

# WORD

*with Ps Simon Saly*

**How To Attain Jesus' Standard of Greatness**  
**Matthew 20: 20-28 (NIV)**



## Matthew 20:20-28 (NIV)

<sup>20</sup> Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him... <sup>24</sup> When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. <sup>25</sup> Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>27</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— <sup>28</sup> just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."



# 3 Mindsets to Attain Jesus' Standard of Greatness

1. **Approach the world as Jesus approached it:**  
By His Holy standard (v24-25)
2. **Make the same contribution as Jesus made it:**  
Through His humble Service (v26-27)
3. **Seek the same goal as Jesus sought:**  
He laid down His life as a human sacrifice (v28)



# **1. Approach the world as Jesus approached it: By His Holy standard (v24-25)**

1. Christ's way is in total opposition to the ways of the world
2. Christ's way of leadership is through servitude not subjugation
  - Loving versus lording
  - Seek God's glory rather than personal glory
  - Worldly versus Christ-centred leadership pattern
3. To pursue greatness one must pursue God's holy standard





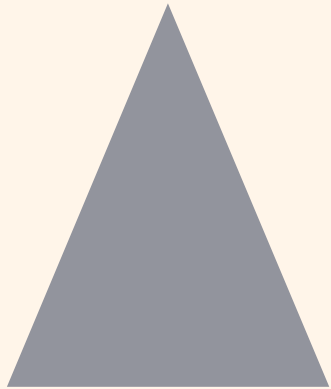
**"There are many who pursue the limelight of Christianity... who want to be a part of the Christian superstar list, who want to seek the prominent place, the place of prestige and honour... the place of power and control, where they can generate these kinds of creature comforts that minister mostly to their physical bodies and their psychological needs..."**

***John MacArthur Commentary on Matthew 20***

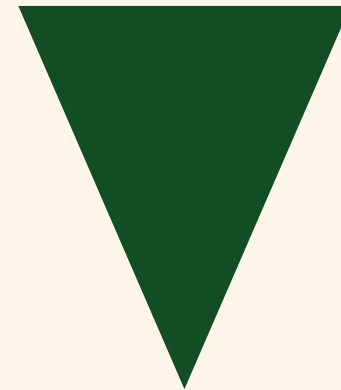


# Worldly versus Christ-centred leadership pattern

**Leader**



**Worldly standard**



**Leader**  
**Christ standard**

**"The great men are not sitting on top of lesser men;  
they are bearing less men on their backs."**

*Richard C H Lenski*

## 2. Make the same contribution as Jesus made: Through His humble service (v26-27)

1. Humble men of the Old Testament (Heb. 11)
2. The ultimate humble man: Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:6-11)  
*Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,  
but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.  
And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself  
and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!*
3. In order to pursue greatness one must pursue humility.



### 3. Seek the same goal as Jesus sought: Gave His Life as a human sacrifice (v28)

- 'Servant', 'slave', 'served', 'serve': hard, unappreciated, menial service, beyond one's comfort zone
- "If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." (Rom. 14:8)
- "Death is at work in us, but life is at work in you."  
(2 Cor. 4:12)  
*Paul suffered so that the Corinthians may experience the life-giving power and presence of Christ!*
- Suffering: affliction, persecution, perplexity, etc  
loneliness, weariness, criticism







## Suffering: weariness & criticism

"I never met a man who was abandoned to the cause of God who wasn't tired or weary. Or a woman. And criticism is another part of the pain. You can expect to be misunderstood, misrepresented, misjudged, wrongly evaluated, accused. And to handle that without self-defense, without self-justification means that you bear the burden between you and the Lord and perhaps someone close and dear to you."

*John MacArthur*



# Suffering

"Suffering, then, is the badge of discipleship.  
The disciple is not above his master."

*Dietrich Bonhoeffer (6/2/1906 – 9/4/1945)*



# Solutions to overcome the Pitfalls

1. Wait on the Lord... (Isa. 40:28–31)
2. Look to the Cross remembering what the Lord Jesus has done for you (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Gal. 2:20)
3. Boldly claim God's promises (e.g. John 14:12)
4. Be encouraged by the reward you will receive from the Lord (2 Tim. 4:8)





# Reflection

1. Why is it necessary to attain Christ's standard of greatness?
2. What makes it difficult to attain it?
3. Of the 3 principles– holiness, humility, suffering– which do you need to work on first?
4. How will you do it?



prayer

+

response