



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

1, 2 Peter, Jude Sermon Series

Supports Session 4: Our Witness

Sermon Title: “Our Witness Through Humble Service” (Mark 10:41-45)

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### Connection to Session 4

As believers, our actions and attitudes are to bring glory to God. When we act like the world, we are not bringing God glory. When we follow the example provided by Christ, we will serve others and put others first.

### Introduction/Opening

It is easy for us to compare ourselves to others. As children, we compare ourselves in the schoolroom or on the field of competition. As adults, we compare ourselves by perceived status and influence. When we compare ourselves with others, we miss the mark. Our comparative point is to be Christ. In today’s message, we will see how Jesus told His disciples not to follow the example of the world, but rather live out their witness in humble service to others.

### Outline

#### 1. Actions of the world (v. 42)

*Context:* To truly understand this passage, we must deal with the context. Jesus had just predicted His death again (Mark 10:32-34). Immediately after teaching His disciples this, James and John approached Jesus and asked that they be placed at His right and left in glory. Upon Jesus telling them about His suffering, they asked Jesus for an eternal placement. They missed what He had been teaching, and He began to teach them about greatness through humble service.

- a. *They lead by title.* Jesus began this teaching by telling the disciples about the actions of the world. He said those outside the faith in leadership “lord it over” (v. 42) those they lead. For us to fully understand what Jesus taught, we need to understand the word “lord.” A simple definition can be boss. Whoever is lord, is boss. We have probably all worked for someone who constantly reminded us that they were the boss, and we were not. We also probably did not have a great deal of respect for this person. Instead of leading with character, they led with their title. Jesus told His disciples that this is the way those who do not know Him lead.
- b. *They lead with a strong hand.* Jesus also said that the leadership style of the world is tyrannical. To be a tyrant means to continuously oppress others. A tyrant is also someone who actively seeks to lift up self to the detriment of others. We should not be surprised at Jesus describing the ways of the world with this language. This is the opposite of the Golden Rule of doing unto others as we would want done to us. Those apart from Christ are not going to model the ways of Christ.

#### 2. Actions of a Christ follower (vv. 43-44)

- a. *Be a servant.* The first word of verse 43 is vital. “But” shows a transition. Yes, the previous verses show the ways of the world, but a follower of Jesus is to be different. Jesus said that greatness is had when service is given. We learn at least two things in this verse.
  - i. First, it is okay to aspire toward greatness. Paul told the church at Colossae, “Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people” (Col. 3:23). This should eliminate doing something halfway.
  - ii. Second, those who aspire to greatness *will* be a servant. Jesus proclaimed this as a statement of fact. Therefore, if we truly desire to be great in the eyes of the Lord, we will be servants of others. This is the opposite of what the world says.
3. *Put others first.* The word “slave” (v. 44) can also be interpreted “bondservant.” Both words indicate a chosen position in which the individual willingly surrenders all rights and privileges. Jesus said that the one who strives to be first is the one who puts others before themselves.
4. **The actions of Jesus (v. 45)**
  - a. *He willingly served.* If anyone deserved to be served, it was Jesus. Yet, He said He did not come be served but rather to serve. This fact shows us today that Jesus is not asking us to do something that He did not willingly do. Therefore, Jesus provided the model for us. If we want to learn what it means to serve others, then we can study the life of Christ as our example.
  - b. *He willingly gave.* Jesus also willingly gave His life as a ransom for many. We have two important words to look at here.
    - i. First, is the word “give.” No one took the life of Jesus. Instead, Jesus gave His life.
    - ii. Second is “ransom.” A ransom is the price one pays for someone who is being held captive. Humankind is held captive by our sin. The good news is that Jesus gave His life as a ransom. He has paid the price for us.

## Conclusion

The world often defines leadership with a title and a strong hand. Jesus calls us to lead by service and putting others first. Jesus also did not ask us to do something that He was unwilling to do. Instead, He modeled this for us. As we embrace these principles, we will serve as a witness to others because our example is vastly different from what the world proposes. The first step in modeling this difference is coming to understand our need for Christ and that He has paid our ransom for us. We are in bondage to our sin and in need of a Savior. When we accept Christ as Lord and Savior, He changes us from the ways of the world to His ways.

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