



Spiritual Reflection - September 2019

You Are Called

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees have sat down on the chair of Moses. So you shall do and observe all they say, but do not do as they do, for they do not do what they say. They tie up heavy burdens and load them on the shoulders of the people, but they do not even lift a finger to move them.

"They do everything in order to be seen by people; they wear very wide bands of the law around their foreheads, and robes with large tassels. They enjoy the first places at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues, and they like being greeted in the marketplace, and being called Master by the people. "But you, do not let yourselves be called "Master" because you have only one Master and all of you are brothers and sisters. Neither should you call anyone on earth Father, because you have only one Father, he who is in heaven. Nor should you be called Leader, because Christ is the only Leader for you. Let the greatest among you be the servant of all. For whoever makes himself great shall be humbled and whoever humbles himself shall be made great." —Matthew 23:1-12

There is a human tendency to want to be the best in things we do. Often, we have been told and oriented to be always on top of everything. And as a result, we might aspire for the best position, the best place.

Some of us become competitive in many aspects in life—in family life, academic life, professional life, social life, and even in spiritual life. We want to be the best and in return we get due and proper recognition from people around us and we get the place or rank that we want.

Is it incorrect to dream big and aspire to be famous? Is it wrong to aim for the best? Is it wrong to strive to do what we can and achieve good results and being recognized in return? No, it is encouraged to give one's best and do one's best in whatever we do. What makes it incorrect is when one is driven to work for the best if only for one's self-interest and gratification.

In the guise of being good and nice, working out one's best would be wrong if it is based on self-centered intention and malicious motivation. It is wrong if the intention is just to get a reward or recognition in return, the intention therefore is not pure and good. That was the point when Jesus addressed the crowd and his disciples about genuine greatness, and that is to serve in humility.

In the gospel, Jesus had described and explained who is the real master. Jesus identified and defined who is the greatest of all, who is the leader of all he who is willing to be the last of all and servant of all and not the positions and places of power that will determine who you are.

Jesus' concept of greatness is of service is humility. To serve others and not one's self, to be the last so that others may be served first. Our love of God is inseparable with our love of neighbour. We serve humanity and the entire creation is not only great but the greatest. To be the first is to be the last of all and servant of all, in this way, one achieves greatness.

Let us always be mindful of our intentions when we pursue, perform and accomplish anything in life—be it a short plan or a strategic project. We only become great when the intention is pure and real, to love God and neighbour, to serve God and neighbour.

Prayer

Almighty and Ever-living God, we want to know you and follow you, love you and serve you. Help us always to be humble. May we praise and please You through our small and big works as we do these in your name. It does not matter if we are least or great, but we humbly serve in love as we are loved by you. This we ask through Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.
Amen.

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