

# Servant Leadership: Greatness in the Kingdom

If you want to know what true greatness looks like in the Kingdom of God, you don't look to the palaces of kings or the halls of power. You don't look to crowns or titles. You look to a towel, wrapped around the waist of Jesus. You look to the Son of God kneeling down, washing dirty feet.

The world says, "Be first. Be strong. Be seen." But Jesus says, "If you want to be great, be last. Be humble. Be a servant."

And here's the truth: we cannot live this way without the power of the Holy Spirit. Servant leadership is not a human strategy—it is supernatural grace.

## Jesus Defines Greatness

Matthew tells us, *"Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'"* (Matthew 20:25–28).

Jesus didn't just teach servant leadership—He modeled it. The King of kings came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life. True leadership lays down its rights for the sake of others. Greatness in the Kingdom is not about who stands at the top; it is about who kneels the lowest.

## The Power of the Towel

John's gospel paints the picture vividly: *"Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him."* (John 13:3–5).

Think about this. Jesus knew all power had been given to Him. He knew where He had come from. He knew where He was going. And in that moment, with all authority in His hands, what did He do? He bent down to wash feet.

Great leaders don't have to prove their power—they demonstrate love. The greatest authority in the Kingdom is revealed in humility.

## **Servant Leadership Is Empowered by the Spirit**

Servant leadership is not weakness—it is Spirit-empowered strength. The Holy Spirit doesn't come to make us impressive; He comes to make us like Jesus.

Jesus said, *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* (Acts 1:8).

Power for what? Power to serve. Power to love. Power to lay down our lives. Without the Spirit, leadership becomes about ego. With the Spirit, leadership becomes about the cross.

## **Servants Filled with the Spirit**

When the early church faced practical needs, they didn't choose leaders based on education or status. They looked for something else: *“Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them.”* (Acts 6:3–5).

Notice this: they didn't say, “Find us the best managers.” They said, “Find us people full of the Spirit.” And among them was Stephen, a man so full of faith and the Holy Spirit that heaven itself opened as he testified.

Servant leadership requires Spirit-filled character more than human credentials. When you're full of the Spirit, you'll serve tables with as much joy as you preach sermons.

## **Servant Leadership Produces Fruit**

Paul reminds us in Galatians: *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”* (Galatians 5:22–23).

This is what Spirit-filled leadership looks like. Love that puts others first. Joy that shines even in sacrifice. Peace that calms storms around you. Patience that walks with the weak. Kindness that notices the unnoticed. Goodness that lifts others higher. Faithfulness that does not quit. Gentleness that heals instead of wounds. Self-control that resists pride and power-hunger.

This is leadership the world cannot produce. It is the fruit of abiding in Him.

## **Servant Leadership Points to Jesus**

At the very heart of servant leadership is the cross. Paul said, *“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!”* (Philippians 2:5–8).

The King became a servant. The Lord of Glory humbled Himself. If Jesus—God in the flesh—could lay aside His rights to serve, then how can we hold on to pride?

## **Servant Leadership Brings Revival**

When leaders serve, the Spirit moves. The greatest revivals in history didn’t come through celebrities—they came through servants. People hidden in prayer closets. Missionaries who gave their lives. Pastors who quietly loved their flocks. Evangelists who laid everything down.

Paul captured this spirit in 2 Corinthians 4:5: *“For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.”*

When we step aside, Jesus is revealed. When we serve, His presence fills the room. And where His presence is, miracles happen.

## **Conclusion: The Call of the Towel**

Servant leadership is not optional in the Kingdom—it is the only kind of leadership Jesus recognizes. And the good news is this: the Holy Spirit empowers us to live it out.

The world says, “Climb the ladder.” Jesus says, “Wash feet.” The world says, “Show your strength.” Jesus says, “Lay down your life.” The world says, “Make yourself known.” Jesus says, “Make Me known.”

And when we do, revival comes.

Friend, maybe today you’re weary of striving for position. Maybe you’ve been chasing titles or applause. Jesus invites you to put down the weight of self-importance and pick up the towel.

Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you again. Let Him give you the heart of a servant. And then watch how the world is turned upside down through simple acts of Spirit-filled love.

### **A Closing Prayer**

“Holy Spirit, I surrender my leadership, my influence, and my life. Make me a servant like Jesus. Fill me with Your power to love, to lay down my rights, and to lead with humility. Let my life point only to Christ. Amen.”