

- A. One of the recent statements from the Dave Ramsey show was “Anyone can become a millionaire.”¹ We should encourage people to achieve greatness; however, Jesus in our text this morning, Jesus didn’t tie being great with having a great wealth.
- B. The argument that we just read about came right after Jesus told His disciples, **“the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men” (v44).**

Jesus shows you the path to greatness.	I. <u>RECEIVE OTHERS IN CHRIST</u> II. <u>DON’T HINDER OTHER CHRISTIANS</u> III. <u>DON’T SEEK TO DESTROY THOSE WHO REJECT CHRIST</u>
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I. RECEIVE OTHERS IN CHRIST →**v46**

- A. Often when we read a passage of Scripture, it helps us to ask where did this statement or problem come from?
- B. The argument must have happened away from Jesus; they were too ashamed to have such a selfish debate in front of Him. After the argument, in **v47** we are told that Jesus spoke to them, **“knowing what they were thinking in their heart,...”**
1. His ability to know the thoughts and intents of men’s hearts is evidence that Jesus is Divine.
 2. In response to their argument, in **v47** Jesus **“took a child and stood him by His side”** to make an important point. Look at what He said to them. → **v48**
 - a. To receive a child in Christ’s name is to bring him or her into the household of faith.
 - b. That involves a commitment to teach and spiritually nourish such a child in the Word and ways of Jesus.
 - 1) This requires patience, repetition, time, and nurturing love.
 - 2) Jesus uses children as an example to us because they are often more teachable and less set in their ways than many teenagers and adults are.
 - c. Another application of **v48** is for us to be patient to receive and nurture those with who are new “babes in the faith” as well.
- C. Today’s text speaks of the exclusivity of Christ as the only way to the Father. In **v48**, Jesus said, **“whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”**
1. You must receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior for you to have any hope for eternal life.
 2. **Acts 4:12** says, **“There is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”**
- D. Rather than argue over being the greatest, Jesus said, **“The one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great” (v48).**
1. It is a Christian virtue to endeavor to put the cares, concerns, and needs of others before our own. **Rom 2:4** says, **“The goodness of God leads you to repentance.”**
 2. In **Mk 9:35**, Jesus told the twelve, **“If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”**
 3. Find simple ways to serve others in the local and regional church.

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09zmM0XKxWI> - The Ramsey Show (October 18, 2023).

II. DON'T HINDER OTHER CHRISTIANS → **v49**

- A. John gave this answer in reply to the Lord's teaching to receive others in His name.
- B. We don't know much about this man working outside of the circle of Jesus and His disciples.
1. The person they sought to hinder was carrying out a ministry in the name of Jesus.
 2. That man was successful in his ministry because demons were being cast out.
 3. John and the other disciples were not successful in stopping this man from his work. Key words here in **v49** are **"we tried to prevent him..."**
- C. If asked about their motivation, John and the other disciples would have said, "We wanted to stop this man was **"because he does not follow along with us."**
1. Some young pastors may be very proud of their seminary. They may look down upon those are trained at other schools.
 2. Many of you are thankful to hold to a Presbyterian and Reformed interpretation of Scripture.
 - a. For a brother who trusts in Christ yet does not hold to our theology, we should not prevent him from serving the Triune God in the best way he knows how.
 - b. The reply that Jesus gave John applies to us today, **"Do not hinder him; for he who is not against you is for you" (v50).**
- D. We disagree with other Christians upon very important matters such as theology, the sacraments, and worship, yet we still, "believe in one holy catholic [universal] and apostolic church" (Nicene Creed).
1. As Paul instructed in **Eph 4**, we are to be **"diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all."**
 2. This does not mean we are to seek ecumenical relations with those considered heretics.

III. DON'T SEEK TO DESTROY THOSE WHO REJECT CHRIST

- A. To understand our text, it is helpful to understand the origin of the Samaritan people. → **2 Ki 17:24f**
- B. We can interpret **vv51-52** as the Samaritans having some initial willingness to make arrangements to host Jesus and His disciples. → **vv51-52**
1. You could imagine some of the leadership in the Samaritan village taking notes such as how many will be staying and for how long so that lodging, food, and drink could be made ready.
 2. Look at the reason why the Samaritans rejected Jesus and His disciples. → **v53**
 - a. Because the Samaritans had a corrupted version of the Hebrew religion, they considered Mt. Gerizim as the holy mountain of the Lord while they rejected the temple in Jerusalem.
 - b. The Samaritans had a temple on top of Mt. Gerizim, yet the Jews destroyed it in 112-111 BC.
 - c. Even today without a temple, the Samaritans still celebrate their Passover among the ruins.
 - d. The Samaritan woman in **Jn 4** argued with Jesus, **"Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (v20).**
- C. James and John couldn't stand the insult of anyone turning them away. → **v54**
- a. Because Muhammad's supposed holy book, the Quran, wasn't finished until about 632 AD, he wasn't the first to propose the idea of a holy war or jihad (Arabic for "striving").
 - b. James and John joined the ranks of many who believed they and their faith were so great that others should believe it or die.
- D. Observe how Jesus rebuked them. → **vv55-56**

Review, further application, and conclusion: