

# Served By Greatness, Serve To Be Great

*Matthew 20:20-28*

## INTRODUCTION

1. Is Salome our Lord's Mother's sister? If so, then James and John are first cousins to Jesus, this being so would indicate that this is a family matter and preferential favor is requested.  
**Matthew 27:56** among whom was Mary Magdalene, [along with] Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee[Salome].  
**Mark 15:40** And there were also [some] women looking on from a distance, among whom [were] Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, and **Salome**.  
**John 19:25** Therefore the soldiers did these things. But there were standing by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the [wife] of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.
2. What good mother does not desire the best for her children?
  - a. The mother of James and John was no different
  - b. She desired great things for her two sons - Matt 20:20-21
3. Yet she was not aware of the significance of what she was asking Jesus...
  - a. Serving in His kingdom would require great sacrifice and suffering - Matt 20:22-23
  - b. Her request could only be granted by the Father - Matt 20:23
4. This request in behalf of James and John displeased the other apostles - Matt 20:24
  - a. Upon which Jesus used this opportunity to teach an important lesson - Matt 20:25-28
  - b. I.e., to be great in the kingdom one must serve, even as the Son of Man came to serve

## I. WE HAVE BEEN SERVED BY GREATNESS

### A. SERVED BY JESUS...

1. He came to serve, not to be served - Mattt. 20:28
2. He served by giving His life a ransom, dying on the cross for our sins
3. He serves even now, as our High Priest who intercedes for us - Heb. 7:24-25

### B. SERVED BY THE PROPHETS...

1. The prophets spent their lives in service for our benefit - 1 Peter 1:10-12
2. Thus we have been served by men like Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and many other "heroes of faith"!

### C. SERVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT...

1. It was the Holy Spirit who inspired the prophets - 1 Peter 1:11
2. He also inspired the apostles to reveal the gospel - 1 Peter 1:12; John 16:13

### D. SERVED BY THE APOSTLES...

1. They are the ones who preached the gospel to us - 1 Peter 1:12
2. Through them, we have come to believe in Jesus - cf. John 17:20

3. Thus we have been served by men like Peter, James, John, and Paul, who suffered greatly in their ministry to us! - cf. 1 Cor. 4:9-13; 2 Cor. 11:24-29

#### E. SERVED BY ANGELS...

1. They had a keen interest in the things being revealed - 1 Peter 1:12
2. For they had a part in the process of revelation - cf. Dan 8,9; Lk 1:11-19,26-38
3. Thus they too have ministered to us - cf. He 1:13-14

#### F. SERVED BY OTHER CHRISTIANS...

1. Someone taught us the gospel, others continue to teach us and our children
2. Some have made it possible for us to assemble, and each week clean up what we leave behind
3. In times of sickness, many have prayed and rendered various forms of service

## II. LET US SERVE TO BE GREAT

#### A. SERVE OTHERS IN EVANGELISM...

1. Someone led you to Christ, can you not lead another to Him?- cf. Jn 1:35-42
2. Begin by being hospitable, offering acts of kindness and service
3. At the very least, invite to services, offer a Bible correspondence course
4. Hone your skills in personal evangelism, seek to improve your ability to teach the gospel to others

#### B. SERVE OTHERS IN EDIFICATION...

1. Many have contributed to your spiritual growth, can you help others? - cf. Ep 4:16
2. Begin by being present at every service, greeting every one present
3. Take a special interest in those who are new, encourage them
4. Offer to help teach our children, even if it only means to assist another teacher
5. Volunteer whatever service you can render in the work and worship of the church

#### C. SERVE OTHERS IN BENEVOLENCE...

1. Has anyone ever showed you kindness? "Be kind to one another" - cf. Ep 4:32
2. Visit the sick or elderly in hospitals, and at home
3. Render service such as cleaning, transportation, errands, etc.
4. Minister to the poor, hungry, or those otherwise in need

## CONCLUSION

1. The important thing is that we be people of service...

- a. People who serve others, not just benefiting from the efforts of others
- b. People who are producers, not just consumers

2. Serving others is not just the path to greatness in the kingdom, it is also the path to happiness in life:

Acts 20:35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (NASB)

Hebrews 7:24-25 but He, on the other hand, because He abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (NASB)

1 Peter 1:10-12 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that [would come] to you made careful search and inquiry,

11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.

12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look. (NASB)

John 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. (NASB)

John 17:20 "I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; (NASB)