

E-Series The Greatest



24 A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. **25** But Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. **26** But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. **27** For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves."
—Luke 22:24-27

On Sunday we got to hear from several servants from Wightman. First, Megan Marshall—a product of Wightman—shared about her role in campus ministry at NC State in Raleigh. It was great to hear how God is using what's in her lunch box to serve the students on campus.

Secondly, we heard from several members of our Mississippi Mission Team. Because of their willingness to give the contents of their lunch boxes to Jesus, many homes have been rebuilt over the course of several trips to the area affected by Katrina.

One of the Habitat staff people was on the video from Sunday. He was quoting Martin Luther King, Jr. on being a servant. Dr. King was preaching on the text above from the Gospel of Luke. You can hear the entirety of that sermon, "[The Drum Major Instinct,](#)" by [clicking here](#). But, here is a snippet from that sermon:

But that isn't what Jesus did; he did something altogether different. He said in substance, "Oh, I see, you want to be first. You want to be great. You want to be important. You want to be significant. Well, you ought to be. If you're going to be my disciple, you must be." But he reordered priorities. And he said, "Yes, don't give up this instinct. It's a good instinct if you use it right. It's a good instinct if you don't distort it and pervert it. Don't give it up. Keep feeling the need for being important. Keep feeling the need for being first. But I want you to be first in love. I want you to be first in moral excellence. I want you to be first in generosity. That is what I want you to do."

And he transformed the situation by giving a new definition of greatness. And you know how he said it? He said, "Now brethren, I can't give you greatness. And really, I can't make you first." This is what Jesus said to James and John. "You must earn it. True greatness comes not by favoritism, but by fitness. And the right hand and the left are not mine to give, they belong to those who are prepared."

And so Jesus gave us a new norm of greatness. If you want to be important—wonderful. If you want to be recognized—wonderful. If you want to be great—wonderful. But recognize that he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. That's a new definition of greatness.

And this morning, the thing that I like about it: by giving that definition of greatness, it means that everybody can be great, because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's theory of relativity to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love. And you can be that servant.

Hoping to be Great,
Pastor Michael

