

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

CONNECT Group study questions for February 12, 2017

Title: Descending Into Greatness — Selected Scripture

Children:

- What does it look like to be a willing servant at your home?
- Think about your classmates or other kids in your neighborhood. Who needs you to show compassion? How could you serve that person in a way that shows them Jesus' love?
- What work has God given you to do as a kid? How can you be faithful in the work God's given you to do?

Review: A mature disciple of Jesus Christ does four things consistently:

Loves God

Loves Others

Loves Ministry

Loves the Lost

Read: Mark 9:30-37

They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me."

Question: Pastor Peppy used the Alfred Nobel story to illustrate how an obituary summarizes a person's life. The founder of the Nobel Peace Prize had the opportunity to read his own obituary, and it changed his life.

If you had that opportunity to write your own obituary, how would it describe your life?

Question: Jesus achieved such greatness that he altered the course of history. He did it not by being a ruler, but by becoming a servant.

In the dog-eat-dog world of everyday life, how is it possible to succeed with the attitude of a servant? How would counting others more significant than yourself (Philippians 2:3) work for you? How would it work against you? **Facilitator:** If it hasn't already been discussed, be sure the group understands it is God who works to protect and prosper us.

Read: Philippians 2:5-11

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.?

Question: Jesus laid out a pathway to greatness for us to follow, described in Philippians 2:5-11 (above), based on a principle he taught, found in Mark 9:33-37 (read below).

Read: Mark 9:33-37

And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest.

And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said

to them, “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.”

What is it about “receiving” a child in Jesus’ name that equals “receiving” Jesus, and ultimately God himself? What does it mean to become as a child (Matthew 19:14-15) to be in the kingdom of heaven?

Read: Matthew 20:25-34

But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” And stopping, Jesus called them and said, “What do you want me to do for you?” They said to him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

Question: Of the two factors in play here—Jesus’ power to heal and his compassion—which do you think motivated the blind men to follow him? Or was it both? As servants of God, how does compassion and the healing power of God “open eyes” and motivate people to follow Jesus? **Facilitator:** Guide the group to Matthew 5:16.

Read: John 17:4

I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

Meditate: Jesus was faithful to the end. Think again about your obituary, which will be an account of what was accomplished in life, not what was started and left unfinished. Consider Luke 9:62—*Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”*