

**THE COMMUNITY OF THE KING**



**THE KINGDOM  
MANDATE**  
Evangelistic & Prophetic  
Mark 9: 33-37

The church is the community of God's people. The two key elements here are the Church as a people, a new race or humanity, and the Church as a community or fellowship – the koinonia of the Holy Spirit.

Howard A. Snyder



**What type of community  
are we called to be?**

Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the way?' But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest.

Mark 9:33-34

**ON THE TRAIL**

- Jesus leading/ the disciples behind
- Like on a hiking trail
- On the way the disciples are bickering about place & status

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF STATUS**

- Who has pre-eminence?
- Qumran community – everyone was ranked every year
- Mark 10:35-45 – the issue continues to be part of their conversation

### IN THE HOUSE

- Jesus asks them directly about their arguments
- They remain silent (v34)
- They realize that their desires for greatness are out of place

### THEY MISUNDERSTAND

- Their previous conversation belies their misunderstanding of Jesus work
- The disciples are still thinking of a 'power-over' model

### NOT AN INTELLECTUAL GAP

- It speaks to an existential awareness of greatness (v34b)

### JESUS' TEACHING

To the Disciples

Mark 9:35-37

He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, 'Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.'

Mark 9:35

### THE TEACHER SITS DOWN

- Greatness is not based on status but service to others
- "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all."

## A CHALLENGE TO OUR PRIORITIES

- To the nature of achievement
- It becomes a reversal of values

## AN ACTED PARABLE

Mark 9:36-37

Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, 'Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.'

Mark 9:36-37

## THE CHILD

- Taking a child in his arms – he highlights the significance of 'littleness'

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

1. The significance of children and guiding them in faith – 'in my name' – we do this unto Jesus
2. The parable also points to the downward way of Jesus and his life of service

For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Mark 10:45

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

3. The importance of humility and childlike simplicity & faith (Matthew 18:3)
4. Service to those who have needs – to help those who are new in the faith ('little ones') – welcome them



### 1. A CALL TO SERVICE AND LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER

- Take up the role of servant
- Everyone is to be treated with respect
- The child functions as a symbol for one's fellow believers

### 2. A CALL TO BECOME A RECONCILED COMMUNITY

- To create and maintain a spirit of reconciliation
- Not simply a theory – but a reality

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way.

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation;

2 Corinthians 5:16-18

### 3. A NEW DEFINITION OF POWER

- Our relationships are not to be controlled by power, status, position
- Power is revealed in practicing and living out the shalom of God

### 4. A CALL TO WORK FOR JUSTICE & LIFTING UP THE NEEDY

- To be a Christian counterculture which takes up the voice of the marginalized

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

Luke 4:18-19

### 5. A CALL TO BEAR WITNESS IN WORD & DEED OF NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

- A call which is evangelistic – telling our story
- A call which is prophetic – living out the reality of the Gospel in real time