

Mark 9:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them,
If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and
servant of all.

Analysis

He sat down called twelve said to them If any man desire be first same shall be last of all and servant of all. Sat kathisas formal teaching position. Called prosephōnēsen summoned. Twelve dodeka apostolic band. Said legei authoritative teaching. Desire thelei ambition. First prōtos highest position. Same shall be last eschatos lowest position. Servant diakonos one who serves. Of all pantōn everyone. Kingdom reverses worldly values. Greatness is servanthood. Leadership is service. Context disciples argued about who greatest (v. 34). Jesus redefines greatness. Reformed theology emphasizes servant leadership pastoral ministry is service not domination. Christ is supreme servant Philippians 2 emptied self.

Historical Context

Disciples argued about positions in kingdom. James John will later request positions of honor (10:35-37). Natural human ambition for status recognition. Jesus consistently reverses this. Greatest is servant. Leader is slave. Worldly leadership dominates controls. Kingdom leadership serves sacrifices. Paul describes himself slave of Christ servant of church. Early church leadership was service not privilege. Medieval church hierarchy sometimes forgot this. Reformation recovered priesthood of all believers servant leadership. Modern church struggles with celebrity pastors platform building. Need to recover biblical servant leadership model.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus teaching that first is last and servant of all reverse worldly leadership models?
2. What practical implications does servant leadership have for pastors elders church leaders?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	καθίσας	ἐφώνησεν	τοὺς	δώδεκα	καὶ	λέγει	αὐτοῖς
And	he sat down	and called	G3588	the twelve	And	saith	unto them
G2532	G2523	G5455		G1427	G2532	G3004	G846

Εἴ	τις	θέλει	πρῶτος	εἶναι	ἔσται	πάντων
G1487	G5100	desire	first	to be	the same shall be	of all
		G2309	G4413	G1511	G2071	G3956

ἔσχατος	καὶ	πάντων	διάκονος
last	And	of all	servant
G2078	G2532	G3956	G1249

Additional Cross-References

Luke 22:26 (Parallel theme): But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

Matthew 23:11 (Parallel theme): But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

James 4:6 (Parallel theme): But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Jeremiah 45:5 (Parallel theme): And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

Luke 18:14 (Parallel theme): I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

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