

# Better Way Apostolic Church- Bible Class

## Subject: Needy Children: St. Mark 10:35-45

Our lesson deals with two important aspect of our Christian maturity as believers. Being able to measure our growth and our greatness in God and the work that we do to improve ourselves and the life of others. **One part of growing up is correcting destructive relationships.**

**As we look at Jesus disciples they were needy children walking in the spirit of carnality. Looking for favoritism. Trying to come to Jesus secretly trying to get a position that they were not ready for at that time.**

**His disciples watched him and knew that his prayers were always heard: and that the continued source of His power and utter freedom from pride came through secret prayer.**

**Correcting a problem is an act of acknowledgment**

**You must be willing to come out of denial and see the writing on the wall about your situation.**

**Take responsibility for your side of the equation**

**Acknowledge that you can do better and put that admission into practice. (With God's help!)**

GREATNESS HOW DOES GOD MEASURE TRUE GREATNESS?

### **Responsible for Growth**

God made you essentially what you are. Don't find fault with Him because you are different from others. Discover what you are and grow in the pattern He has designed for you. We are responsible for growing, but not for the essential element of our being. A little girl expressed it beautifully when she said, "Mother made me this much"— indicating the smallness of a baby—"and I grew that much" — showing how tall she had become. How tall have you grown in your Christian life?

### **Needy Children**

Some people have the idea that once the relationship is established between God and man, nothing more is needed. This is a mistake. When a child is born it has the general nature and characteristics of its parents, but does it not continue to need their loving care? It could not live without it. So it is with us and God. He gives us of His nature, His fullness; we become His children, but we need Him constantly and uninterruptedly if we are to go on living spiritually. Our lives as Christians cannot be maintained at all unless it is He who maintains them. This is unlike our earthly parent-child relationship in one sense, however. In our relationship with God we never outgrow our need to be dependent on Him. And though, in the New Testament, Christian maturity is enjoined on all believers, this process of spiritual growth never brings us to a point where we may become independent of God. We are given to understand that our relationship to Him is always that of children. Woe unto anyone who ceases to be a child of God in his own estimation and thinks he has grown up sufficiently to be independent of God!

### **TRUE GREATNESS DOES NOT CONCERN ITSELF WITH BEING RECOGNIZED.**

James and John wanted the highest positions in Jesus' kingdom. But Jesus told them that true greatness comes in serving others. Peter, one of the disciples who had heard this message, expands the thought in 1 Peter 5:1-4.

Most businesses, organizations, and institutions measure greatness by high personal achievement. In Christ's kingdom, however, service is the way to get ahead. The desire to be on top will hinder, not help. Rather than seeking to have your needs met, look for ways that you can minister to the needs of others.

KEY BIBLE VERSE: The greatest among you must be a servant. But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted. (Matthew 23:11-12)

### **TRUE GREATNESS IS MEASURED BY SERVICE.**

Jesus challenged society's norms. To him, greatness comes from serving-giving of yourself to help God and others. Service keeps us aware of others' needs, and it stops us from focusing only on ourself. Jesus came as a servant. What kind of greatness do you seek?

KEY BIBLE VERSE: John told them, "I baptize with water, but right here in the crowd is someone you do not know, who will soon begin his ministry. I am not even worthy to be his slave." (John 1:26-27)

### **TRUE GREATNESS IS CHARACTERIZED BY PROFOUND HUMILITY.**

John the Baptist said he was not even worthy to be Christ's slave, to perform the humble task of unfastening his shoes. But according to Luke 7:28, Jesus said that John was the greatest of all prophets. If such a great person felt inadequate even to be Christ's slave, how much more should we lay aside our pride to serve Christ! When we truly understand who Christ is, our pride and self-importance melt away.

### **TRUE GREATNESS IS CONTENT TO SERVE WITHOUT RECOGNITION.**

Although John was a well-known preacher who attracted large crowds, he was content for Jesus to take the higher place. This is true humility, the basis for greatness in preaching, teaching, or any other work we do for Christ. When you are content to do what God wants you to do and let Jesus Christ be honored for it, God will do great things through you.

### **GROWTHWHAT FACTORS BRING ABOUT GROWTH IN OUR LIFE?**

KEY BIBLE VERSE: God appeared to Jacob once again when he arrived at Bethel after traveling from Paddan-aram. God blessed him and said, "Your name is no longer Jacob; you will now be called Israel." (Genesis 35:9-10)

### **PROBLEMS CAN BE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH.**

God reminded Jacob of his new name, Israel, which meant "one who prevails with God" or "one who struggles with God." Although Jacob's life was littered with difficulties and trials, his new name was a tribute to his desire to stay close to God despite life's disappointments.

Many people believe that Christianity should offer a problem-free life. Consequently, as life gets tough, they draw back disappointed. Instead, they should determine to prevail with God through life's storms.

Problems and difficulties are painful but inevitable; you might as well see them as opportunities for growth. You can't prevail with God unless you have troubles to prevail over.

KEY BIBLE VERSE: Moses called all the people of Israel together and said, "Listen carefully to all the laws and regulations I am giving you today. Learn them and be sure to obey them!" (Deuteronomy 5:1)

### **SPIRITUAL GROWTH RESULTS FROM LISTENING TO AND OBEYING GOD'S WORD.**

The people had entered into a covenant with God, and Moses commanded them to hear, learn, and follow his statutes. Christians also have entered into a covenant with God (through Jesus Christ) and should be responsive to what God expects. Moses' threefold command to the Israelites is excellent advice for all of God's followers. Listening is absorbing and accepting information about God. Learning is understanding its meaning and implications. Following is putting into action all we have learned and understood. All three parts are essential to a growing relationship with God.

KEY BIBLE VERSE: Accept Christians who are weak in faith, and don't argue with them about what they think is right or wrong. (Romans 14:1)

### **RECOGNIZING WEAKNESSES IS OFTEN THE BEGINNING OF GROWTH.**

What is weak faith? Paul is speaking about immature faith that has not yet developed the muscle it needs to stand against external pressures. For example, if a person who once worshiped idols were to become a Christian, he might understand perfectly well that Christ saved him through faith and that idols have no real power. Still, because of his past associations, he might be badly shaken if he knowingly ate meat that had been used in idol worship as part of a pagan ritual. If a person who once worshiped God on the required Jewish holy days were to become a Christian, he might well know that Christ saved him through faith, not through his keeping of the law. Still, when the feast days came, he might feel empty and unfaithful if he didn't dedicate those days to God.

### **OUR RESPONSE TO OTHERS' WEAKNESSES IS A MEASURE OF OUR PERSONAL GROWTH.**

Paul responds to both weak brothers in love. Both are acting according to their consciences, but their honest scruples do not need to be made into rules for the church. Certainly some issues are central to the faith and worth fighting for-but many are based on individual differences and should not be legislated. Our principle should be: In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in everything, love.

KEY BIBLE VERSE: All athletes practice strict self-control. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. (1 Corinthians 9:25)

### **SPIRITUAL GROWTH RESULTS FROM DISCIPLINE.**

Winning a race requires purpose and discipline. Paul uses this illustration to explain that the Christian life takes hard work, self-denial, and grueling preparation. As Christians, we are running toward our heavenly reward. The essential disciplines of prayer, Bible study, and worship equip us to run with vigor and stamina. Don't merely observe from the grandstand; don't just turn out to jog a couple of laps each morning. Train diligently-your spiritual progress depends upon it.

### **SPIRITUAL GROWTH RESULTS FROM SELF-DENIAL.**

At times we must give up something good in order to do what God wants. Each person's special duties determine the discipline and denial that he or she must accept. Without a goal, discipline is nothing but self-punishment. With the goal of pleasing God, our denial seems like nothing compared to the eternal, imperishable reward that will be ours.