

Jesus' Invitation For All To Be Great In His Kingdom (Part 2)

I. GOD INVITES EVERYONE TO BE GREAT IN HIS KINGDOM

¹⁹ ***Whoever breaks (consistently) one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches (encourages) them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 5:19)***

- A. God invites “whosoever” or literally everyone to be great in His Kingdom. This is a primary teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (constitution of the Kingdom; Mt. 5-7). We cannot repent of the desire for greatness because God designed our spirit with this longing. We must repent for seeking greatness in a wrong way. We must also repent for neglecting to seek greatness.
- B. Jesus taught on God’s invitation for our greatness more than any other man in Scripture. Jesus revealed a new paradigm for greatness. We are to focus on being great in His sight rather than in the sight of men. We understand that this greatness will be fully manifest in the age-to-come not in this age. Our greatness will be based on our heart responses not on natural gifting and resources and thus, it is available to everyone (whoever Mt. 5:19; 20:26-27; 23:12).
- C. It is necessary to understand Jesus’ earthly reign over all the nations. The Millennium speaks of a literal 1000-year period in which Jesus rules all the nations on earth as He rules every sphere of life (political, social, agricultural, economic, spiritual, etc.) This period of global blessing is initiated by Jesus’ coming to establish a 1000-year period of righteousness and blessing.

⁴ ***I saw thrones, and they (saints of Rev. 19:14) sat on them, and judgment was committed to them... They lived and reigned with Christ for 1,000 years. (Rev. 20:4-5)***

II. CENTERPIECE OF GOD’S PURPOSE: BRING HEAVEN AND EARTH TOGETHER

⁹ ***Having made known to us the mystery (hidden plan) of His will... which He purposed in Himself, 10 that in the... fullness of the times He might gather together in one ALL things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him. (Eph. 1:9-10)***

- A. The centerpiece of God’s eternal purpose is for Jesus to come back to fully establish His Kingdom rule over all the earth as He joins the heavenly and earthly realms together. God’s purpose has always been for God and His people to live together in this way. This is the interpretive key to understanding the End-Times.
- B. **Heaven** speaks of the supernatural spirit realm where God’s power and presence are openly manifest. It includes the realm of angels and is the place believers go for the last 2,000 year as a “temporary holding pattern” for disembodied spirits. The saints do not have a resurrected body in heaven because they do not need one to relate to the environment of heaven. **Earth**: speaks of the material physical realm as the place where human process and human emotions and physical sensation reach their fullest expression. The earthly realm **requires a resurrected body** to fully relate to it.

III. HOW TO PURSUE GREATNESS: FAITHFULNESS IN THE LEAST COMMANDMENTS

¹⁷ ***Do not think that I came to destroy (nullify or minimize) the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill (bring their full intentions to full expression). 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away (renovated by fire at the end of the Millennium), one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the Law (Word) till all is fulfilled (embraced and expressed in God's people). 19 Whoever breaks (consistently) one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches (encourages) them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 5:17-19)***

A. Jesus made a significant prophetic declaration in Mt. 5:17-20. He revealed to Israel that He did not come to destroy (nullify, minimize) God's moral commandments as seen in the OT law and prophets. The OT law of Moses is sometimes categorized in three primary areas: moral laws (ethical), ceremonial laws (ritual) and civil laws (judicial).

B. Jesus came so that the fullness of what God originally intended in each of His commandments would eventually be fully expressed in the lives of His people. Israel did not understand God's full intention for each command. God wanted His commands to be obeyed in their inner life as well as in their relationships and outer circumstances (comprehensively and continually). Israel was only concerned with the most general and superficial meaning of God's commandments. Thus, they greatly reduced them to apply to external issues.

²⁹ ***Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! (Deut. 5:29)***

⁵ ***You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. (Deut. 6:5-6)***

C. The least of God's commandments are in contrast to those perceived as His great ones. In other words, some commandments are seen as great or significant by men because they overtly impact other people (for example, laws that have social consequences i.e., do not murder, steal or commit adultery). The great commands in the eyes of people are the ones that have the greatest consequence in society. These commands receive the greatest emphasis among God's people.

D. The least commandments emphasize the areas of our life that are "esteemed as least" in importance to men. God intended that they dynamically impact even the "least" (private) areas of our life. The ***least commandments*** speaks of those that are "least honored" (least emphasized or obeyed) by God's people because they focus on the hidden and private issues of our heart which includes our thought life, attitudes and words along with how we spend time and money. Jesus was not referring to divine commandments that were least in significance to God (such commandments do not exist).

- E. The common mindset of the Jews in that time was to only honor the well known laws that seemed to have an obvious impact on society. It was common for them to neglect what seemed like the least commands that focused on the smaller private areas of one's life. They saw them as being of secondary importance to God and therefore, optional. They were content in their spiritual lives to only concern themselves with the "big commands" such as not worshipping idols, murdering or committing adultery.
- ⁴ ***But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" (Mt. 4:4)***
- F. Jesus wants His people honor the supremacy of His Word by obeying even the least commands. In the Millennial Kingdom, Jesus will insist that even in the least issues of the heart that His people fully value and embrace what He intended when He originally gave His commandments.
- G. Whoever obeys the least honored commands ***shall be called great in God's Kingdom***. This is a dynamic promise that has staggering implications. Anyone who establishes a vision to obey God in the least honored or focused on areas of their life will be called great in the Kingdom of God.
- H. We must have a vision to have an optimum participation in the Kingdom on earth after the Second Coming. We must live in a way to be found worthy of this by honoring God through honoring the supremacy of His Word. The Lord is deeply committed to His Word and will honor it by only choosing a worldwide Millennial leadership team that diligently honored it in their obedience in this age. Whoever minimizes even the least portion of what God originally intended will be called least in authority when Jesus' Kingdom is established on the earth (Mt. 5:5).
- I. In Mt. 5:18, Jesus assured us that by the time heaven and earth passes away or are renovated at the end of the Millennium (2 Pet. 3:10-13), that every jot and tittle or the smallest details intended in God's commandments will be fully embodied in the lives of His people.
- ¹⁸ ***For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled (expressed in His people). (Mt. 5:18)***
- J. Jesus is committed to fulfilling His Word to such a degree that even the least intention must be honored and expressed in His people now and in the age to come. He will not dismiss even one jot of His Word. He is looking for people who will obey the full intention of His Word and heart. The eyes of the Lord look for those who will take hold of His Word (2 Chr. 16:9).
- K. Whoever teaches others to obey God in the least commandments will be called great. Jesus was not referring mostly to those with a public teaching ministry. Most of the teaching that occurs in the body of Christ is not done on a platform or through a microphone. Most of it is done when only 2 or 3 people are present in homes (family), workplace or friends fellowshiping together.
- L. One important aspect of ministry is to help people be great in God by teaching them to diligently and consistently obey what seems like the least of God's commands.

- M. Jesus gives insight into the “least areas” of the law in the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount. Some of the least areas of the law point to what God intended when He originally gave the commandments. These include the least or small issues of our heart (Mt. 5:21-48) and to our devotional activities before God (Mt. 6:1-20).
- ²¹ *You have heard that it was said..., “You shall not murder”...²² but I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...²⁷ You have heard that it was said..., “You shall not commit adultery.” ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery in his heart...³³ You have heard that it was said..., “You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord”...³⁷ But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.'...³⁸ You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” ³⁹ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. (Mt. 5:21-39)*
- ⁴ *That your charitable deed may be in secret...⁶ pray to your Father who is in the secret place...¹⁷ when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place...¹⁹ Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth...²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...²⁵ do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on...³³ seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness... (Mt. 6:4-6, 17-20, 33)*
- N. God invites us to greatness without regard to our outward achievements or the size of our ministry impact. Rather, it is based on the development of our inner man in love, meekness, and revelation or in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Spirit (Rom. 14:17). The development of the inner man includes prayer and fasting, etc. To some, these are the least important issues in life.
- O. A common stumbling block is in being faithful in the small areas of our lives. Some imagine that they will be faithful when the Lord entrusts them to more.
- ¹⁷ *Well done...you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities. (Lk. 19:17)*
- ²¹ *Well done...you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many. (Mt. 25:21)*
- P. It is necessary to be found faithful in pursuing 100-fold obedience if we are to receive the maximum blessing that God invites each of us to lay hold of. Faithfulness is determined in the simple (or private and seeming least) areas of our life which include making a covenant with our eyes (Ps. 101:3; Job 31:1), bridling our speech (Jas 3:2; Eph. 4:29-5:4), managing our time (Eph. 5:15-16) and money to increase the Kingdom (beyond personal comfort and honor) (1 Tim. 6:8; Mt. 6:19-21) as we engage in communing prayer with the Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14).
- Q. Our words and decision are remembered in the age-to-come and have long term consequences. Our words will give final proof as they verify and vindicate our life choices on the judgment day.
- ³⁶ *I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. ³⁷ For by your words you will be justified (vindicated), and by your words you will be condemned." (Mt. 12:36-37)*

IV. THE DIFFERENCE IN THE DEGREES OF GLORY AND GREATNESS IN THE KINGDOM

- A. There will be a vast range of degrees of glory and greatness in God's Kingdom including those who are called the least and the greatest. Our rewards in eternity greatly differ from one another. (The largest star known is the Pistol Star, which has a mass about 100-150 times that of the Sun, and is about 10 million times brighter).
- ⁴¹ *There is one glory of the sun...and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:41-42)*
- B. The measure of God's glory will be manifest in our resurrected body (1 Cor. 15:41-42; Mt. 13:41-43, Dan. 12:2-3).
- C. Our work assignment and authority (over nations, tribes and cities, etc.) will bring us in close proximity to Jesus (Mt. 19:28, 30; 20:16, 27; 25:23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; Dan. 7:22, 25-27). This will influence the measure of impartation of power and wisdom that we operate in. Some will be exalted with authority and honor (Mt. 5:19; 18:4; 20:25-26; 23:11-12; Mk. 10:42-43; Lk. 6:23, 35; 9:48; Lk. 14:11; 18:14; 22:26).
- D. We will receive varying praise from God (Jn. 12:26; 1 Pet. 1:7; Mt. 25:21, 1 Cor. 4:5).
- E. We will receive crowns (1 Cor. 9:25, Rev. 2:10; 3:11; Jas 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2 Tim. 4:8).
- F. Our communion with Jesus will vary according to the degree that we have the spiritual capacity to receive from Him as the Morningstar (Rev. 2:28; 22:16; Gen. 15:1).
- G. Our garments have varying dimensions of God's glory (Rev. 3:4-5, 18; 16:15; 19:7-8).
- H. Riches, treasures and rewards in heaven will include the location and design of our heavenly dwelling place (Mt. 5:12; 6:4, 6, 18, 20; 10:41-42; 16:27; 19:21; Mk. 9:41; 10:21; Lk. 6:23, 35; 12:21, 33; 16:11; 18:22; Rev. 2:9; 3:18; 22:12).
- I. Our history with people will be cherished in eternity (1 Thes. 2:19; Phil. 2:16; Lk. 16:9).

V. THIS LIFE IS AN INTERNSHIP THAT GIVES US OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE MEEKNESS

Life in this age can be likened to a 70 year internship (Ps. 90:10) which prepares us for our life on earth in the age to come. Our next stage of life in the Millennium is when our primary ministry calling begins. This primary ministry assignment will last for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4-6). In our 70 year internship, we have two issues that we are to determine in the grace of God. First, to decide if we want to ***be in God's family*** as voluntarily lovers. Second, to decide if we want to ***function in Jesus' government*** (initially for 1,000 years in the Millennium, then for all eternity). The measure that we develop in love, meekness, and revelation (of His Word) determines our place, function and glory in His eternal government

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VI. DIFFICULT: FOR THOSE GREAT NOW TO BE GREAT IN THE AGE-TO-COME

- A. When referring to the rich young ruler, Jesus revealed that many who are “first” in prominence, gifting, and privilege, along with putting themselves first in their lives in this age will be “last” in the Millennium. He also revealed that some of those who are last in prominence, skill and privilege and who put themselves last, will be first in prominence and glory in the Millennium.

²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." ²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. ²³ Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich (great in money or prominence) man to enter the (fullness of) Kingdom of heaven...²⁷ Peter said, "We have left all and followed You. What shall we have?" ²⁸ Jesus said, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration (Millennium), when the Son of Man sits on the Throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold...³⁰ But many (majority) who are first (prominence, gifting, and privilege, etc.) will be last, and the last first. (Mt. 19:21-30)

- B. There is an inherent dilemma in “being first” in privilege and prominence in this age because it creates social and time pressures that may distract us from developing meekness. This ultimately can lead the great (rich in money, prominence, gifting) to be “last” in honor in the age-to-come.
- C. Some believers who are last in privilege now, will also be last in the Kingdom in the age-to-come because they lack faithfulness in their obedience to God. Also, some who are first in this age in prominence will also be first in the age-to-come if they live faithfully in obedience.

VII. THE SMALL NUMBER OF FAITHFUL BELIEVERS

Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life...there are few who find it. (Mt. 7:14)

- A. One of the premises of Scripture is that only a small percent of the redeemed are considered faithful in bearing fruit to maturity (Lk. 8:14-15) so as to work closely with the Lord as He establishes His government across the earth in the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 2:26-27; 3: 21).
- B. Many people are called (invited to inherit great things) yet only a few are chosen or esteemed by God as faithful or worthy to be commissioned to rule with Jesus when He returns. Jesus reveals that only a few will have a sufficient maturity in faithfulness to rule in the Millennium. Let the words “many” and “few” resound in your being knowing how important they are. Only a few will have a sufficient maturity in meekness to share in the Millennial government. God must evaluate their life as proven in faithfulness (follow through), meekness, and obedience

¹⁴ For many are called (invited), but few are chosen (commissioned to reign) (Mt. 22:14).

¹⁶ For many are called, but few chosen. (Mt. 20:16)

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