

BEING TRULY GREAT

BY ANTONIO BALDOVINOS

“He...made us kings and priests to our God...we shall reign on the earth.” – Rev. 5:10

Have you ever wanted to be great? I have.

We were destined for greatness. There is an innate longing to be noble and be successful. God made us this way. He also redeemed us to be kings and priests before our God. This is our original design.

KING OF THE HILL

I grew up in Minnesota, where it was cold and had lots of snow. Growing up I played a lot of king of the hill. I loved it; I loved the thrill of pushing people out of the way and eventually being king. And I loved defending my position of being king. I would do anything to have the bragging rights of being king of the hill.

Growing up I thought the game of life was set up to push people out of the way to be king in whatever I did, whether that was sports and even in ministry. In many ways we pursue greatness in the eyes of others. Whether we show it or now, we do everything possible to get recognized and not get passed by or overlooked. Let me show you some examples we measure success:

- Who are we connected to? We measure success by who we rub shoulders with. Our networks and status establish us as important in people's eyes.
- Garnering accomplishments. Like athletes have won trophies, we measure success by what trophies we have garnered and our identity is built on those accomplishments.

GREATNESS ACORRDING TO GOD

As we study the Bible we know that we are meant for greatness but I do see that all through scripture greatness is countercultural. True to God's character, He has a better way. God doesn't want us to strive for greatness in people's eyes. He doesn't want us to push people down the hill to get some sort of special place or get recognized. He also doesn't want us to have our identity built on status, accomplishments or who we are connected to.

OUR POSITION

Our current position is important to understand. *We can stop striving to earn our place on this earth.* The bible says that we are “seated in heavenly places with Christ.” This position comes because we are His Son. **I don't think we have any real idea who we really are.**

God satisfies our longing to be great by granting us as His bride, a position of authority surpassing even the highest-ranking angels. Nothing can even compare to the greatness of the Bride of Christ. The Father has planned a dynamic inheritance for Jesus, to give Him an eternal companion, the Bride of Christ. That's who we are.

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We need the eyes of our understanding to be opened so that we can know the riches of the glory of being God's inheritance. These two positions are the greatest potions we could ever be granted. We are His Sons and His Bride. There is nothing greater!

We need to realize that our greatness is not based on what we look like physically, how big our ministry or business is, or how much money we have. We can have back the amount of energy we expend trying to establish our own sense of success and importance. The gift of greatness has already been given to us by the revelation of being His Son and His Bride.

SELF PROMOTION

“But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” – Matthew 19:30

The call to greatness is issued to every human being. We should not be ashamed of it. Self-promotion however, is so much a part of the human experience. Jesus' leadership structure is upside down compared to what we are taught and see in our culture today. Jesus taught that the first will be last and the last will be first. This simply does not add up in today's cultural thinking.

Several years ago I had a powerful dream that I often use to lead my life when it comes to this issue of self-promotion. In the dream I entered a boardroom. The executives were sitting at the head table. Around the table the leaders were seated, but there was one empty chair. Behind the executive leaders were empty chairs all the way around the room. Initially, I approached the executive chairs to sit with them. This represented decision-making, leadership, highest position, etc. I really wanted that empty seat.

I heard a voice asking me to take the secondary seat. He asked me to *“sit behind them”*, my heart sunk. Immediately he said, *“if you take this seat, you will be asked to lead and make the decision from the head table. But wait to be invited.”*

Then in the dream, someone else came in and took the chair at the head table. I thought I missed it. I could have taken that seat. The leader of the executives at the table commenced the meeting. He said to the person who took the seat with the invitation, to please *“withdraw yourself from that seat and sit behind us.”* He then looked at me and asked me, *“Antonio, would you join us at the head table, we need you to help us make these decisions.”*

Since I had the dream, I have tried to go into every room, every circumstance by a position of not being first but last, not with false humility but understanding my place. God will raise us up in due time. If we take this position of humility, our emotional striving to be noticed or be seemingly important all goes away. This is a much better way to live.

GREATNESS BY HUMILITY

First we cannot earn His love, His affection or our position as being His. We are already positioned for greatness because we are His.

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Secondly, we serve on this earth by serving others in humility, not expecting anything in return. We serve as Christ serves us. Christ took on the very nature of a servant and we must live the same; dead to self, alive with Christ! When we put others first we become great in the kingdom of heaven and in eyes of the Lord.

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name...” Phil. 2:3-9

“If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.” Mark 9:35

“Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 18:4

Systems of the Kingdom of God are so very different than the way of the world. Let's not conform any longer to the patterns of the world, but be transformed by renewing our mind. We must conform to God's pattern and adhere to what and who He say's we are; to **truly be great**. Let's pursue greatness as heirs of the kingdom, the bride of Christ and the servant of all!