's people by praying, praying, praying, praying.

Like Anna in the temple. Oh, how differently the Lord will see and reward them in that day. Who will we serve this week?

[41 : 02] At home, at church, at work, at school. This argument about who's the greatest wasn't settled.

You'd think that this was a pretty good medicine, wasn't it? It sure ought to fix them. But it didn't. As I said, next chapter, we'll see plenty of this same spirit among the 12.

Even in the upper room on the very night of Christ's arrest, when Jesus spoke so plainly once more about his body being given for them and his blood being shed for them, Luke records a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be the greatest.

What? That's what we're reading in Luke 9. In Mark 9, we're going to meet this same argument. Yes, it's one of those arguments that never got settled, you see.

And so they put it away for a while, and then when they have another chance, they'll bring it up and argue some more. Each claiming their preeminence. No wonder no one was willing to stoop and wash each other's feet that night.

[42 : 14] They were too important for that. That was beneath them, servant work. and so the suffering servant of the Lord took off his robe and wrapped a towel around him he looked like nothing but a low down servant and he went around washing his disciples dirty feet and on the morrow he would wash their sins away in his blood from the cross oh how low Jesus stooped to serve us brothers and sisters the argument was far from over it would take the death of Jesus Christ to silence this argument it would take seeing their Lord and Master humbling himself to the cross on their behalf before they would finally come to see who really was great was Jesus who served us and being like him is what makes for greatness there's something powerfully humbling about the cross of Jesus

Isaac Watts saw it and wrote when I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died died my richest gain I count but loss and here it is poor contempt on all my pride I despise my pride when?

when I see the prince of glory hung up suffering and dying for me we were the last and least he was the first and greatest and yet he served us taking our hell giving us his heaven taking our infinite wrath deserved giving us his infinite favor due from his obedience taking our curses giving us his blessing and though he is now exalted to the throne of God in heaven and is receiving the praises of saints and angels he's not forgotten us here on earth so tied is he with us poor us down here on earth he's not forgotten us but is still serving us as the great prophet of his people teaching us the will of God he's still the great high priest and he is presenting his merits there in heaven on our behalf he's interceding for us as our advocate at the throne of God he is still serving us as our great king ruling over us and defending us from all of our enemies sending us help mercy and grace in our time of need and dear believer if your faith can believe it when he comes again in great glory to receive us to himself

Jesus says in Luke 12 37 he will dress himself to serve will have us his servants sit down at the table and will come and wait on us you see his serving is not degrading to his eternal sonship it does not diminish his greatness but demonstrates it to serve it is his glory his greatness to serve it's at the very heart of deity to serve to stoop to serve that's why he became one of us and went to the cross so let's worship him as we survey the cross together let's pray almighty God our savior you alone are great the eternal sinless holy one and we are the sinners the creatures the dependent ones the lowest the least and yet you stooped to save us in Jesus Christ we thank you for him forgive us

Lord that we should ever seek greatness for ourselves for from you and through you and to you are all things to you be the glory forever and ever make us more like our suffering servant the son of God that we might even this week be looking for those that we can serve that are overlooked by others and yet are needing to be served thank you Jesus for giving us this way that we can serve you and the one that you sent by serving yours help us to buy up the opportunities this week we pray in Jesus name amen it will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes I tell you the truth he will dress himself to serve he will have them recline at the table and he will come and wait on them amen let them■■■ let them listen amen amen