

How to Be Great in the Kingdom, Part 1

Scripture: Matthew 20:20–25

Code: 2347

INTRODUCTION

A. The Celebration of Pride

1. In the world

We live in a proud and egotistical generation. People continually promote themselves. I can't remember a time when there was more acceptance and promotion of pride as a virtue. During the time of the Roman Empire, pride was exalted as a virtue and humility was viewed as a weakness. I used to wonder how a society could ever reach that point. But now I see that same thing occurring in our society. It may well be one of the marks of the demise of our society, just as it was of Roman society. No society can survive when pride runs rampant.

Society depends on meaningful, ongoing, and supportive relationships. But when a mass of people are committed to themselves alone, relationships will disintegrate. And that is exactly what is happening in our society--relationships are falling apart. Everyone is consumed with his own rights--with self-glory, self-esteem, self-promotion, and pride. People who you would think had the sense to mask their pride instead parade it as if it were a virtue. Even the business world is based on pride and self-promotion.

2. In the church

Sadly, that tendency has found its way into Christianity. People are now twisting the Bible to promote pride and self-esteem. There are so-called Christian books on how to make your body and face more beautiful. I even saw one that told how to buy a wardrobe that matched your skin color. Those are not spiritual issues.

Since around 1974 we have seen the cult of selfism burgeon in the church of Jesus Christ. We live in a Christian age that now thinks God's only design for us is to be healthy, wealthy, happy, satisfied, and fulfilled. We know very little about sacrifice or the pain of suffering. Many want to eliminate that part of Christianity. Most of us are consumed with creature comforts and travel in our quest to fulfill what we believe to be deep needs. In the process, we have begun to exalt pride and forget humility. There was a time in the church when many preached about humility. During the time of the Reformation and the Puritans, you will find a sense of brokenness and contrition in the church. People trembled at the Word of God. The humility and meekness that existed within the church gave it great power. But today the church wants to be proud, fulfilled, and indulgent. It has fallen prey to the sin of pride. It has replaced humility as a virtue, and humility has been labeled as a weakness.

B. The Confrontation of Scripture

1. The denunciation of pride

The Bible is very clear about the sin of pride.

a) The definitions of pride(1) Proverbs 21:4--"A proud heart ... [is] sin."(2) Proverbs 16:5--"Every one who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."(3) Proverbs 8:13--"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride, and arrogance."(4) Romans 1:30--Pride is a mark of the reprobate mind.(5) 1 Timothy 3:6--Pride comes from the devil.(6) 1 John 2:16--Pride is a part of the world.(7) 1 Timothy 6:3-4--Pride characterizes false teachers.b) The downfall of pride(1) James 4:6--"God resists the proud."(2) Isaiah 23:9--God brings the proud into contempt.(3) Psalm 31:23--The proud will be judged.(4) Exodus 18:11--The proud will be subdued.(5) Psalm 18:27--The proud will be brought

low.(6) Daniel 4:37--The proud will be abased.(7) Luke 1:51--The proud will be scattered.(8) Malachi 4:1--The proud will be punished.

2. The exaltation of humility

Humility is exalted as a virtue in the Bible. We need to understand that in terms of our experience as well.

a) Micah 6:8--"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"b) Psalm 138:6--"Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly."c) Psalm 10:17--"Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble."d) Proverbs 15:33--"Before honor is humility."

The Lord lifts up the humble (James 4:10). Colossians 3:12 instructs us to put on humility. First Peter 5:5 tells us to be clothed with humility. And Ephesians 4:1-2 says we are to walk in humility. If you desire honor and glory from God, you must display humility first. That is contrary to our earthly philosophy, which exalts pride.

C. The Correction of Christ

We need to learn that honor comes through humility and that glory comes through suffering. The disciples needed to learn the same lesson. They too sought self-glory and self-esteem. They sought the high places in God's Kingdom. The Lord needed to correct that attitude, and He confronted it in Matthew 20:20-28. Unfortunately He was forced to teach the same lesson a few days later.

1. Regarding glory

The disciples basically forsook all to follow Jesus. They followed Him out of genuine love and admiration, yet they also knew that whatever they gave up would be more than replenished when He entered into His Kingdom, for Jesus said, "In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Matt. 19:28- 29). Those are some powerful promises! Unfortunately, it fed their materialistic thinking, even though it wasn't intended to do that. When Jesus talked about suffering, they didn't understand because they didn't listen. They were too interested in what He said about glory, honor, and reigning in the Kingdom.

2. Regarding suffering

a) The sufferings of ChristIn Matthew 20:17-19, for a third time Jesus gave a description of what His death would be like. His previous discussions took place in Matthew 16:21 and 17:22-23. He told His disciples that He was going to Jerusalem to suffer and to die. He was trying to balance their perspective. There is going to be a Kingdom, but the way to it is through suffering. First comes death, then glory. Humility is before honor (Prov. 15:33).b) The sufferings of the disciplesJesus also taught the disciples about their own suffering.(1) Expect nothing from the worldIn Matthew 8:20 Jesus told a would-be disciple that before he followed Him he ought to know, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." In other words, "If you follow Me, I can't promise you a thing--not even a place to sleep."(2) Expect to dieJesus said He had come to bring a sword and to set a person against his own family (Matt. 10:34-39). In Matthew 16:24 He says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." That meant death.The disciples received many lessons about suffering--both their own and Christ's--but it never seemed to sink in because they were so intent on learning about their glory and greatness in the Kingdom.

3. Regarding humility

a) The lesson of self-denialJesus emphasized humility in Matthew 18:3-4 when He said that anyone who would come into His Kingdom must humble himself as a little child. They needed to learn to deny themselves. That's a mark of a true follower of Jesus Christ. He tried to get the same message across to the rich young ruler when he said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and

give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven; and come and follow me" (Matt. 19:21). But the man wouldn't do it. That was a profound lesson about the requirements for entering into the Kingdom--humility, self-denial, and abandonment.^{b)} The lie of self-glory⁽¹⁾ Believed by the disciplesThe disciples could have forsaken all and followed Jesus without ever asking what was in it for them, but they didn't. In Matthew 19:27 Peter asked, "What shall we have, therefore?" The human heart is treacherous. Selfishness is incurable in this life; it only can be brought under control. They should have understood their service to Christ as a service of love without thought of receiving anything in return. The humble person seeks no glory, no esteem, no honor, no promotion, and no popularity. In Matthew 20:17-19 Jesus talked about His suffering and death, but all the disciples could think about was their own self-glory. After Jesus taught the disciples about humility, they soon proved they didn't get the message. In the upper room the night Judas betrayed Christ, the disciples continued to argue about who would be the greatest in the Kingdom. The Lord was again telling them of His own death, and they were still debating about which of them was going to sit in the chief seats in the Kingdom. How crass!⁽²⁾ Believed by ChristiansThe same thing is true today. Jesus is still saying, "Take up your cross." Humility is still the path to glory. He still wants us to abandon ourselves to ministry. We should be willing to give up everything we have in this world to do what Christ wants no matter what the cost. But people are still missing that lesson. They look at grace like a free ticket to the storehouse of divine goodies--that all God wants to do is make you healthy, wealthy, and happy. I trust none of you are approaching the Christian life for what it can give you. God has not called us to that; He's called us to humility. He's called us to suffer. Second Timothy 2:12 says, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." First Peter 5:10 says, "After ye have suffered awhile, [God will] make you perfect." Romans 8:18 says, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." As we suffer here, we're glorified in heaven. If we seek glory here, we forfeit it there (Matt. 16:25).

Voices of Reason

Paul Brownback attended Talbot Theological Seminary after graduating from West Point, and is now the president of Citadel Bible College. He has written a helpful book entitled, The Danger of Self Love (Chicago: Moody, 1982). In it he says, "Almost immediately the Christian public felt warmly at home with its newfound friend; self-love has been easily incorporated into the mind-set of evangelical Christians. All one needs to do to verify this is to walk into his Sunday school class next Sunday morning and ask, 'Should a Christian love himself?' He probably will discover quickly that the tide of opinion flows strongly toward a positive response" (p. 13). That is not biblical Christianity. Neither is it historic Christianity. Brownback cites the following:

1. John Piper--"Today the first and greatest commandment is, 'Thou shalt love thyself.' And the explanation for almost every interpersonal problem is thought to lie in someone's low self-esteem. Sermons, articles, and books have pushed this idea into the Christian mind. It is a rare congregation, for example, that does not stumble over the 'vermicular theology' of Isaac Watts's 'Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed': 'Would He devote that sacred head/For such a worm as I?'" ("Is Self-Love Biblical?" Christianity Today, 12 August 1977, p. 6). People don't like that. One of the letters written to the editor at Moody Monthly in response to an article I wrote on Robert Schuller's book Self Esteem said, "MacArthur has become a victim of worm theology." That's not a popular thing in a day when men promote themselves.
2. John Stott--"A chorus of many voices is chanting in unison today that I must at all costs love myself" ("Must I Really Love Myself?" Christianity Today, 5 May 1978, p. 34).
3. Saint Augustine--"Two cities have been formed by two loves; the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God, the heavenly by the love of God even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord" (The City of God XIV, 28).
4. John Calvin--"For so blindly do we all rush in the direction of self-love that everyone thinks he has

a good reason for exalting himself and despising all others in comparison" (Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966], 2:10). Calvin offers a cure for the problem: "There is no other remedy than to pluck up by the roots those most noxious pests, self-love and love of victory This the doctrine of Scripture does. For it teaches us to remember, that the endowments which God has bestowed upon us are not our own, but His free gifts, and that those who plume themselves upon them betray their ingratitude" (Ibid).

The problem of self-love was something that historical leaders of the church have dealt with, and we are facing the same thing today. People are even going so far as changing the words in some of the hymns. They are removing lines like "Mine own worthlessness," or "My sinful self, my only shame." There's even a magazine called Self, which leaves little in doubt regarding its content.

The New Cross

Someone has said there is a new cross in evangelicalism today. He writes that the old cross slew men; the new cross entertains them. The old cross condemned; the new cross assures. The old cross destroyed confidence in the flesh; the new cross encourages it. The old cross brought tears and blood; the new cross brings laughter. The flesh, smiling and confident, preaches and sings about the cross; before that cross it bows and toward that cross it points with carefully staged histrionics, but upon that cross it will not die, and the reproach of that cross it stubbornly refuses to bear.

We need to reexamine the whole idea of humility as a path to glory. And that is precisely what we will do in Matthew 20:20-28. I want to examine two points: how not to be great and how to be great.

I. HOW NOT TO BE GREAT (vv. 20-25)

Four worldly ways to seek greatness are given in verses 20-25: two by example and two by instruction of our Lord. Men pursue greatness through earthly means, but such ways are not adaptable to God's Kingdom. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36).

A. Political Powerplay (vv. 20-21)

The world tells us that if you want to get something or somewhere, it all depends on who you know. If you want to climb the ladder of success, you're told to get next to the people who have the influence. Political powerplay is a common approach to reach places of prominence and glory in this world. You can manipulate people and circumstances to get close to those who can pull you to the top. One pastor commented some years ago that whenever he attended his denomination's convention, he always tried to get a hotel room next to the men in charge so he could get to know them. That way he would be assured of getting bigger and bigger churches.

1. The proponents of the powerplay (v. 20)

"Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons [James and John], worshiping him, and desiring a certain thing of him."

It amazes me that this event happened right on the heels of Jesus' explanation of His coming death (Matt. 20:17-19). James, John, and their mother seem to be completely indifferent to that. (In fact, no mention is made that any of the disciples even responded to what Jesus said.) Mark 10:35-41 is a comparative passage, but there the mother is not even mentioned. It's important that we don't think she was on her own or that they were just tagging along. They came as a trio.

2. The proposition of the powerplay (v. 21)

"And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these, my two sons, may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom."

That was an act of pride. James and John wanted the chief places in the Kingdom. They were seeking self-glory, honor, and esteem. They wanted to sit next to Christ so people could say, "Look at how close they are to Christ. They must be the second and third most holy people." They sought that kind of affirmation from people.

Both James and John were bold. If you don't think so, then read Mark 9:38 and Luke 9:54. They

were called "Sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). We often think of them as passive because Jesus spoke of John so endearingly. But they both were brash, bold, and demanding men who were trying to make a political powerplay on Jesus.

a) An advantageous relationship Matthew, Mark, and John tell us that when Jesus was being crucified, some women stood at the foot of the cross. Matthew 27:56 gives their names as: Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. Mark 15:40 says they were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome (who must then be the mother of the sons of Zebedee). John 19:25 says, "There stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene." We know who Mary Magdalene is. We know who Jesus' mother is. Mary, the wife of Clopas must be the mother of James and Joseph. That leaves the other woman--Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee--who is now called Jesus' mother's sister. Therefore, the mother of the sons of Zebedee is the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Do you understand the politics? Advancement is in who you know. James and John wanted to play on the affection of Jesus for His mother. So they used their ace in the hole: they were Jesus' cousins--their mothers were sisters. And they didn't come just as cousins: they brought their mother along to play on Jesus' sympathy for His aunt. b) A manipulative reverence Jesus' aunt worshiped (Gk., proskuneo) Him. She bowed down and treated Him like a king. Verse 21 says she was "desiring a certain thing of him." She wouldn't tell Him what she desired (Mark 10:35). She wanted Him to promise to give it to her before she told Him what it was. Now that is childish. Have you ever had your child do that to you? Standard procedure in our house is to say yes to very few things, and we never say yes to things we don't know about. I think the mother's approach betrayed some doubt in her heart about the legitimacy of her request. It also betrayed great ambition on the part of James and John. They wanted the seats so badly that they were willing to corner Christ into promising something they believed He wouldn't do if He knew what it was. The approach James, John, and their mother used was a common method of exalting a king. For example, Herod Antipas told Salome, the dancing girl, that he would give her anything she wanted (Matt. 14:7). In that way a king showed how far-reaching his power was. So the mother treated Jesus like a king. She thought she could appeal to Him on the basis of His love of royalty and power. It was an extremely manipulative approach. c) A sinful request (1) The motivation of the mother She did not ask Jesus for herself; she would get her glory through the honor given to her two sons. There is some virtue in her desire: she does reveal that she believes Christ will bring about His Kingdom. But apart from that, there's no virtue in the request at all. It is sinful because it seeks glory for James and John. Suppose you and your mother go to Jesus and say, "Of all the people who have ever served God, we believe we ought to sit on your right and left hand in the Kingdom." You would no doubt feel awkward in using such a brash approach. (2) The motivation of James and John You might be wondering how James and John could conceive of making such a request. For one thing, they were Jesus' cousins. In that sense they had a certain intimacy with Him. They were also in the inner-circle of the disciples, which included Peter. They knew Peter was continually being rebuked by Christ, so they probably thought he couldn't qualify for a chief seat. They weren't any better than Peter, but they had learned to keep their thoughts to themselves, so they appeared to be more holy. Based on their relationship to Christ and Peter's disqualification, they figured it was a legitimate request. Why did they want to sit to the right and left of Christ? Because they wanted to be glorified. The church still suffers from people who seek preeminence. They are like the Pharisees, who loved the chief seats in the synagogues, wanting to sit above men and be called Father (Matt. 23:6-9). There are always people in the church who want to be esteemed and lifted up, thinking that they will receive an eternal reward as a result. But our Lord rejects political powerplay. That is not how you reach a place of blessing and honor in the Kingdom.

B. Audacious Ambition (vv. 22-24)

1. The ignorance of James and John (v. 22a)

"But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask."

They were asking for glory but didn't realize that the path to glory is suffering. The highest places of glory are reserved for those who endure the greatest degree of suffering. From time to time I'm asked, "Who will receive the greatest reward in heaven?" The answer is given in the Word of God: those who suffered the most in this life for the cause of Jesus Christ-- those who confronted a hostile world and paid the greatest price in self-denial for His purposes.

Second Corinthians 4:17 says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." What leads to glory? Affliction. Now that is not referring to physical affliction from illness or affliction associated with carelessness or sin. But when we are persecuted for the cause of the gospel, we are building up a greater inheritance of glory in eternity. As we learned in Matthew 20:1-16, we all equally receive eternal life. Similarly we all inherit the perfection of Christ's likeness in eternity, yet there is a greater weight of glory reserved for those who suffered the most for the cause of Christ in this life.

2. The implications of the request (vv. 22b-23a)

a) Exalted commitment (v. 22b)"Are you able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" Jesus was going to be exalted as a result of His suffering. If James and John wanted to sit beside Him in the Kingdom, then they needed to be willing to seek the same degree of suffering that He would experience. The word cup is used as an Old Testament symbol that meant "to take everything in." Our Lord is saying, "Are you able to suffer to the degree that I will?" Its use is reminiscent of Isaiah 51:17, 22, which refers to the cup of God's fury. Christ drank of that cup to the last. So He asks the disciples if they are able to do likewise. Christ was exalted to full glory because He endured such profound suffering. Because He suffered the most; He is glorified the most. Whoever suffers most next to Him will be glorified next to Him. Our eternal weight of glory is predicated on suffering. If you seek such glory, you will achieve it only through humility, suffering, and self-sacrifice--not by political powerplay or audacious ambition. b) Excessive confidence (v. 22c)"They say unto Him, We are able." They weren't able. They had audacious ambition. Many people plunge into a task thinking they can do it. This old adage remains true: "They said it couldn't be done, but he hopped right to it and couldn't do it." That's often true in the spiritual dimension. I think some of us have excessive confidence. If you think you can do something in your own strength, you can't. Peter told Christ, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended" (Matt. 26:33). Yet before a cock crowed, he denied the Lord three times. James, John, and all the rest of the disciples fled when Jesus was taken prisoner (Matt. 26:56). They couldn't handle the danger. James and John may have thought they were able, but they obviously weren't. They were plagued by their audacious ambition. You can't move your way up the Kingdom's ladder of honor and glory by boasting in your self-confidence. Neither can you climb it by a manipulative political powerplay. c) Eventual commission (v. 23a)"And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup" The disciples would taste of Christ's cup of suffering, but they would never drink the whole thing. The time came when they were faithful. We know James was faithful because when he was the first apostle to be martyred (Acts 12:2). John was faithful, for he was exiled to the Isle of Patmos for the rest of his life on account of Christ. They did drink of the cup. They experienced the fellowship of His sufferings, if not the fullness of them. But they never were able to drink of the cup until the Spirit came and infused them with internal spiritual strength.

3. The inclination of God (v. 23b)

"But to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared by my Father."

Christ was in submission to the Father. Only God can pass out the rewards. He ultimately gives glory to whomever He wills. I've often wondered who will be the greatest in heaven. The only possible answer is the one who suffered the most to proclaim the name of Jesus Christ. It certainly won't be anyone who has sought glory by political powerplay or audacious ambition. It is prepared for those

who have been smitten with "worm theology," and lived it out.

4. The indignation of the ten (v. 24)

"And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren."

The other ten disciples weren't spiritual; they were angry because James and John asked for the chief seats before they did. Luke 22:24-27 tells us that days later they were all arguing about who would be greatest in the kingdom.

C. Dominant Dictatorship (v. 25a)

"Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them"

The Greek word translated "exercise dominion over" is katakurieuo, which means "to lord it over."

Another way people of the world seek greatness is through dominant dictatorship.

1. In the world

The Caesars, the Ptolemys of Egypt, the Herods, Antiochus Epiphanes, Pilate, Hitler, Idi Amin, and the Shah of Iran were all dictators. They ruled by lording their authority over people. One of the reasons Africa is so susceptible to communist revolution, and the reason for unending foment in Latin and Central America, is that those nations are coming out of dominant dictatorships. Many of the leaders in those countries filled their coffers at the expense of the people. In reaction to that, the people became fertile soil for communist infiltration, resulting in the kind of chaos that leads to Communism.

2. In the church

Leadership in some churches is also dictatorial. Certain leaders dominate everyone in the church by telling them what to think and how to act. There are those leaders, like Jim Jones, whose strange movements have moved closer to mainstream Christianity than his ever did. I've heard more times than I'd like to remember from people who have said they can't tell their pastor anything. Peter specifically told pastors not to lord their authority over the people (1 Pet. 5:3).

D. Charismatic Control (v. 25b)

"They that are great [Gk., megalos, 'the chief ones'] exercise authority over them."

The Greek word translated "exercise authority" is katexousiazo, which means "to vaunt power."

Colloquially it means "to throw your weight around." It seems best to see this as the power of personality. Dominant dictatorship is the power of position; charismatic control is the power of personality. This type of leader has the charm, charisma, wit, and glibness that gives him power in swaying people. There are many people who achieve greatness in the world by virtue of their charismatic personality.

Such people also exist within the church. You might have asked yourself how people are able to listen to certain preachers and teachers and believe what they say. They certainly aren't intimidated by them, but they are enamored by their personality. Those kinds of preachers and teachers know what psychological tricks and gimmicks will move people to fall prey to their leadership.

We received a series of correspondence from a woman who was under a dominant dictatorship in her church. The pastor wanted to totally control her life. It nearly drove her to suicide. That shows the tremendous power a dominant dictatorship can have. We counseled her, and fortunately the Lord has delivered her. We have also received letters from people who have been delivered out of the control of leaders who had subtle ways of convincing them that they were of God.

CONCLUSION

Our Lord tells us not to seek greatness by political power play. Don't try to climb the ladder of success based on who you know. Don't seek it by audacious ambition--don't overstate your abilities. Don't seek it by dominant dictatorship--don't try to pull rank on people. And don't use your personality to manipulate others. If you want to be great, learn the lesson that Jesus teaches in Matthew 20:22. Before honor comes humility. Before you can wear the crown, you have to drink the cup. The way to

exaltation is the way of humility. Seek to know God and walk humbly with Him. Matthew 20:26-28 gives us the way to greatness in the Kingdom: "It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Focusing on the Facts

1. Why have relationships within our society reached a stress point?
2. In what way has the church begun to follow the example of the world?
3. What marked the churches in the Reformation and Puritan eras?
4. Define pride.
5. What must a Christian display before he can ever receive glory and honor from God?
6. What did Jesus teach the disciples about their own suffering?
7. How do we know that the disciples did not learn from Jesus' teaching about suffering in Matthew 20:17-19?
8. Define the strategy of political powerplay.
9. What special relationship did James, John, and their mother have with Jesus?
10. What motivated the mother of James and John to do what she did?
11. What motivated James and John to do what they did?
12. For whom are the highest places in glory reserved?
13. What leads to glory?
14. What was the cup Jesus referred to in Matthew 20:21?
15. Both James and John said they were able to drink of the cup, but they fled when the time came (Matt. 26:56). What finally gave them the ability to drink from the cup?
16. Why did the other ten disciples become indignant with James and John?
17. Describe the strategy of dominant dictatorship.
18. Describe the strategy of charismatic control.

Pondering the Principles

1. Proverbs 15:33 says, "Before honor is humility." How often do you get the order of the two mixed up? Read James 4:1-10. What happens as a result when you exalt yourself? What happens when you humble yourself before God? Remember, "friendship with the world is hostility toward God" (v. 4, NASB). In this past week, have you shown any hostility toward God? The world is characterized by pride. Make it your goal this week to begin rooting out pride in your life and developing a humble attitude.
2. Review the four ways not to be great in God's Kingdom. Give examples of your behavior that have revealed tendencies to gain greatness through each of those ways. How can you specifically apply Matthew 20:26-27 to each of those areas? Be diligent in your application.

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