

Mark 9:30-50
January 7, 2024

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Q: What is your understanding of Jesus's definition of being "great" in His kingdom? [Let people engage]

Transition: In today's text, Jesus never does he takes his disciples to task because of their desire to be "great." God has somehow built into every human heart the desire to succeed at whatever we do in whatever terms we think success means. He did not rebuke them, for this is part of our humanity -- to want to succeed, to be the greatest. Obviously, none of us like to fail at anything we do! What he did do was to tell them the true way to greatness. "It is not by seeking to be first," he said, "It is by a willingness to be last. It is not by getting people to serve you; it is by becoming a servant of all."

What He is really saying is that there are two kinds of greatness, or two kinds of ambition. There is the ambition to be approved and applauded by men, and the ambition to be approved and applauded by God. These are as different as night and day. There are those who want to gain fame and attention and influence and power. The measurement of the ambition to be great before men is always: "How many serve me? How much power do I exercise over others? How wide is the extent of my influence? How far has knowledge about me traveled?" Who of us has not suffered many times this desire to be known, to be admired, to be considered important and great in the eyes of men?

But Jesus points out that true greatness is never found there. The measure of true greatness is: "How many do I serve? How many am I willing to minister to? How many can I help? This is the mark of greatness in the eyes of God. This is enduring greatness. Let's read the text.

BOOK:

³⁰They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, ³¹because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." ³²But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

Who Is the Greatest?

³³They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" ³⁴But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

³⁵Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

³⁶He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷"Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

Whoever Is Not Against Us Is for Us

³⁸“Teacher,” said John, “we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”

³⁹“Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, ⁴⁰ for whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.

Causing to Sin

⁴²“And if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where

“ ‘their worm does not die,
and the fire is not quenched.’ (Isa 66:24)

⁴⁹ Everyone will be salted with fire.

⁵⁰“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with each other.”

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What did you most like about this passage? What resonated with you? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you least like about this passage? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you find in this passage that you didn't understand? [Let people engage]

Q: What do we learn about Jesus in this passage? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

Jesus describes the measure of true greatness is: "How many do I serve? How many am I willing to minister to? How many can I help? This is the mark of greatness in the eyes of God. This is enduring greatness. May that be so for each of us.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible Exposition Commentary (Vol. 1, pp. 142-143). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.*

Service Leads to Honor (Mark 9:30–50)

Jesus was still leading His disciples to Jerusalem, and as they went, He reminded them of what would happen to Him there. Note that He also reminded them of His resurrection, but they were unable to understand what He was saying (see Matt. 17:9). They were “exceedingly sorry” (“deeply grieved,” Matt. 17:23, NASB).

However, they were not grieved enough to set aside their personal dispute over which of them was the greatest! After they heard what Jesus had said about His own suffering and death, you would think they would have forgotten their own selfish plans and concentrated on Him. Perhaps the fact that Peter, James, and John had gone on the mount with Jesus had added some fuel to the fires of competition.

To teach them (and us) a lesson on honor, Jesus set a child before them and explained that the way to be first is to be last, and the way to be last is to be the servant of all. The unspoiled child is an example of submission and humility. A child knows he is a child and acts like a child, and that is his secret of attracting love and care. The child who tries to impress us by acting like an adult does not get the same attention.

True humility means knowing yourself, accepting yourself, being yourself—your *best* self—and giving of yourself for others. The world's philosophy is that you are “great” if others are working for you, but Christ's message is that greatness comes from our serving others. Since the words “child” and “servant” are the same in the Aramaic language, it is easy to see why Jesus connected the two. If we have the heart of a child, we will have little difficulty being servants; and if we have the attitude of servants, we will welcome the children as the representatives of Jesus Christ and the Father.

At this point, John felt it necessary to defend the disciples (Mark 9:38–41) by pointing out their zeal. Imagine telling a man to stop casting out demons when the nine disciples had failed to deliver the deaf and dumb boy from Satan's power! To use the name of Jesus is the same as working under His authority, so the men had no right to stop the man. “To his own master he stands or falls” (Rom. 14:4).

Mark 9:40 should be compared with Matthew 12:30, “He that is not with Me is against Me.” Both statements declare the impossibility of neutrality when it comes to our relationship with Jesus Christ. Since we cannot be neutral, if we are not for Him, we must be against Him; if we are not against Him, we must be for Him. The anonymous exorcist was bringing glory to His name, so he had to be *for* the Saviour and not against Him.

But it is not necessary to perform great miracles to prove our love for Christ. When we lovingly receive a child or compassionately share a cup of cold water, we are giving evidence that we have the humble heart of a servant. After all, we are serving Christ, and that is the highest service in the world (Matt. 25:31–46).

Jesus did not treat John's statement lightly; in fact, He went on to explain the danger of causing others to stumble and therefore stop serving the Lord (Mark 9:42–50). “These little ones” refers to all God's children who follow Christ and seek to serve Him. The way believers treat others in the family of God is a serious thing, and God wants us to “have peace one with another” (Mark 9:50). The disciples did not get along with each other, nor did they get along with other believers!

This solemn message about hell carries a warning to all of us to deal drastically with sin. Whatever in our lives makes us stumble, and therefore causes others to stumble, must be removed as if by surgery. The hand, foot, and eye would be considered valuable parts of the body, yet they must be removed if they are causing sin. Of course, the Lord is not commanding literal physical surgery, since He had already made it clear that sin comes from the heart (Mark 7:20–23). What He is teaching is that sin is to the inner person what a cancerous tumor is to the body, and it must be dealt with drastically.

Some people are shocked to hear from the lips of Jesus such frightening words about hell (see Isa. 66:24). Jesus believed in a place called hell, a place of eternal torment and righteous punishment (see Luke 16:19ff). After an army chaplain told his men that he did not believe in hell, some of them suggested that his services were not needed. After all, if there is no hell, then why worry about death? But if there is a hell, then the chaplain was leading them astray! Either way, they would be better off without him!

The word translated “hell” is *gehenna*. It comes from a Hebrew phrase “the valley [*ge*] of Hinnon,” referring to an actual valley outside Jerusalem where wicked King Ahaz worshiped Molech, the fire god, and even sacrificed his children in the fire (2 Chron. 28:1–3; Jer. 7:31; 32:35).

Some manuscripts do not have Isaiah 66:24 quoted in Mark 9:44 and 46, but the statement is quoted in verse 48, and that one verse is sufficient. Hell is not temporary; it is forever (see Rev. 20:10). How essential it is for sinners to trust Jesus Christ and be delivered from eternal hell, and how important it is for believers to get the message out to a lost world!

“But isn’t that too great a sacrifice to ask from us?” someone might argue. “To deal that drastically with sin would cost us too much!” In Mark 9:49–50, Jesus used the concept of “living sacrifices” to illustrate His point (see Rom. 12:1–2). The sacrifice ends up on the altar and is consumed by the fire. Would you rather endure the fires of hell as a lost sinner or the purifying fires of God as a sacrifice for His glory? Remember, Satan promises you glory now, but the pain comes later. Jesus calls us to suffering now, and then we will enjoy the glory.

The Jews were not allowed to put leaven or honey on their sacrifices, but they were required to use salt (Lev. 2:11, 13). Salt speaks of purity and preservation. It was used in Old Testament days in the establishing of covenants. The disciples were God’s salt (Matt. 5:13), but they were in danger of losing their flavor and becoming worthless. Our salt today is purified and does not lose its taste; but the salt of that day contained impurities and could lose its flavor. Once you have lost that precious Christian character, how will you restore it?

Instead of rebuking others, the disciples should have been examining their own hearts! It is easy to lose our “saltiness” and become useless to God. Christians will experience the fire of trials and persecutions (1 Peter 1:6–7; 4:12) and they need to stand together, no matter who is the greatest! Commitment and character are the essentials, if we are to glorify Him and have peace with each other.

The three lessons Jesus taught in this section are basic to Christian living today. If we are yielded to Him, then suffering will lead to glory, faith will produce power, and our sacrificial service will lead to honor. In spite of his impetuosity and occasional mistakes, Peter got the message and wrote: “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered awhile, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever” (1 Peter 5:10).

Grassmick, J. D. (1985). *Mark*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 145-148) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

1. JESUS' SECOND PREDICTION OF HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION (9:30–31) (Matt. 17:22–23a; Luke 9:43b–44)

9:30–31. Jesus and His disciples **left that place** (cf. vv. 14, 28, probably near Caesarea Philippi) **and** were passing **through** northeastern **Galilee** (cf. 1:9), heading toward Capernaum (9:33). This was the first leg of their final journey southward to Jerusalem. **Jesus** wanted to keep their presence from becoming known **because** His public ministry in Galilee had ended and now **He** wished to prepare **His disciples** for the future.

His coming death was a constant theme of His **teaching** on this journey. He said that He, **the Son of Man** (cf. 8:31) would **be betrayed** to both Jews and Gentiles. “Betrayed” (*paradidotai*) means “deliver up” or “hand over.” It was used both of Judas’ betrayal of Jesus (3:19; 14:41; Luke 24:7) and of God’s delivering up Jesus to death for the redemption of sinners (Isa. 53:6, 12; Acts 2:23; Rom. 8:32). The latter idea is probably intended here, suggesting that the implied Agent of the passive verb is God, not Judas.

2. THE DISCIPLES’ LACK OF UNDERSTANDING (9:32) (Matt. 17:23b; Luke 9:45)

9:32. The disciples failed to **understand what Jesus meant** (cf. v. 10) **and were afraid to** inquire further. Perhaps this was because they remembered Jesus’ rebuke of Peter (8:33) or, more likely, because His words had a devastating effect on their hopes for a reigning Messiah.

3. JESUS’ LESSONS ON THE MEANING OF DISCIPLESHIP (9:33–10:31)

This section has two geographical settings. First, Jesus taught His disciples in a house in Capernaum, Galilee (9:33–50). Second, Jesus resumed a public as well as a private teaching ministry in Judea and Perea (10:1–31).

a. *The essence of true greatness* (9:33–37) (Matt. 18:1–5; Luke 9:46–48)

9:33–34. Jesus and His disciples **came to Capernaum** for the last time after an absence of several months (cf. 8:13, 22, 27). **When** they were **in the house** (cf. 2:1–2; 3:20; 7:17) Jesus candidly **asked them what they were ... arguing about on the road** (*en tē hodō*, “on the way”; cf. comments on 1:2). Once again His pointed question opened the way for additional teaching (cf. 8:27, 29).

The disciples were ashamed to admit **they had argued about who was the greatest** among them. Matters of rank were important to the Jews (cf. Luke 14:7–11) so it was natural for the disciples to be concerned about their status in the coming messianic kingdom. Perhaps the privileges given to Peter, James, and John (cf. Mark 5:37; 9:2) fueled the argument. Whatever its cause, it showed that the Twelve did not understand or accept what Jesus’ Passion prediction (cf. v. 31) meant for them.

9:35. After **sitting down**, the recognized position of a Jewish teacher (cf. Matt. 5:1; 13:1), **Jesus** summoned **the Twelve**. He taught them the essence of true greatness: **If anyone wants** (cf. Mark 8:34) **to be first**, to have the highest position among the “great” in God’s kingdom, **he**

must be the very last (lit., “he shall be last of all,” by deliberate, voluntary choice) **and the servant of all**. Here “servant” (*diakonos*) depicts one who attends to the needs of others freely, not one in a servile position (as a *doulos*, a slave). Jesus did not condemn the desire to improve one’s position in life but He did teach that greatness in His kingdom was not determined by status but by service (cf. 10:43–45).

9:36–37. To illustrate servanthood Jesus set **a little child** from the home (cf. v. 33, perhaps Peter’s child) **among** the disciples. To be a “servant of all” included giving attention to a child, the least (cf. “the very last,” v. 35) significant person in Jewish as well as Greco-Roman society which idealized the mature adult.

Jesus took the child **in His arms** (cf. 10:13–16). To welcome, that is, to serve or show kindness to (cf. 6:11; Luke 9:53) **one of these little children**, who represented the lowliest disciple (cf. Mark 9:42), **in Jesus’ name** (on His behalf) is equivalent to welcoming Jesus Himself (cf. Matt. 25:40 and comments on Mark 6:7). But to do this was not to **welcome** Jesus *only* but also the heavenly Father **who sent** Him to earth (cf. John 3:17; 8:42). This gives dignity to the task of serving others.

b. The rebuke of a sectarian attitude (9:38–42) (Luke 9:49–50)

9:38. Jesus’ words (v. 37) prompted **John** (cf. 3:17; 5:37; 9:2), addressing Him as **Teacher** (cf. 4:38; 9:5), to report an attempt by the disciples **to stop** an anonymous exorcist from **driving out demons in Jesus’ name** (cf. comments on 1:23–28; 5:6–7). They did this **because he was not one of them**; he was a disciple but not one of the Twelve commissioned by Jesus to do this work (cf. 6:7, 12–13). It was not the man’s misuse of Jesus’ name (as in Acts 19:13–16) that troubled them but rather his *unauthorized* use of the name. Furthermore, he was successful (in contrast with the nine; Mark 9:14–18). This incident revealed the Twelve’s narrow exclusivism.

9:39–40. **Jesus** told them to **stop** hindering this exorcist because **no one performs a miracle** (*dynamis*, a mighty “deed”) **in His name** and then immediately turns around and publicly speaks evil of Him.

Jesus’ acceptance of this man was reinforced by the maxim, **Whoever is not against us is for us** (cf. the reverse of this in Matt. 12:30). “Against us” and “for us” leave no room for neutrality. If one is working for Jesus, in His name (cf. Mark 9:38), he cannot work against Him at the same time.

Though this man did not follow Jesus in exactly the same way as the Twelve, he nevertheless followed Him truly and stood against Satan.

9:41. With a solemn affirmation (**I tell you the truth**; cf. 3:28) Jesus broadened His words (in 9:39–40) to include activity besides exorcism. Even one who performs the smallest act of hospitality in Jesus’ name (cf. v. 37), such as giving **a cup of water** to someone **because he belongs to Christ will certainly not** (*ou mē*, emphatic negation) **lose his reward**. He will ultimately be recompensed by participation in God’s kingdom (cf. v. 47; 10:29–30; Matt. 25:34–40), not on the basis of merit (a good deed) but because of God’s gracious promise to people of faith (cf. Luke 12:31–32). Jesus’ use of the title “Christ” instead of “Son of Man” is rare in the Synoptic Gospels.

9:42. This verse concludes the thought in verses 35–41 and sets the stage for verses 43–50. Jesus sternly warned **anyone** who would deliberately turn somebody away from believing in Him. The punishment for such an offense was so severe that **it would be better for him to be drowned in the sea** before he could cause **one of these little ones who believe in Jesus** (i.e., lowly disciples, including children, who are immature in faith; cf. vv. 37, 41) **to sin**.

The verb “cause to sin” (*skandalisē*; cf. v. 43) must be understood from a future judgment viewpoint (cf. vv. 43–48). It refers to enticing or provoking a disciple to turn away from Jesus, resulting in serious spiritual damage. The undeveloped faith of the exorcist (v. 38) or anyone else who acts in Jesus’ name (v. 41) should be encouraged rather than ruined by harsh criticism or sectarian bias.

The **large millstone** (*mylos onikos*, lit., “donkey millstone”) was a heavy, flat stone turned by a donkey when it was grinding grain; this differed from the small hand mill (*mylos*) used by women (Matt. 24:41). Punishment by drowning someone this way was no doubt familiar to Jesus’ disciples (cf. Josephus *The Antiquities of the Jews* 14. 15. 10).

c. *The snare of sin and the radical demands of discipleship (9:43–50) (Matt. 18:7–9).*

9:43–48. These strong words warn disciples about the danger of letting *themselves* be led astray. Jesus reinforced the demands of discipleship (cf. 8:34–38; 10:24–31) in hyperboles.

If (*ean*, “whenever,” indicating a real possibility) the activity of **your hand**, an instrument of inward inclinations (cf. 7:20–23), **causes you to sin** (*skandalisē*, “should entice you to fall away”; cf. 9:42) then **cut it off**. Jesus meant a disciple should take prompt, decisive action against whatever would draw him away from his allegiance to Him. The same is true of the **foot** and the **eye**, for temptations come through various means. Whatever *tempts* a disciple to cling to this world’s life must be removed much as a surgeon amputates a gangrenous limb.

It is better to be a disciple and **to enter** eternal **life** (cf. 10:17, 30) in God’s future **kingdom** (9:47), and to do so **maimed**, minus earthly possessions that have been renounced, **than to** be an unbeliever. An unbeliever retains his allegiance to this world, refuses eternal **life** with God on His terms, **and** so will be **thrown into hell** (*geennan*; vv. 45, 47).

The Greek word *geenna* (“Gehenna,” translated “hell”) is transliterated from two Hebrew words meaning “Valley of Hinnom,” a place south of Jerusalem where children were once sacrificed to the pagan god Molech (2 Chron. 28:3; 33:6; Jer. 7:31; 19:5–6; 32:35). Later, during the reforms of Josiah (2 Kings 23:10) the site became Jerusalem’s refuse dump where fires burned continually to consume regular deposits of worm-infested garbage. In Jewish thought the imagery of fire and worms vividly portrayed the place of future eternal punishment for the wicked (cf. the apocryphal Judith 16:17 and Ecclesiasticus 7:17). Jesus used the word *geenna* in 11 of its 12 New Testament occurrences (the one exception is James 3:6).

Where the fire never goes out is probably Mark’s explanation of Gehenna for his Roman readers. The **worm** (internal torment) and **the unquenchable fire** (external torment) (quoted from the LXX of Isa. 66:24) vividly portray the unending, conscious punishment that awaits all who refuse God’s salvation. The essence of hell is unending torment and eternal exclusion from His presence.

9:49. This enigmatic statement, unique to Mark, is difficult to interpret. About 15 possible explanations have been suggested.

An explanatory “for” (*gar*, not translated in the NIV) and the word “fire” link this verse to verses 43–48. **Everyone** may be explained in one of three ways: (1) It could refer to every unbeliever who enters hell. They **will be salted with fire** in the sense that as salt preserves food so they will be preserved throughout an eternity of fiery judgment. (2) “Everyone” could refer to every disciple living in this hostile world. They will be “salted with fire” in the sense that Old Testament sacrifices were seasoned with salt (Lev. 2:13; Ezek. 43:24). Disciples, living sacrifices (cf. Rom. 12:1), will be seasoned with purifying fiery trials (cf. Prov. 27:21; Isa. 48:10; 1 Peter 1:7; 4:12). The trials will purge out what is contrary to God’s will and preserve what is

consistent with it. (3) “Everyone” could refer to every person in general. All will be “salted with fire” in a time and manner appropriate to their relationship with Jesus—for nonbelievers, the preserving fire of final judgment; for disciples, the refining fire of present trials and suffering. This last view seems preferable.

9:50. “Salt” links this verse to verse 49. **Salt is good**, useful. Salt as a condiment and a preservative was common in the ancient world. It was a necessity of life in Palestine, so it had commercial value.

The main source of salt in Palestine was from the area southwest of the Dead (Salt) Sea. The coarse, impure salt from the saline deposits of this area was susceptible to deterioration, leaving savorless saltlike crystals as residue. **If** (*ean*, “whenever”; cf. v. 43) **it loses its saltiness**, its savory quality, it cannot be regained so such salt is worthless.

Have salt in yourselves points to the disciples’ need to “have salt” which is good (not worthless) *within* themselves continually. Here “salt” depicts what distinguishes a disciple from a non-disciple (cf. Matt. 5:13; Luke 14:34). A disciple is to maintain his allegiance to Jesus at all costs and to purge out destructive influences (cf. Mark (9:43–48).

The second command, **Be at peace with each other** is based on the first command and rounds out the discussion provoked by the disciples’ strife (vv. 33–34). In essence Jesus said, “Be loyal to Me and then you will be able to maintain peace with one another instead of arguing about status” (cf. Rom. 12:16a; 14:19).

Church, C.L. (1998). *Mark In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), Holman Concise Bible Commentary (pp. 437-438). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.*

The disciple’s discussion of who was the greatest indicates their misunderstanding of the destination of “the way” of the cross they traveled with Jesus. The measure of true greatness is service. In this Jesus set the standard, coming not “to be served, but to serve” (10:45). The child is not a model for discipleship (see 10:15) but an illustration that no insignificant one should be neglected in the disciples’ service.

THE ABSOLUTE VALUE (9:38–10:16)

The Twelve’s narrow view of “authorized” disciples prompted Jesus to affirm that all ministering in His name would be rewarded. Intolerance of the work of fellow believers can prove a stumbling block to nonbelievers looking to see our love and unity (John 13:35; 17:23). That the warnings that follow concern common sins is unlikely. This sin prevents one from entering eternal life and results in one suffering in “Gehenna.” Earlier Mark noted that *all* sin can be forgiven except rejecting God’s saving work in Jesus. Jesus’ warning is to avoid causing anyone else to reject Christ and to reject whatever leads one to reject Christ. Hand, foot, and eye—like possessions, family, and physical life—are not absolute values. God’s future kingdom is the absolute value. To be “salted with fire” is to undergo persecution. The disciples’ “saltiness” is their loyalty to Jesus and the gospel that results in their effective witness.

Leavell, L.P. (1972). *Mark. In H. F. Paschall & H. H. Hobbs (Eds.), The Teacher’s Bible Commentary (pp. 625-626). Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers.*

During a brief visit back to Galilee, Jesus insisted on his role as suffering Servant. They still had not accepted the messianic role of Jesus, holding to their own image and ideas.

The paradox of Christian greatness is beautifully described in 9:33–50. These teachings were prompted by the fact that the twelve were still jockeying for position. Jesus did not denounce greatness, he merely taught that it came in a different way than men suppose. Greatness comes through service. It involves the same spirit that leads to kindness toward a child. Such kindness is rendered without thought of reward. A child can scarcely repay. We extend kindness and service to all, even those who cannot give in return. In 9:40 Jesus seems to be dealing with prejudice. Like the twelve, we must be slow to criticize those who use different methods from our own.

Responsibility and reward are outlined in 9:41–48. How important it is for the trumpet to sound a certain note. To do otherwise can cause a babe in Christ to stumble, and this has serious consequences. Chapter 9, verse 48 points up the horror of hell, where there is no death nor any cessation from punishment.

The concluding verses of chapter 9 suggest our influence may well be determined by our harmony with one another. This may refer back to the person described in verse 38.

Daniel Akin: <https://www.danielakin.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Mark-9.-30-50-The-Road-To-True-Greatness-Manuscript-ds>

- 1) “The gospel frees us from our addiction to ourselves!” That is a powerful statement.
- 2) Before Christ redeems us and sets us free, we are like alcoholics intoxicated with ourselves:
We are not as interested in serving as being served.
We are not as interested in giving as receiving.
We are not as interested in pursuing God’s way as we are in getting our way.
We are not interested in being the least but being the greatest.

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). Mark 9:30-50. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.