

Sermon-Based Questions
January 27, 2019
Dave Gustavsen

Paradox
LAST IS FIRST
Matthew 19:13-30

Introduction (choose 1):

1. When are you the most likely to not give someone the attention they need and deserve?
2. Our culture is obsessed with ranking things. This includes sports teams, places to eat or live, etc. Which list do you follow most closely and why ?

Understanding (choose 4-6):

3. Samuel 16:7 shows the difference between God's ranking system and the world's ranking system. When are you most likely to fall into the trap described here?
4. Jesus gave the disciples advice about children back in Matthew 18:1-5. Compare that to what happened in verses 13-15 of today's passage. Why do you think the disciples did not follow Jesus' advice?
5. The rich young ruler asked, "What must I do to get eternal life?"
 - a. What was his error in asking this?
 - b. When are you most likely to think you need to do things to get Jesus to accept you?
6. Some teachers claim that the sign of God's blessing on your life is material success. How does their claim contrast with today's teaching?
7. Read John 7:24 and 2 Corinthians 5:16.
 - a. Is it wrong to evaluate people?
 - b. Are you in sync with the counsel in these verses or do you need to change?
8. According to today's Scripture, which do you think is more dangerous and why: being very rich or being very poor?
9. Luke 14:7-11: Read the parable of the places of honor in Luke 14:7-11.
 - a. Have you been embarrassed by thinking you deserved something and then not getting it?

- b. Have you been pleasantly surprised and given some honor you did not think you deserve?

Application:

10. Pastor Dave challenged us to see how “Last is First” affects our friendships, goals, and dating/marriage. How has the Lord led you to re-think your views in any of these areas?

11. Consider these words from the hymn *Rock of Ages*:

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace

Whether you feel like you rank really high in the world’s eyes, or really low in the world’s eyes, pray that you would come to a deeper experience of turning from the world’s ranking system, and fleeing to Jesus.

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Lectio Divina

1. **Opening Prayer:** Ask God for insight into His Word, for open hearts and minds, for hunger to know Him better, and for an attitude of learning from one another.
2. **Reading:** Have someone from your group read the passage aloud. It is best to print out a copy for each group member so they can read along, make notes, or go back as needed.
3. **Meditation:** Spend an *entire minute in complete silence*, contemplating what was just read. Feel free to re-read the passage quietly to yourself or jot down thoughts/highlight what stuck out to you.
4. **Sharing:** At the leader's signal, invite group members to share their insights for about 5 minutes.
5. **Repeat:** After the 5 minutes are over, repeat the process 2 more times using the same passage. Listen/read like you haven't heard this passage before. If there are longer moments of silence, the leader can prompt discussion with the following questions:
 1. What did you hear and what seems important?
 2. What is the Holy Spirit impressing on you?
 3. What does it make you think of from your life?

Luke 14:7-11

⁷When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: ⁸“When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. ⁹If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. ¹⁰But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. ¹¹For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Matthew 18:1-5.

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

²He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

1 Sam 16:1,6-7

The LORD said to Samuel, ... I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”

⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed stands here before the LORD.”

⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”