

A Crucial Element to Greatness in Your Walk With Christ

I was in Australia one warm afternoon, preaching at a gathering of about 200 leaders. The subject? How we, as humans, can be great.

I'm not very familiar with Australia's past so I asked the crowd, "Who are the heroes in your nation?" Nobody responded. I pressed in, "You know, the United States has Abraham Lincoln. England has Winston Churchill. So what about Australia?"

An awkward silence still filled the room. I felt as though I had put my foot in my mouth, something I've become familiar with, to be honest, but couldn't figure out why! The lead pastor in the front row finally broke the tension and leaned forward. "Kris," he said under his breath, "It's culturally taboo to be a hero in our nation. We don't talk about being great here. "

I was shocked to hear this, and later their team explained what they called "tall poppy syndrome" to me further. This is a social dynamic in which anyone who accomplishes greatness or grows above the crowd is then cut down by the masses. As I thought through this, I realized that this syndrome is not only prevalent in Australia but in many churches today. Plenty of Christian circles are teaching people to be good without empowering them to break the mold and be *great*.

The Dirty 'R' Word

Humility and greatness walk hand-in hand. That's right—true humility is fully connected to being rewarded. Most of us know Matt. 23:12 says that, " ... he who exalts himself will be

humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” So the act of humility is the pathway to promotion. However, for some reason the culture in the church has built shame around the concept of reward. It’s become a dirty word.

In many people’s minds, the goal of being rewarded, successful or even glorious is one we should remove from our hearts for fear we would become independent and prideful. But even Jesus achieved greatness for the sake of reward: “for the joy that was set before Him [He] endured the cross,” (Heb. 12:2b). How have we as a church become so opposed to what is clearly laid out in Scripture?

15 Keys for Remaining Humble

Jesus actually encourages us into greatness by showing us how to attain it: by humbling ourselves. So how do we live out the tension of being rewarded while remaining humble? Here are 15 attributes of humility that we must hold to as God exalts us:

1. We must remain teachable.
2. We have to be influenceable.
3. We have to be able to receive correction without defending ourselves.
4. We must rejoice when others are celebrated.
5. No job can be too small for us.
6. We don’t always have to be right.
7. We should naturally seek the advice of others.
8. We actually do pray and not just talk about it.
9. We must freely admit our flaws, mistakes and failures.
10. We have to live to help others succeed.

11. We cannot be easily offended.

12. We have to have a thankful attitude.

13. We must refuse to live with a sense of entitlement, thinking someone owes us something.

14. We have to be quick to forgive and not hold grudges.

15. We have to be confident in who we are and content with who we are not.

I want to encourage you to take a minute and invite Holy Spirit to search your heart. If there's something on this list that leaves you with room for improvement, He will teach you and guide you into it.

Also ask yourself if you're okay with the greatness God has for you. Can you receive from Him without shame? If you see greatness in another, do you quickly cut them down or can you celebrate the ways God is using them? {eoa}

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