

There's More

Part 2: More than You.

Matthew 18:1-4

WELCOME:

Want more to life... is this all there is?

Want more meaning and purpose... to find it we think we need to BE more than what we are... be more than the others around us... look for more respect, success, authority, freedom (gov/parents)...

But what happens when the entire human race is trying to BE MORE THAN? Conflict/Fights

Much of our conflict comes from our desire to be MORE THAN.

B/c when we want to be more than... it means we have to make others LESS THAN

Popularity fights in school?

Fight co-workers for promotions/influence...

Fight in marriages b/c want upper-hand, don't want to be walked on, want what you want, desire to act on what we individually think is right...

Quit marriages- want more than this.

Our society- political sides want to be more than the other... have more influence...

Wars... have the power to shape world way we want it.

Even happens in churches... fight for influence/authority to guide organization way we think it should...

But Jesus invites us to better/more... Called it the Kingdom of God- A call to join the revolution that is counter to the way our world operates/fights.

Counter-intuitive... operates opposite of human nature and its need to be MORE THAN...

What is important to most of the world is considered nothing in the kingdom of God... and vice versa.

We are all invited and have a role to play... a leading role in the revolution that continues to change millions of lives...

When you join the revolution you begin to find There's something more than the MORE THAN of the world.

You find what you've always been looking for... find what you were always meant to be.

Find, and this might surprise you, **In the Kingdom of God LESS THAN is more powerful than MORE THAN.**

GOD: Desire to be MORE THAN nothing new... Disciples wanted to be MORE THAN too... a few recorded fights about who would be greatest...

How know? They told us. (Why believe Gospels... someone writing a fake account to gain influence/power wouldn't show themselves in such a negative light...)

So one day instead of just fighting among themselves... they get the guts to just ask Jesus himself.

And Jesus puts them in place and gives one of the most revolutionary descriptions of greatness/being more...

Matthew.

V. 1 *About that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?"*

- KoH and KoG interchangeable.
- What they thought KoH was... political/golden age
- More authority/land/families set/heroes to their people b/c of kicking out the Roman oppressors
- Comparing their status to the others... Am I MORE THAN THEM?

Makes sense right? Gave lives to this... how we would all think (might not actually say it out loud but...)

We naturally view our lives through a comparison of hierarchy and rank.

- might be subconscious
- who wears the pants?
- are you assistant regional manager or assistant to the regional manager?

Jesus probably rolls his eyes, takes a deep breath and...

V. 2-4 *Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. Then he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven."*

Kids around Jesus... they loved him and he loved them.

Turn from sins- Kill that pride / Stop fighting for more / Stop being loyal to kingdom of self...

"Become like little children"?

- Innocent? Pure? Not self-seeking? Gentle? Don't know what kids you've met... but this would not describe the kids in my house. (video of all crying?)

Not talking about any of that... nor false modesty, or some inner character trait.

How is a child humble? Their actual status...

No authority. Under authority. No rights. Dependent. Lowest rank of society. A person of no social importance or influence.

Jesus is saying true greatness comes from choosing to be little, allowing yourself to be unimportant in society's eyes.

Exact opposite of what we "know."

- Might makes right
- Influence so society goes the right way
- Even church since constantine... always ends up poorly.

To turn and become like little children is a radical/revolutionary re-orientation of how we view our place in our world and how we relate to others.

Revolutionary unimportance.

- Purposely take the lower place
- Place others in the spotlight
- **Paul**- outdo each other in showing honor
- Don't fight for own rights/ what we individually deserve
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Mark 10:44 Whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else

Ok great... but why would anyone want to do this? Like I get the idea but it sounds horrible...

B/c...**MAIN POINT** **We find MORE by choosing to become LESS.**

Joining the revolution... entering the kingdom of God means you are FREE from having to fight for yourself, you are free from having to live up to anyone's expectations (even yours), you are free from having to BE or TRYING TO BE MORE THAN.

B/c you are under God's leadership/rule... not your own or anyone else's.

We find MORE freedom in being LESS.

You can rely on God and don't have to fight for yourself...

- Kids free b/c they are dependent on me
- Trust/know needs will be taken care of/ don't have to rely on identity from others... b/c know that the ones who know them best see them for their best.
- **Jesus** uses the idea of birds not worrying about what they will eat... God takes care of them... why not you?

We find MORE peace in being LESS

We've seen how the opposite goes... when we always fight to be more than... we always fight to be more than THEM.

It means we are constantly in competition with those around us... anything good that happens to someone else puts them at risk of becoming more than us... can't celebrate with others... cheer when they fall.

(Again... look at politics right now)

We find MORE purpose in being LESS.

When you accept being less... Your life stops being about MORE THAN... you are free and empowered to love God and love others and leave the details to your heavenly father.

YOU:

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE...

DISCOVER:

Read Luke 22:24-27

ASK:

How are you trying to be MORE THAN?

- Best of salem "award"

What would choosing to "become less" allow you to find?

- Freedom (expectations? pressure?)
- Peace (getting out of the frantic rat race? Stop fighting for the upperhand? Lower worry & anxiety?)
- Purpose (a life about more than being more than?)

ACT:

Pick one person to be "less than" for 5 days

WE:

There is so much more than scratching our way to MORE THAN.

We are all invited to join the revolution... to experience more than we can imagine by choosing to become less than.

True power/greatness in the kingdom of God comes from this counter-intuitive choice...

Imagine being known, not for someone constantly fighting to be MORE THAN, but being known for being someone who consistently tries to make others more than?

Imagine a family where there is no fight about "you get more than me"... but all members making sure the other gets more than them?

What about a neighborhood, community, or even world like that?

What if we could truly celebrate with those who celebrate and mourn with those who mourn b/c we aren't trying to be more than them but are free to love them and not worry about how their success or failure affects us?

That is the power of choosing to be less. That is what has changed this world and what we are all invited to join.

In the Kingdom of God, LESS THAN is more powerful than we can imagine.

Discover, Enjoy , Share.

Questions

1. What's your reaction to this week's message and/or passage? What tickled you?
2. Read Luke 22:24-27. How do you see "MORE THAN" & "LESS THAN" playing out here? Put yourself in the disciple's place- how would you react to this exchange and the direction to "become like a little child"?
3. Who is the person you are choosing to be "LESS THAN" this week? What challenges or barriers do you foresee? How can your group pray for you in this during the week?