

This sermon was preached by Evangelist Reggie Thomas on November 8, 2009 at the Villa Heights Christian Church in Joplin, Missouri.

WORSHIP

Last Lord's Day our minister began a new sermon series called Worship. He spoke concerning Worship= ON YOUR FACE—REVERENCE AND AWE

TODAY he has asked me to continue the series by preaching on WORSHIP---ONE YOU'RE KNEES---SERVICE AND HUMILITY

Thinking about worship I remembered the woman at the well in John 4. She was a sinner and like most sinners she tried to change the subject when Jesus asked her about the man she was living with who was not her husband. She said *John 4.20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem:* Jesus replied, *"You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."* Surely every one of us desire to be true worshipers.

Recently in preparing a lesson I noticed Romans 12:1 In my lifetime I have read this verse hundreds or maybe thousands of time. I even have it memorized. But I had never seen this truth until recently: *"Therefore I urge you brothers in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God---this is your spiritual act of worship."* This says to me that if I go visiting in Jesus name---sick---jail---on the street---in a home---I am worshipping. If I offer my voice and go to choir practice----I am worshipping. If I help serve a dinner to a family that is bereaved---I am worshipping. **WORSHIPPING INVOLVES SERVICE AND HUMILITY.**

Jesus said nothing more revolutionary than this, *Matt 20:26-28 "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. And whoever wants to be first must be your slave---just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

Young man or woman, if it is a burning desire within you to some day be great, then I ask you to take a long look at the world's really great and see what that word involves. I guess every normal person desires within limitations to amount to something. We all seek greatness in varying scales. None of us wants to be a nobody. We hope for our sons and daughters to succeed. All the while Satan is

trying to persuade us that greatness can be gained by earning money, having a big bank account, owning property.

But I would ask you to view greatness through the eyes of the perfect man, Jesus Christ. Jesus taught that to be really great

I YOU MUST BE HUMBLE!

Isn't that a radical contradiction of the idea of greatness that has permeated our day. Look at the proud Pharisee in Jesus' story-----who would say he was great? We all would rather be like the humble sinner who hid in the corner and cried out to God0---be merciful to me a sinner. Look at the priest and Levite who traveled the Jericho road. They were great in the world's eyes-----but who wants to be like them?-----we would all love to be like the humble Good Samaritan who stopped and serviced and humbly helped the wounded man.

Jesus said, "blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth" but from the days of Nebuchadnezzar men have been crying, is not this great Babylon, great Alexandria, great Hitler, Great Queen Elizabeth? Day by day we know the master was right about greatness. It's not something you flaunt before the world for a short while, it's not the height of popularity---- he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

How many of us want to be like a famous movie star, or like Michael Jackson, or Brittany Spears? I don't see any hands raised-----but suppose I would ask How many of your girls would like to be like Mother Teresa, or how many of you boys would like to be like that airplane pilot, Sully Sullenberger, who landed the airplane in the Hudson river saving everyone on board? Oh hands would go up all over the place. Yes, truly the great ones are those who are humble servants.

Illustration Dentist----Angie, Stephanie, and Linda Garman

II Jesus also taught that to be great one must be USEFUL.

He admired energy, enthusiasm, competence and power. He had no use for negative ness, listlessness, and indifference. In Jesus parables he chose efficient, energetic businessmen, farmers, housewives and stewards for examples. He was forever acclaiming those who made themselves useful.

A few years back a poll was taken in France to determine who was popularly regarded as the greatest Frenchman that ever lived. Who do you think it was? No, not Napoleon who at his prime was the axiom of greatness by shallow standards. It was a common ordinary fellow name Louis Pasteur.

If one were to choose among the greatest benefactors of humanity, Louis Pasteur would certainly rank at the top. He solved the mysteries of rabies, anthrax, chicken cholera, and silkworm diseases, and contributed to the development of the first vaccines. He debunked the widely accepted myth of [spontaneous generation](#), thereby setting the stage for modern biology and biochemistry. Pasteur's work gave birth to many branches of science, and he was single-handedly responsible for some of the most important theoretical concepts and practical applications of modern science. He was a man who killed himself in the service of mankind. Jesus you were right, we must agree “Whosoever loseth His life for my sake , shall find it.”

Why is the name of Jesus above every name? August Caesar ruled the world when Jesus came. King Herod conivingly tried to destroy the Saviour before Hiss mission got started. When Jesus went to the cross, Tiberius was emperor. These fellows would have rated as the “top great” in the “who’s Who” of the world. How could anybody believe that this stranger of Galilee, this Jesus born in another man’s barn, riding on another man’s animal, dying in another man’s place and buried in another man’s tomb, would be the most revered personality of all the ages? Because in Jesus was the perfect picture of greatness---He gave His life so that others might live---He’s the greatest hero of all time.

If the President of the United States or the Queen of England walked into this room we would all want to shake hands. But if Jesus should walk into this room we would all bow on our knees in reverent awe and worship.

Illustration Clyde Brooker

Yes, to be really great we must be HUMBLE AND USEFUL, but hear me now

III To be really great we must be like CHRIST.

How do you measure up? When you come to the end of the way, will tears of joy flow as friends say, “We’ll miss him here for he was always doing good. His life was to serve others” Christ-likeness is attained by being in touch with the throne of God, through prayer. By being in the Lord’s house on the first day of every week. Sometimes folk ask me, “Brother Reggie don’t you think a man can be a Christian without ever going near a church?”

If that be true, then the Lord Jesus need not have died on a cruel cross to establish the church. The Bible says, “Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.” My friend, if a lot of God-fearing, Christ-honoring folks before you hadn’t loved the Church, you never would have heard the name Christian. Through seas of mud and blood Christian martyrs came forward carrying the Christian banner. Have we the smallness to lilk at the church for which Jesus died and say, “What if I do turn my back upon it, what if I do vote Sunday after Sunday to close its doors, what if I do turn down the request of my Lord, I’m a Christian anyhow!

Oh do you not see the tragic emptiness of such a position? God grant that you shall be a true worshipper in the Kingdom of God when the final summons comes. "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" What have you done for the saving of others. What kind of material have you prepared in Heaven judged by your love and service and faith?

The civil war had only been over a few years. A Negro man, strong and healthy but getting gray from years, was on trial for murder. He had killed another Negro and had been lying in jail awaiting trial. Testimony against him was given by other Negroes who witnessed the killing. When the case was called for trial by the judge, an old man arose and in a voice deep and low but full of marked gentleness said, "will your honor please mark me for the defense?"

It was General Robert Toombs. His face was wrinkled with age, but it was large and strong and the lines of intellect made deeper wrinkles than those of age. His eyes still flashed as when he stood in the Senate chamber at Washington.

The witnesses all seem unfriendly toward the prisoner, In his own statement, he admitted the killing but said was in self defense. General Toombs analyzed the testimony of the witnesses and then spoke, "Your honor, and gentlemen of the jury, a few years ago my only brother fell wounded on the battlefield of Gettysburg. He lay there bleeding to death with no friendly hand to help him. No friend could go near him; no surgeon dared to approach him. My brother had a body servant, a Negro who waited on him in camp. The Negro saw his master's danger and straight into that sheet of battle and flame and death he went. A piece of shell tore the flesh from his breast, but on he went and gathering my brother in his arms, the blood of the man mingling with the blood of the master, he bore him to safety and to life." Then turning to the prisoner he said, "Jim, open your collar." The prisoner turned and opened his shirt front. On the chest, the jury saw the long jagged scars where the shell had torn its way. "Jim's skin may be black, "the General continued, "he may be a Negro, but man that would do what he did has soul too white to have ever killed a man except in defense of his own Life." The jury agreed with him and Jim was set free.

What pathos must have been in the voice of that old warrior as he pleaded the cause of the Negro. Straight into the sheet of battle and fame and death he went. Was this not what the Lord Jesus did for the sinner when there was no eye to pity? He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. Therefore I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to God---this is your spiritual act of worship.