

Patterns of Greatness

Scripture Reference:

Psalm 71:19-21 (NIV): *Your righteousness, God, reaches to the heavens, you who have done great things. Who is like you, God? Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up. You will increase my honor and comfort me once more.*

Main Idea: Walking in humility will inevitably lead to greatness. God told Abraham that He would make Abraham's name great. Jesus told his disciples that whoever believes in Him would do the same works He had been doing and even greater works than those! By simply walking out our faith in Christ, we will see greatness.

3 Patterns of greatness:

- 1. Pattern of Urgency**— Over sixty percent of the use of the word immediately is found in the Gospels. This is a key word that defined the ministry of Jesus. He lived with a sense of urgency not because His time is limited, but because ours is.

Matthew 14:22 (NIV): *Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.*

Question: Jesus lived with urgency but was never in a hurry or rushing around. What is the difference between urgency and hurry? Why do you think this is an important distinction for you to recognize in your own life?

- 2. Pattern of Dismissal**— Jesus dismissed the crowd and the disciples to go ahead of Him. One lesson Jesus is teaching us through this is that what is urgent to me is not always urgent to other people. We must learn when to dismiss others so we can take care of ourselves.

Matthew 14:23-24 (NIV): *After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.*

Question: During your walk with the Lord have you ever associated your distance from people with being distant from God? How do we make sure that our moments on the mountain do not turn into prolonged seasons of isolation and loneliness?

- 3. Pattern of Withdrawal:** Withdrawal is the ability to focus on the practices that match your

destiny. Jesus withdrew from the crowd to avoid being forced to become an earthly king because that did not line up with His purpose. Jesus knew who He was so that helped make clear who He was not.

John 6:15 (NIV): *Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.*

Closing Thoughts: These patterns of greatness require humility to walk them out. Jesus was going to indeed be made king. His crown, however, was going to be made of thorns and not of beautiful jewels that the crowd was going to make for Him. He was going to be made King of all kings, but it was at the declaration of His Father in heaven not by the declaration of man. If we want to see greatness, we must remember that the ultimate cost will be self-sacrifice, and the ultimate reward is being elevated by God.

Call to Action: One of the most powerful words in our study is the word “again”. Jesus withdrew AGAIN to pray. This was clearly a common practice for Jesus. Now that our church wide fast is over be sure to set up for yourself a regular time and place to withdrawal so that the mountain (prayer) becomes routine in your life instead of a good idea you hope to get around to.