

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us An Expository Study of the Gospel According to Luke Chapter 22- Luke 22:24-34 329- Jesus Teaches about True Greatness- Part 2

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## Luke 22:24-34

24 And there arose also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them was regarded to be greatest.

25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.'

26 "But *it is* not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant.

27 "For who is greater, the one who reclines *at the table* or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines *at the table*? But I am among you as the one who serves.

28 "You are those who have stood by Me in My trials;

29 and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you

30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat;

32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

33 But he said to Him, "Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!"

34 And He said, "I say to you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me."

To the Glory of God

Now this scene of the Last Supper of Jesus, as described by Dr. Luke as he was moved along by God the Spirit to write this account, is

one of the most amazing scenes in the entire Bible. This is a very busy scene, in fact, it is quite chaotic. There is a lot is going on in this single Service, both real Good and real Bad.

One of the *best* things that God is doing in this Service, on this particular Thursday evening in the last week of Jesus' earthly Ministry, is using Himself to institute one of the glorious "Means of Grace", one of the gifts that God has given to the Church to help encourage and empower believers, the "Ordinance" or the "Sacrament" of the Lord's Supper, that the Christian Church has celebrated now for 2,000 consecutive years. And that is a real Good thing.

Jesus is also confirming that the institution of the glorious New Covenant will be through His Own Blood rather than through the blood of an animal, as was the Original or the First Covenant. And that is a very Good thing.

But one of the worst things that is happening at the very same time in this very same Service is *the* single greatest sin in the history of Mankind is being carried out, the betrayal of Jesus by Judas. And that is a very Bad thing.

And yet, as we have discovered, this betrayal is carried out in such a way that fully and precisely fulfills God's Own pre-ordained Plan of Salvation that God set in motion before the world was. And so in the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, we have perhaps the single greatest example in all of the Bible of the profound Mystery between two seemingly divergent forces:

- ✓ God's Sovereignty
- ✓ Human Responsibility

God is absolutely Sovereign over everything, all the time, so that *nothing* that God has determined to do will fail. And yet, at the same time, Man is full accountable to God for what he does, and can and will be judged by God if he doesn't do the "right" thing.

And *both* of these concepts are absolutely true, and neither one hinders the other one. And so we must resist the temptation to lean too heavily on the Truth of God's Sovereignty at the expense of Human Responsibility, and we must resist the temptation to lean too heavily on the side of Human Responsibility at the expense of God's Sovereignty. There is a tension between these two Truths that tempt us to become

warped or jaded, which will cause us to either try to work to be saved, or to lay back and become unconcerned. And neither one of those are right. And so we must be careful to maintain the tension between both of these Truths so that we hold both to be equally true at all times.

Now we went over this part in great detail last week, and so today I want to look at another part of what Jesus is doing here in this Last Supper, and that is prepare these men to lead the Church after He is gone.

We must remember that as we read this, later this very night Jesus is going to be forcefully taken and He will be beaten within an inch of His Life. He will then be subjected to interrogation by both the Jewish and Roman authorities, and based upon numerous false witnesses, and early the next morning, based upon a perverted understanding of the Old Testament by people who should have known it best, Jesus will be condemned to die.

And, at some point on Friday morning, the only sinless Man Who ever lived will be nailed to a Cross and Crucified between two thieves, while a murderer will be set free in His place. At some point during that afternoon, Jesus will cry out with a loud voice the single most important statement made by any Man,

It is finished!

... and Jesus will have accomplished every aspect of God's Plan to magnify the Glory of His Grace by saving unworthy sinners by what He alone does for them, rather than what they do for themselves.

At dawn of the next Sunday morning Life from God will enter back into Jesus' dead Body and He will rise from the dead in the very *same* body that He died in, with *all* the wounds and *all* the lash marks and *all* the piercings made by evil men.

This same Jesus will appear and disappear to these very men, and over the next 40 days the risen Christ will teach these men things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

And then Jesus will physically and literally ascend up into the sky and go to be with His Father, where He will take His place at the Right Hand of the Majesty on High to make intercession for those who belong to God 24 hours every day and 7 days every week.

And so here in this Last Supper Jesus has a little over a month left to give to these men what they will need to do five things:

1. Receive the final, full, and completed Revelation of God (The New Testament) and formulate that Revelation, articulate it, and write it down, thus *establishing* the Church on the earth.
2. Confirm this radical Revelation by demonstrating breathtaking signs and wonders and miracles and various gifts of the Holy Spirit.
3. Correctly interpret the mysteries of the Old Covenant.
4. Lead the Church during its formative years, and defend the Gospel against at last three major attacks by false teaching.
5. Out of obedience, they will begin to take this glorious Gospel to the peoples of the world.

And, as I have told you before, if *anybody* should have failed in their mission, it was these men. If *anybody* who has ever named the Name of Jesus should have literally collapsed under the weight of what they were called to do, it was these men. If *anybody* could have possibly had an excuse as to why they could not fulfill their Calling, it was these men.

And yet they did *not* fail. They did *not* collapse. These men fulfilled their Calling perhaps better than anyone since. And the fact that we are all a part of the very same Church that these men established 2,000 years ago is testimony to the faithfulness of their ministry and godly leadership. And it all begins right here in this section of Luke's inspired Record of Salvation at this Last Supper.

So the success of the Gospel rests with these men. And as we have discovered, *none* of them were trained in priestly ways. *None* of them came from a line of spiritual leaders; *none* of them had any connection with Jerusalem or with the Temple. *None* were wealthy, and *none* of them were highly educated. Four of them were fishermen, one was a disgraced tax collector, one was a terrorist, and one was the "Son of Perdition" who would betray the Lord of Glory for thirty pieces of silver.

And Jesus knows that every one of them were filled with pride and arrogance and self-righteousness and human ambition, as all humans are. And so, Jesus conducts one of the most amazing classes on

true, godly "Spiritual Leadership" that anyone has ever conducted. And it will be a Class that will go all through this night and into the next day, as every single one of these men, the closet men that Jesus has had on this earth, will all forsake Him out of fear for what it might cost them to be numbered as His friends. And it will be a Class that will impact their lives like nothing else and something they will never forget.

Now I will not hesitate to say to you that if these men had not been confronted right here, in this sacred setting as Jesus Himself is initiating the Lord's Supper that every generation of believers have maintained now for 20 centuries, with this serious wickedness. the Church of Jesus would have been over before it even started.

What Jesus is exposing in these men, right here at the Table of the Lord, is absolutely *critical* to the success of Biblical Christianity. And so without this lesson being learned, there will be no Church, and Christ will have failed in His Mission and we all would be yet in our sins.

There is simply no way to overstate the importance of what Jesus is teaching these men here. In fact, I will go so far as to tell you that the reason why we are witnessing scandal after scandal in the modern Church, the reason why we are looking at a literal epidemic of Church Leaders having to resign and step down, is because the Lesson that Jesus is teaching these handpicked souls has been almost entirely lost to our current generation.

So let's find out what Jesus is doing here by looking again at **Luke 22:21-23**

**21 "But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table.**

**22 "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"**

**23 And they began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who was going to do this thing.**

Now as we found out last week, the *initial* reaction to what Jesus says here is that these men were deeply and profoundly disturbed, and the Apostle Levi gave us further insight into just how much they were disturbed at Jesus' statement when he wrote this in **Matthew 26:22:**

**Being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to Him, "Surely not I, Lord?"**

Now Jesus *could* have solved this problem right off jump street if He had just identified that it was Judas who was going to betray Him. And that would have relieved the rest of all this consternation. And yet, He didn't do that.

And if you have learned anything about Jesus over the last 8-1/2 years of going through this "journey" through Luke you have found out that Jesus doesn't simply forget. He doesn't just say something or *not* say something to be flippant or cute. He is *always* teaching, *always* showing; He *always* has some great Lesson for us to learn.

So His silence here as to who it was that was going to betray Him was conducted on purpose, and we begin to see the reason when we read the next verse in Luke. In **Luke 22:24**, we see how quickly their normal and natural propensity to manifest their fallen nature of pride and arrogance and self-righteousness overruled their disturbance as Dr. Luke said this:

**And there arose also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them was regarded to be greatest.**

So, in just a few moments, these men went from abject terror in thinking that maybe they were the ones who would betray the Lord, to a horrible demonstration of fallen self-righteousness in assuring themselves that they would never do such a terrible thing. And this is the reason *why* Jesus was silent about who His betrayer was.

Now one of the things about the Holy Bible, in general, that we need to know that will help us understand what is going on here is found in **1 Corinthians 10**, so please go there with me, **1 Corinthians 10:1-14**.

**1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea;**

**2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;**

**3 and all ate the same spiritual food;**

**4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.**

**5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.**

**6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.**

**7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "*THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.*"**

**8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day.**

**9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents.**

**10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.**

**11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**

**12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.**

**13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.**

**14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.**

So the *reason* there are accounts of wickedness and false conversion and lying and cheating and other manifestations of wickedness in the pages of the Bible is so that as we read how people despised the Lord and despised His Ways and dishonored His holy Name that we won't do these things ourselves. Look again what he said in verse 6:

**Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.**

And verse 11:

**Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**

And he sums it all up by saying this in verse 12:

**Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.**

So, the *reason* that God preserved the account of Pharaoh's hard heart in **Genesis**, and the genocide of the Canaanites in **Judges**, and the slaughter of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea in **Exodus** was to incite fear and trembling and deep concern in our *own* hearts so that we will not "act" and "do" and "think" and "believe" like them.

As we read that God raised up pagan nations to destroy the Jew that He called and chose to be His peculiar people to the exclusion of all the other peoples of the world, and carry them away captive, we should fear and tremble because God has set His Love upon us to be His New Covenant people. And in the words of warning from the Apostle Paul in **Romans 11:17-21**:

**17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree,**

**18 do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, *remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.***

**19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."**

**20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;**

**21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either.**

So the *reason* we can open our Bibles today and read in **Genesis** how Joseph's brothers betrayed him is so we will *not* betray one another. And the reason we can read in **The Acts 5** how God killed Ananias and Sapphira in a Church Service *under* the Grace of Jesus Christ for lying is so that we will all see the value of being honest with God and not live our lives as deceitful.

Now keep in mind that the people that the Bible shows us were wicked and evil and conniving and scheming and hypocritical and lying were not the *only* ones who were engaging in these sins. But God judged them for two reasons:

- A. Because they were guilty
- B. To warn us



And that means that Joseph's brothers were not the only people who betrayed. And it also means that Ananias and Sapphira were not the only people who were lying in that Church. And they were certainly not the only ones who were tempted to fudge a little about how much they were giving to the Church. But God exposed them "as examples" to the rest of the people in that Church in that day and He exposed them to us in Scripture.

And God judged them because they were guilty. But He did so to encourage everybody else who was lying to repent before God's Hammer fell on them. And He recorded it in Scripture for us so that we will not allow our own hearts to be wicked like that. So in the case of the people who were exposed and judged, God magnified the Glory of His Justice in condemning guilty sinners. But, in the case of those who were guilty of the very same sin and yet were not judged, God magnified the Glory of His Mercy and Grace in allowing them space to repent. And God is still using these people to warn us that it doesn't pay to live our lives in rebellion to God.

And so it is with the disciples here at the Last Supper here in **Luke 22**. The reason why Peter asked John to ask the Lord who the betrayer was was because Peter thought it was him. You see, Peter knew his own heart was dark and that he had pondered several times about either leaving Jesus or turning against Him.

But then we read in verse 24 that all of the disciples quickly forgot that they were very human and began to seek to outdo each other in just who was the most spiritual, who was the most faithful, and who was the greatest among them.

And so what we need to understand is that God exposed the wickedness of Judas to damn him because he was guilty. But the way that Jesus handled this also exposed the inclination of pride and arrogance and self-righteousness and human ambition in the other eleven men, as well, so that they could see it for themselves in a very dramatic way and repent. And Dr. Luke was moved along by God the Holy Spirit to pen this event down so that we would be convicted of the very same wickedness in our day.

As soon as Jesus began to hear them discuss who among them would be the greatest, He launched into one of the most important Teachings for spiritual Leadership that the Church has ever known.

Now remember that as far as they know at this point, Jesus will be betrayed by one of them, and they still don't know who that is. And yet these men have no sympathy at all for Jesus. And so their conversation becomes an explosion of ambition and pride. And you would wonder whether the Passover meal with all of its directed worship toward God and the Lord's table, with all of its directed attention toward Christ as the Sacrifice meant anything at all to them.

Because all they can think about is themselves. And this is really bad. At this point, none of these men are "world changers". Because, based on their words and actions, their devotion to Christ is questionable, at best.

All they care about at this point is the coming Kingdom and their role in it. So it is their own fabricated Eschatology as to what drives their ambition here. These men are expecting an earthly Kingdom in which the Messiah reigns in Israel, in Jerusalem, over the world in which God blesses Israel with all the promises given to Abraham and David, and New Covenant Salvation promised to Ezekiel in Jeremiah. And these men are looking forward to that Kingdom.

And they know that in the Kingdom there will be honor and blessing. And so, what is really going on here is that these men are "jockeying" for domination in the Kingdom that is coming. And we know that is the topic of discussion because of what Jesus said in verses 28-30:

**28 "You are those who have stood by Me in My trials;  
29 and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you  
30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

But they have forgotten that before there can be a Kingdom, there has to be great suffering and dying. Before these men could ever hope to sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel, they have to be purged from their own self-righteousness and their own arrogance and their own self-centered ambition that is the very antithesis of what God will do in His Kingdom.

So how can such a shallow self-centered group with a history of weakness and vacillation and failure, how can they possibly be used to change the world? And so what is our Lord going to say in response to

this demonstration of pride and arrogance and human ambition? His response is amazing. Please read verses 25-27 again with me:

**25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.'**

**26 "But *it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant.***

**27 "For who is greater, the one who reclines *at the table* or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines *at the table*? But I am among you as the one who serves.**

You see, the whole world operates on "Autocratic Power." That's how the world operates. It operates by dominance, and by dictatorship, and authoritarianism, and despotic rulers "lord it over" people by threat and force. Tyranical.

That's the world's way. Out there, you have a pecking order, you have a hierarchy, you have somebody at the top who dominates everybody else. And all of these men understood this. This is how life was in the ancient world. In fact, there were no democracies anywhere in sight at that time in human history.

So this is the world's way. Somebody has to always be the greatest. Somebody is always on top and everybody else suffers. Somebody has the authority, somebody dominates, and the rest are dominated over. And Jesus said that's the Leadership style of the Gentile kings. And then He added:

**... and those who have authority over them are called "Benefactors".**

Now in the original Greek this *should* have said:

And those who have authority over them call themselves "Benefactors"

You see, the word "Benefactor," means "Energizers". These are the ones who think all the influence lies with them. These are the self-described "movers and shakers" of the world, who claw their way to the top at everybody else's expense. They think they're responsible for being the *source* of everything that happens. They think it all flows out

from them. So they're the Energizers. They have all the authority, meaning *total* and *absolute* authority.

So out in the world, you have dictators and kings and rulers and Caesars and monarchs and Pharaohs and all the rest. And they dominate by power and force and threat and rule by fear and manipulation. And they call themselves, "the Influencers", "the Energizers", and "the Benefactors", that is they think they're the *source* of all the "Good" that comes to everybody else. And Jesus said that this is how the world operates with this kind of hierarchical structure.

But in the Church, among the believers, among the saved, those who will be great must follow Christ's Example and become humble. And those who seek a place of authority in the Kingdom must be those who serve here in this life.

Jesus puts forth a very radical Teaching here that says that *in here*, in the Church, inside the Body of Jesus Christ, among believers, we don't operate the way of the lost pagan world. *Out there*, out in the lost world, people respect open demonstrations of glory and displays of power and force. But, *in here*, the only thing that matters is how low you can go. And he who would lead must serve those he leads.

Now there is a very important phrase here in verse 25 that is the catalyst to everything Jesus is teaching here. And it is the phrase,

### **The kings of the Gentiles "lord it over them"...**

Now to "lord it over" someone is to boss them; to operate from a superior position over them. It is to cruelly and authoritatively dominate over another individual. And this goes to the crutch of the matter because this was the leadership style of the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Scribes. So everything done in the religious system that Man builds operates with Benefactors.

But *everything* done in the Church that Jesus is building from cleaning the bathrooms to mowing the grass to preaching a sermon to counting the money to leading in the song service to counselling a troubled soul, is a ministry based in love. It is more than merely talking about "Right" and "Wrong". it is a reflection of what is going on in our hearts. It is an outward demonstration of the inward humility and brokenness that should be true in every Blood bought saint.

You see, everything done in Jesus' Name is merely an outward response of the Love that God has shed abroad in your heart. And if it isn't done for that purpose and from that kind of heart, God doesn't recognize it at all, you are not pleasing to God at all, and it is as though you didn't even do it. To center only on "Right" and "Wrong", with no concern for the condition of the heart, doesn't make you spiritual, it makes you a self-righteous Pharisee.

So *nothing* is to be done in the Name of the Lord for self-promotion. *Everything* done in here is to be done to the Glory and the Honor and the Praise of the Lord Jesus Christ, to help make Him known and treasured and feared and adored among the peoples of the world, and to make Him look absolutely irresistible to the lost world. *Nothing* should ever be done to dominate over another. *Nothing* should be done by coercion or manipulation of another soul or so that one can take authority over another. Now that is *exactly* the way of the pagan world, but Jesus said:

*it is **not this way with you***

The Church of Jesus is *the* single most unique place in all the world. In here, Jesus has the preeminence. In here, we are all brothers and sisters, called out of the *same* darkness and washed in the *same* Blood, forgiven by the *same* Savior, and adopted into the *same* Family. In here, the important Person is Jesus Christ. In here, the Desires that matter are His. In here, the Way to walk and run the race is set forth in His Word.

*In here*, men are called to lead based on their genuine desire to love the sheep and to feed the sheep and to put their arms around them and weep with them and rejoice with them and pray for them and get involved in their lives and get their hands dirty with the problems of the people that we genuinely love and shepherd them, *not* rule over them. You see, *in here*, there are no bosses and no managers. The Leadership of the Church doesn't bark orders and expect obedience. We don't make demands of others. We don't hold a position of power that allows us to look down to the people and speak down to them. No, we look *to* them and we speak *to* them from a position of humility and weakness, as we wash their feet and wipe their brow and give them

words of hope and comfort. And this is patently *not* normal, it is *not* natural. It is truly a Work of the Spirit.

And this is why I so look forward every year around the time we celebrate the Resurrection to have foot washing along with the Lord's Supper. It is yet another avenue by which we can demonstrate our love to one another and humble ourselves. As we wash one another's feet and pray one for another, the Holy Spirit takes this act and seals our love for each other. Because it is very hard to hold a grudge against someone that you just washed their feet.

Today, in far too many places, the Pastor operates as the CEO of the Corporation called "The Church". The Elders and Deacons operate as the Board of Directors and the people are the stock holders. There is even a name for this, it is called "The Corporate Model", and its hallmark is the wickedness of "Human Pragmatism" that says:

"If it brings in lots and lots of people and lots and lots of money, it must be God"

... and so they come up with the most carnal and worldly tactics to try to get more warm bodies in the pews. But God the Holy Spirit already told us the method to use to grow the Church. The Apostle Paul was moved along by God the Holy Spirit to say this in **1 Corinthians 1:21**:

**For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.**

And then he wrote this from **2 Timothy 4:1-5**:

**1 I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:**

**2 preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.**

**3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,**

**4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.**

**5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**

We live in a day when the overwhelming majority of people who attend Church demand to be entertained and have little or no use for anything that might edify them, *especially* deep, penetrating line upon line, precept upon precept preaching and teaching from God's Word.

Now through the centuries, there have been many heretics who have sought to undermine Biblical Authority in the Church. But recently we have seen Rick Warren and his Teaching on "The Purpose Driven Church" make this man-made "Corporate Model" the very *epitome* of modern American religiosity as it says:

"Find out what the people of your community want and give that to them, and they will come."

And this model has become the darling of those who lead in the modern Church. But to this madness, the Lord Christ would say:

**... *it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant***

And then Jesus gave us the very best example in the next verse when He said:

**For who is greater, the one who reclines *at the table* or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines *at the table*? But I am among you as the one who serves.**

In **John 13:1** the Apostle wrote this:

**Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.**

... and the phrase, "He loved them to the end" comes from a Greek phrase that means:

He loved them to the max.

Jesus honestly and truly loved these men to the maximum capacity that He had to love. He loved them to the infinite level of Divine Capacity. And that is the very *same* way Jesus loves every single soul who is saved. He loves His Own even though they are so troubling to Him.

Now many in the modern Church teach that Jesus loves us so much He would never do or say anything that would hurt us or disturb us or cause us anguish. But that is simply not true. Jesus loves you so much He isn't about to allow you to remain the way you are right now. But He will challenge you and rebuke you and discipline you and change you so that you may share in His Holiness.

Now notice that in your Bibles, the word "Benefactors", in verse 25, has a capital "B". And that is because it was an actual title used by Ptolemy I, Ptolemy II, Nero, and Caesar Augustus. So this is an actual title that these wicked rulers applied to themselves.

But it's not this way with you. In the Kingdom of Christ, leaders don't dominate by force and fear. They don't see themselves as the source, the Benefactor, the source of all good and influence. In this Kingdom, the one who is the greatest among you must become like the younger, or the youngest. You must become like the youngest.

Now I understand why Jesus said that leaders must be as those who serve, but why did Jesus use the word "younger?" Well, this all had to do with the Jewish culture of that day. The youngest person in that culture was the least honored because age and honor went together. If you were the youngest, you were the least honored because you had lived less and done less. So, in that culture, honor came with age.

But Jesus turns this on its head and said, *"In My Kingdom, the greatest is the one who sees himself as the least honored."* And so in **Matthew 20:26-28**, Jesus said:

**26 "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,**

**27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;**

**28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."**



... same thing. In Christ's Kingdom it's about slavery and service; it's about humility. It's not about acquiring power.

So leadership in the Church is going to have a servant quality about it, a humble quality about it. It is going to be trying to get under people and lift them up to something good and holy as their servant rather than "lording it over" people and oppressing and manipulating and using them to accomplish your own private ends.

Jesus wants authentic leadership, not people who are on an ego trip, who want to have a big following because it keeps their egos satisfied. Those who lead have become completely satisfied by Jesus, He is their Treasure, and they do what they do so that others may come to enjoy Him.

And so these kind of godly leaders are willing to "get down low". They are willing to be patient. They are willing to wait. And they are willing to serve. And *without* that quality, all you have are "Benefactors" who will *dominate* over the people with force and manipulation.

Now this Teaching is very straightforward and clear. And yet Jesus knows that the leader of the Apostles, the protos, the first among equals, Simon Peter, is not ready for this yet. And so, as Jesus finishes this radical Teaching about godly humility in Spiritual Leadership, He turns to Peter, and in front of them all, says:

### **Luke 22:31&32**

**31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat;**

**32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."**

.. and Lord willing, we will look at this amazing interchange between Jesus and Peter next week.

Amen. Let's pray

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The Covenant of Peace Church 13600 John Clark Road Gulfport, Mississippi 39503 228.832.7729 [www.covenantofpeace.net](http://www.covenantofpeace.net)

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.