

Have You Fallen for This Debilitating Lie About God's Kingdom?

We live in a culture of platform and prominence. Somehow, we mistakenly believe that in order to be significant to the kingdom of God, one must write best-selling books or lead worship in front of thousands or pastor a megachurch.

I am not sure that God's perspective matches our mistaken belief system.

Now, I certainly believe that God is using best-selling authors, well-known worship leaders and the pastors whose faces I see weekly on TV, but I also believe that the fabric of the kingdom of God is made up of those who simply and quietly serve.

I believe that Sunday school teachers who faithfully teach unruly 4-year-olds are making a profound difference for Christ and His kingdom.

I believe that greeters in church parking lots and those who pray for the pastor of the church are every bit as important as those whose jobs are more visible and therefore seemingly more praise-worthy.

Let's never forget that God's prerequisite for greatness is not fame nor is it platform; God notices those who serve—those who quietly and faithfully serve.

"It shall not be so among you. Whoever would be great among you, let him serve you" (Matt. 20:26).

What if popular Christian periodicals dedicated an issue every year to applauding church janitors, nursery workers and ushers? What if we interviewed small group leaders and junior

high pastors and the sound man who sits unnoticed at the back of the sanctuary?

What if?

My father, Norman Burton, who never pastored a church or wrote a book, supported more missionaries than I can remember. He taught the adult Sunday school class at our rural church for nearly 40 years and visited the shut-ins and church widows every single week. My father is my definition of the word "great" in God's kingdom, although his face will never grace the cover of a Christian magazine nor will he be the subject of a radio show.

When I was in the second grade, my father required me to memorize these words spoken by John Wesley centuries earlier. They were my father's motto by which he lived and perhaps we should all ponder the challenge of these words today:

Do all the good you can,

By all the means you can,

In all the ways you can,

In all the places you can,

At all the times you can,

To all the people you can,

As long as ever you can. –John Wesley

Greatness in God's kingdom may be in direct opposition to the noted personalities of our culture. Greatness in God's eyes begins by simply being good to those around you.

"But do not forget to do good and to share. For with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13:16). {eoa}

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