



# RED HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

## THE WEEKLY BRICK

September 20, 2009.

*As you come to him, the living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. - 1 Peter 2:4-5*

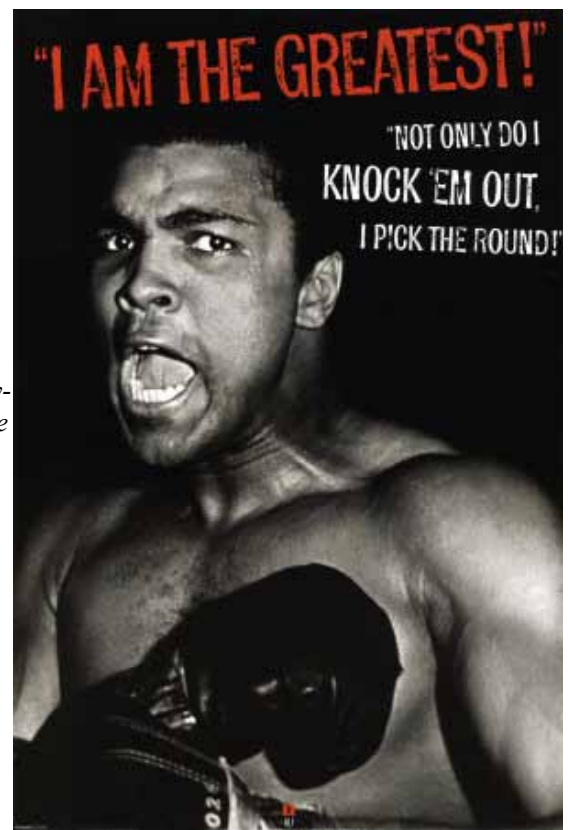
**How to Be the Greatest:** *Float Like a Butterfly, Serve Like A...Bee?* **Mark 9:30-37**  
**IT'S EITHER:**

**A.**



**OR**

**B.**



**1. SERVICE BEGINS WITH THE CROSS. 9:30-32**

*<sup>30</sup> They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, <sup>31</sup> because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." <sup>32</sup> But they did*

*not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.*

**2. JESUS OFTEN CATCHES US PRETTY FAR AWAY FROM THE CROSS. We can't serve very well from there.**

*9: 33-34 They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" <sup>34</sup> But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.*

**3. GREATNESS IS DETERMINED BY BEING LAST AND SERVANT OF ALL. 9:35**

*<sup>35</sup> Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."*

Instead of *using* people, we are to *serve* them. Jesus' mission was to serve others and to give his life away. A real leader has a servant's heart. Servant leaders appreciate others' worth and realize that they're not above any job. If you see something that needs to be done, don't wait to be asked. Take the initiative and do it like a faithful servant. Don't approach life expecting high positions, honors, and special privileges. Look instead for ways to help others.

## WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

### Monday, September 21st *Read Mark 9:30-37*

**Verse 30-32 concentrates on** the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because of its enormous importance Jesus drilled the truth of His death and resurrection into His disciples. It is absolutely essential that we grasp the death and resurrection of Jesus.

- ⇒ Our eternal destiny depends upon grasping the truth.
- ⇒ The fate of the Christian message depends upon believing the truth.
- ⇒ The fate of the world, moral truth and justice, depends upon us grasping and believing the truth.

Here's the basic organization of this part:

- The preparation: Jesus got alone with His disciples (v.30).
- The lesson: Jesus taught His disciples that He was to die and arise (v.31).
- The response: the disciples rejected what they did not wish to see (v.32).

**Read verse 30.** Here Jesus got alone with His disciples. This was a pivotal point in Jesus' ministry. He left the area of Caesarea Philippi in the north country where He was safe and headed toward Galilee from where He was to go into Jerusalem. The cross was sitting right before His face (cp. [Mark 8:31-33](#)). But note: He was still moving about quietly. Matthew says that Jesus "moved to and fro" Galilee. The idea is that Jesus moved about in order to avoid the crowds, yet He was moving ever so much closer to Jerusalem and the cross. Jesus needed to concentrate on His disciples, to drill into them the fact that He had to die and arise from the dead. He had to continue repeating and reiterating His death and resurrection because it was contrary to all their hopes and expectations. It was different from all they had ever heard or been taught. The Messiah was thought to be a Messiah of power and sovereign rule, not a Messiah who had to suffer and die in order to save us

**Read verse 31.** Jesus taught His disciples that He was to die and arise from the dead. Note three things.

1. Jesus "taught" (*edidaske*) His disciples. The Greek tense is imperfect; that is, He continued to teach them, kept right on teaching them. It was a continuous process, pulling one to the side, then another, then two, then four or five, then the whole group. He taught and taught, drilling the fact of His death and resurrection into them.
2. The word "delivered" (*paradidotai*) means to be delivered over and into death. It means that His death was determined, ordained, set in the plan and counsel of God. Note that Jesus said, "The Son of Man is delivered." His death is right before His face.

**a. God delivered Christ up to be betrayed.**

**b. Christ delivered Himself up to be crucified.**

*Galatians 1:4* who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

*Ephesians 5:2* and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

*Ephesians 5:25* Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

### Tuesday, September 22nd *Read Mark 9:31*

There are several reasons why Jesus repeated and repeated the fact of His death.

**a. To enforce that He was dying as a willing sacrifice and not as a hopeless martyr or as a mistaken man who thought He was the Messiah.**

*John 10:11* "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

*John 10:15* just as the Father knows me and I know the Father--and I lay down my life for the sheep.

*John 10:17-18* The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life--only to take it up again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

**b. To stress that He was dying to redeem us just as God willed.**

*Romans 3:24-25* and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

<sup>25</sup> God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--

*Galatians 3:13* Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

*Ephesians 1:7* In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

*Ephesians 5:2* and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

*Colossians 1:14* in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

*Titus 2:14* who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

**Hebrews 9:12** *He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.*

**c. To assure that His death was deliberately planned in the purposes of God and that He was willingly dying to fulfill that purpose.**

*Acts 2:23* *This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*

**Romans 8:32** *He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*

**d. To keep the disciples from thinking that the Messiah, the Son of God, could never .**

**e. To drill His death into the disciples so that they could better understand the truth after His resurrection.**

### **Wednesday, September 23rd** *Read Mark 9:32*

The disciples rejected what they did not wish to see. Jesus stressed and stressed His death and resurrection to the disciples. He meant what He said: He was to die, and He was to arise from the dead. The disciples were just not able to accept the literal facts. Their confusion and rejection was understandable.

⇒ They had been taught all their lives that the Messiah was coming to free them from all oppression and suffering.

⇒ Jesus had taught them that the kingdom was at hand, ready to be established now. How could it be established if He was to literally die? They failed to see the various stages of the kingdom.

⇒ They had been with Jesus for only a few months. *A complete reversal and unlearning of beliefs takes time.* They had not had enough time to sit at Jesus' feet, not enough time to accept and understand the literal truth of His death and resurrection.

Apparently, the disciples spiritualized His death and resurrection. They clearly saw a new air about Him as He quickened His pace and set His face toward Jerusalem. They could tell that something was pending, something that seemed to draw Christ forward with more determination than ever before. They knew that for many months now, He had been concentrating upon teaching them and sharing the truth of His death and resurrection. However, it was all a mystery to them; it was a puzzle. By death and resurrection did He mean...

- that He had to die to self, being shamed and discredited by the leaders before He would become riled enough to rise up and establish the kingdom?
- that He had to die to self, rejecting the present order of things (present religion and government) before He could rise up and restore things to some higher level or state?
- that the conflict of freeing Israel from her enemies would be so severe that it would be like a death, and the victory which would take three days would be like a resurrection from the dead?

The disciples just did not understand. They certainly did not want to accept the fact that their Lord would be literally killed. So they went along with the desire of their flesh and spiritualized what He said.

**Luke 24:25** *He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"*

**Matthew 15:16** *"Are you still so dull?" Jesus asked them.*

**Acts 28:27** *For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.*

### **Thursday, September 24th** *Read Mark 9:32*

The disciples, on more than one occasion, argued over who should hold the highest position in the kingdom. Their desire was for recognition and honor in an earthly kingdom. Jesus had to reeducate their thinking.

The same reeducation is needed by all men. All have the same needs for...

- some recognition
- some position
- some prestige
- some money
- some authority
- some esteem
- some challenge
- some physical satisfaction

There is nothing wrong with these needs. They are human and legitimate and must be met, but men allow their hearts to be overtaken with selfishness. We begin to want more and more to the point of lusting and consuming and hoarding. They become prideful, covetous, worldly, ambitious, envious, and hurtful even to the point of destroying and killing in order to fulfill their lusts (cp. James 4:1-3). What Christ sets out to do is to change the lives and reeducate man's concept of greatness.

Jesus returned to Capernaum, His headquarters, and entered the home which was so often opened to Him. Along the way, the disciples had been disputing among themselves and were probably continuing to argue after entering the house. The word "disputed" (*dialogizomai*) means arguing and bickering as well as reasoning. They were definitely arguing among themselves. Imagine how Jesus' heart must have been cut to the core. How often He had told them about the cross. And here He was about to stand face to face with the cross, yet the disciples were arguing over who should be the greatest. I'd be mad, wouldn't you? He could do only one thing: continue to teach them. He knew about the dispute, but they were not aware that He knew. He very simply turned and asked, "What were you arguing about along the way?" **Thought 1.** How often we have heard about the cross,

and yet how easily we forget!

- 1) Many have heard time after time and have never responded. Such cuts the heart of Christ.
- 2) Many have heard and have responded, yet they continue to seek the things of the world: power, position, wealth, property, fame. Such also cuts the heart of Christ.

### **Friday, September 25th** *Read Mark 9:34-35*

The disciples had been arguing over who should be the greatest in Jesus' government. Note several things about their argument.

1. They did not mean who would be the greatest in quality or character, but in name and position. They were thinking in terms of power, fame, wealth, position, and name.
  - a. They sensed that Jesus was about to set up His kingdom, about to assume His throne. They were looking forward to becoming chiefs of state in His kingdom.
  - b. They had seen three men among them honored in special ways (Peter, James, and John, Matthew 17:1-13). And one of them in particular had been distinguished (Peter, Matthew 16:17-19). Who were to be the leaders in the Lord's kingdom? They were apparently gripped with jealousy, envy, ambition, and some rivalry.
  - c. They misinterpreted Jesus' words that He must die and arise again. They spiritualized His words instead of taking them at face value. Apparently they connected the thought of "rising from the dead" with the setting up of His kingdom and began to argue over the top positions of leadership.
2. They did not yet understand what the kingdom was. They still saw an earthly, temporal kingdom and not a spiritual, eternal kingdom. This passage shows just how far away they were from understanding God's idea of the Messiah

Note that the disciples "held their peace." They kept quiet and said nothing in response to Jesus. They knew they had done wrong and were ashamed and embarrassed. Their ambition had led them to quarrel and divide. Their ambition shamed them.

**Thought 1.** Ambition that leads to argument and division is wrong. The person who seeks and secures by dispute and division shall soon stand before Christ ashamed and embarrassed.

**2 Corinthians 5:10** *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.*

**Hebrews 9:27** *Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,*

**Thought 2.** Each of us will be called to give an account for our disputes. We shall give an account both for words and life.

Yikes. This is why we need a savior.

**Matthew 12:37** *For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."*

**Matthew 23:12** *For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*

**Revelation 3:16-17** *So, because you are lukewarm--neither hot nor cold--I am about to spit you out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup> You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.*

**Psalms 49:6-7** *those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches? <sup>7</sup> No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him--*

Ambition needs instruction. Note that Jesus "sat down and called the twelve." In Jesus' day, when a Rabbi was ready to give a profound lesson, he sat down before his pupils. The disciples had slipped into a gross error and committed a serious sin. They must be corrected and taught the truth. Their ambition needed to be instructed and guided in the right direction.

**2 Timothy 2:15-16** *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. <sup>16</sup> Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.*

In verse 35 ambition is a virtue, but it must be directed toward the right goal. Note the points made by Jesus.

**1. Ambition is a virtue.** It is not wrong to desire greatness, to desire to make a contribution. Jesus did not rebuke the disciples' ambition. What He did was to direct their ambition, their energy and motive and efforts in the right direction.

**2. The way to greatness is service, humble service.** If you wish to be great, then you must actively seek to serve others. No matter your position, financial status, or authority, you're to serve; actively work for the sake and benefit of others. Your ambition must not be to rule for the sake of holding position and authority and receiving honor from others.

To be great, you must use gifts and abilities to serve others, helping and ministering to them in every way possible. A great person does not build one's own prestige. A great person builds the lives and betters the welfare of others. Are you a great person? I think you might be!

**Romans 12:3** *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

