



‘Worship at home’ Sunday September 22nd 2024



As we worship, we reflect on how we live,
as we seek to live in faith,
serving and showing love to others.

Opening

We worship as part of the body of Christ:

God’s people of all ages and cultures,
with differing backgrounds and experiences;

we come to seek God’s way of gentleness and peace.

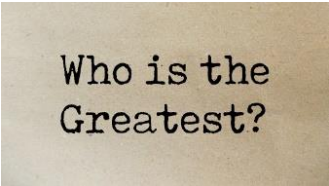
When we welcome each other in love,
we welcome God in our midst;

we come to seek God’s way of wisdom and love.

Whoever wants to be first must take last place
and be the servant of others;

we come to seek God’s way of humility and grace.

In worship we are invited once again to consider how we live out
our faith, as we are called to live with humility and grace, showing
love and welcome to all.



Who is the
Greatest?

**Who would you say are the greatest
people of our time?**

for example...who’s the greatest
cricketer? singer? actor?

Who are the people you personally admire as being great?

**What is it that makes you think they are great –
is it who they are (their qualities)
or what they have done (their actions)?**

**Are the people who we see as great
those who have the greatest influence over others?
(eg sports captains, religious leaders, politicians)**

Mark 9:30-37

They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it. They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the

road?" But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all." He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

New International Version

In Mark's account this story comes just after Peter, James and John have witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus, pointing to Jesus as Messiah. Jesus instructed them not to tell anyone, and instead took them away from the crowds and talked of his betrayal and death. They did not really understand what he was saying. If he really was God's son, why didn't he show his greatness to the world?



We all like a little recognition or even praise for what we do, and acknowledgement of our achievements. When have you vied for who has the best car, the biggest house, the most prestigious position? Who has the most influential friends? Who has the most talented grandchildren? In our society, it is so easy to get caught up in pride and competition. We are taught to stand tall, to be assertive, and not let others put us down.

Jesus challenges us to look at life differently, with humility and grace. "Stop bragging about who you know, how much you have, what you can do, and get on with showing my love," Jesus might say to us.



So often we gain our sense of importance and our self-worth by what we have and what we achieve. When we follow God's ways, our self-worth comes from who we are, and from our relationships with others. There is an inner strength that comes from choosing to serve others, to place their needs first, and to care more about what they have than what we have. This life of service is not implying we should live under the rule of others and bow weakly to their demands, but rather brings strength as we are empowered by the Spirit of God to live with humility and grace.

In Jesus' time, children were not given the same importance that they are today. They were cared for and loved, but were often the first victims of famine, disease or war. They were not given iPods and mobile phones and driven to dance lessons and sport. They had no rights and no social status, on the edges of society.

"Anyone who welcomes
a little child like this
on my behalf welcomes me,
and anyone who welcomes me
welcomes not only me
but also my Father who sent me."

- Mark 9:37



In the gospel of Mark, we hear of Jesus giving particular consideration to children, welcoming them on his knee, healing and blessing them, raising them from death. By taking that child in his arms, Jesus was making a radical statement not only about the place of children in society, but about other marginalised and vulnerable groups.

Jesus encourages us to consider how we value those who are not always valued by our society, asking us to welcome those who are

powerless and vulnerable. Our society places much emphasis on status, success and knowledge, and commonly we attribute value to those who have prestige and power. Jesus' words challenge us to relinquish power and position, and to place the needs of others ahead of our own. They challenge us to value those who are seen as least, those on the edges.

Who are the marginalised or vulnerable in our society?

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, you call us to welcome and serve others, and to show your love and compassion even when that puts us out.



We pray for those who are most vulnerable in our community.

children Indigenous people asylum seekers
the elderly people of different colours or cultures
homeless people the unemployed those who are unwell
people with disabilities and mental health problems

May we show each other welcome as we learn to put aside any biases and assumptions to value and accept each other.

May we be open to giving and receiving, as we value what each of us has to offer, in love and community.

May we work with others toward justice and peace for all.

We commit ourselves again to following your way of gentleness and peace. Amen

Closing

We go to live as God's people in the world;

we go to live out God's way of gentleness and peace

We go to show love to others,

for in doing so, we show love for God;

we go to live out God's way of wisdom and love

Whoever wants to be first must take last place

and be the servant of others;

we go to live out God's way of humility and grace

So humble yourselves before God;

to live out our faith in all we do and say. Amen!