



TRUE GREATNESS COMES FROM SERVING

We have a week under our belts getting to play with new teammates and in new places. In order for us to experience greatness this summer, we don't have to have the highest batting average or the lowest earned run average. We will find as we explore God's Word this week that true greatness comes from serving others. Greatness in God's eyes is what we do for others and how we serve Him and them. Our goal this summer should be two fold. We want to improve in every area of our game. But also and yes I think even more important is for us to improve this summer as servants.

Come to this week in expectation of what God is going to do in our lives.

Sunday: Read Joshua 22:5

Today Joshua wants us to see our responsibility with God. Notice carefully the end of this verse. We are to serve God with ALL our heart and soul.

1. List what Joshua reminds us to do.
2. What does it mean to serve God with all our heart and soul?
3. How will serving God this way help us to be better teammates?

Monday: Read Joshua 24:14-15

Joshua knew he did not have long to live. He brought the people of Israel together for a final farewell address. He wanted to remind them of how God had been there for them every step of the way from the Wilderness experience through the beginning of the conquest of the Promised Land. Let these words sink in as Joshua reminds us that serving God is a choice.

1. How do we serve God with faithfulness?
2. How can our commitment to serve God make a difference in the lives of our coaches and teammates, also those in the community in which we play?

3. Will you join me in making a daily commitment to serve God?

Tuesday: Read Galatians 5:13-15

Paul reminds us in these verses of a very important part of serving, it must be done in love. Service without love is more duty than love. Jesus was always more interested in having people love and follow Him not because of what He did, but who He was. Jesus is more interested today in us serving others because we love Him and them than because we think we ought to do so.

- 1. What are some ways we can serve our coaches and teammates in love?**
- 2. What are some ways we can serve the kids at the ballpark in love?**
- 3. May we allow God this day to show us ways to serve others in love?**

Wednesday: Read Matthew 20:20-28

Jesus is on the way to Jerusalem for the final time. He knows He is on the journey to die, to die for our sins and mistakes on Calvary's cross. I can only imagine the things that would be racing through His mind as His steps got closer and closer to Jerusalem. The Mother of James and John came up to Jesus and asked Him for a favor. Obviously by reading between the lines we see that as Mom is asking James and John are within hearing. She asked that her two sons would be given places of prominence in the Kingdom. Mom wanted James on one side of Jesus and John on the other. Jesus asked her if they could go through what was about to face Him? James and John answered we can! The problem was the other ten disciples heard this exchange and were really angry with James and John. How dare they ask for something like this? Who do they think they are? They are no better than we are! Jesus, as He always did, knew just what to say and how to say it. James and John wanted positions of greatness. They wanted authority and prominence in God's kingdom. Jesus teaches them probably not for the first time, to be great one must become a servant. To be first in God's eyes is to become a slave. Jesus reminded them all He came into this world not to be served but to serve and give His life as the price for our sins! Can you sense that at that moment, the heads of the 12 were hung in shame. Here they had been concerned about places of prominence instead of places of service. Don't we make the same mistakes? We want greatness in the game. We strive to be the best we can be and if we work hard enough we may even get the opportunity to play professional baseball. We want the greatness that can bring. I dare say there is not one of us who would not know Derek Jeter if he came to one of our games. The game and the way he plays and yes serves the game has brought him greatness. I got to meet Jeter in Baltimore with Brian Roberts. The thing that impressed me the most was how he interacted with the fans. As he was preparing to hit in BP, kids were yelling at him Derek, Derek. He would find a kid, point to him and wave. He took time out to give of himself to others, in God's eyes, that is true greatness. Let these words of Jesus sink into our hearts. May we see that

true greatness comes in not we accomplish. True greatness comes from how much we give ourselves in service to others.

- 1. Who are we more like today, the disciples who were worrying about places of prominence or Jesus who was concerned about serving others? Why?**
- 2. How can we be great in God's eyes today?**
- 3. The greatest gift we can give is the gift of ourselves, who needs us today to be a servant to them, giving of our time and energy?**

Thursday: Read 1Peter 4:8-11

Peter reminds us today to love deeply, serve others with what God has given to us. Verse 11 tells us to speak as if we are speaking the words of God and serve others in His strength. All of this we do for one reason, so that God will be praised through Jesus Christ.

- 1. Why is it so important to love deeply?**
- 2. What are ways we can use the gifts God has given to us to serve others?**
- 3. As God's Holy Spirit gains more control of our lives, the more we can speak the words of God and serve in His strength. How much control does His Holy Spirit have in our lives?**
- 4. May our lives this day and everyday be a sacrifice of service given to praise Him.**

Friday: Read John 13:1-17

As Jesus is preparing to eat the Passover meal with His disciples on the eve of His death, Jesus teaches an object lesson on serving others. In that day people reclined at a very low table almost lying on one arm. The feet of everyone was almost on nose level of those preparing to eat. The first thing that was done when entering a house for a meal was the feet were washed by the lowest servant in the household. I don't think I would want the job of washing everyone's dirty sweaty, and yes probably stinking feet. As the meal was about to be served, no one stepped up to wash the feet of those gathered to eat. Jesus got up from the table and began to wash the disciples' feet. Can you imagine how the disciples must have felt? The Master is washing my feet, I should have done that for Him. At the end of this event Jesus tells them they will be blessed if they serve others this way!

- 1. What are tasks at the field no one ever wants to do?**

2. **If Jesus did the task of the lowest servant in the household what does that say to us?**
3. **What are some ways we can be blessed by serving others?**

Saturday: Read 2Kings 5:1-3

Naaman was the greatest military leader of his time. He had commanded the armies of Aram (Syria) to great victories. But now he was facing his toughest enemy, leprosy, a skin disease that literally ate away at one's flesh. Leprosy was highly contagious and there was no known cure. A girl captured and made a slave in Naaman's household was from Israel and knew of the prophet Elisha. The girl went to Naaman's wife and told her that all Naaman needed to do was to go to the prophet and be healed. Even in the midst of being a slave, the little girl was looking out for others.

1. **Serving others means looking out for others, who do we need to serve by looking out for them?**
2. **Read the rest of this story.**
3. **Are there any issues of pride that are keeping us from experiencing God's blessings?**
4. **Sometimes serving others means taking a risk, just like the slave girl, ask God today for the courage to take a risk to serve others in His Name.**