

"Surprising Greatness?"

"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant." Mark 10:43

Who is the greatest? How would you answer that question? Muhammed Ali repeatedly said, "I'm the greatest!" You could survey the public for their choices – politicians, journalists, religious or business leaders. You could turn to historians for their estimate based on the historical contributions of great individuals. And, of course, NFL football fans will know who the greatest is at the conclusion of Super Bowl LIX on Sunday, February 9.

James and John were working for a prominent place in Jesus' kingdom, one on His right and the other on His left. They were measuring greatness by prestige or status. The other disciples were furious when they heard about that request, probably because they wanted the same greatness for themselves.

Are we any different? Do we not strive for greatness in our own way – formal college degrees, title or position on the job, net worth and material possessions, social standing, number of celebrities we know personally, community organizations we join, or even church positions we hold. We struggle, climb ladders, cultivate the right kind of friends, and hope to achieve greatness.

Jesus must have shocked the disciples when He spoke the words of our text. As the greatest man who ever lived, He described His mission in life, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). He washed the disciples' feet and "humbled himself ... to death, even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:8). This, my friends, is greatness; greatness in humble service!

Now, as redeemed, restored, and forgiven children of God, we too can pick up the towel and ready the basin of water for a life of service. Yes, you! And yes, me! Again, the Lord isn't saying that He's upset with His people for their personal goals and passions in life. However, is our ambition only for self and personal gain? Instead, as Christians, and especially as members of our beloved congregation, bringing Christ to all people and helping them grow in their Christian faith, life and service shouldn't be a surprising greatness!

Therefore, in this month of hearts, candy and flowers, let's (more importantly) begin sharing the greatness of our Lord, a greatness that changes and saves lives eternally, as we serve our Lord and others with our time, talent and treasurers.

A continued blessed Epiphany!

Pastor Seehafer