I confer on you a kingdom

Luke 22:24-30

Key Verse 22:29

**“And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me”**

Let us assume that you have to bear false accusation from someone whom you know very well. To be falsely accused is very painful because you are condemned by it, and others will speak ill of you without proper reason, and their relationship with you will be broken. If we assume those situations, how challenging will it be for us to bear false accusation. Probably we want to retaliate or make threats.

But suppose, you will be rewarded by such a large amount of money which will far outweigh your suffering, what will do you? Will you bear it? Probably you will.

The same truth was revealed in today’s passage. Jesus knows serving comes with trials, sometimes unbearable. But he promised great reward and his reward is far greater than the suffering of trials. So he encouraged his disciples to keep serving and become great man following his image.

My message has two parts. Part I. Which of them was considered to be greatest (v.24-27) Part II. You may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom (v.28-30)

**Part I. Which of them was considered to be greatest (v.24-27)**

Look at verses 24-27.

**24A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. 25Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. 26But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. 27For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.**

It was the last Passover table, and Jesus’ death was within a day. But Jesus’ disciples could not understand what was going on in the heart of Jesus although he told them one of them would betray him. They were arguing about which of them was considered to be greatest.

Jesus’ disciples could not agree about who would be greatest among them. They all thought each one of them was the greatest. They all wanted to be considered to be greatest.

To them the final day of Jesus’ life would mean the coming of Jesus’ kingdom and they all wanted to be the prime minister of Jesus’ kingdom. But they could not agree with which of them was considered to be greatest. So a dispute arose.

What was Jesus’ response?

Jesus could have responded by saying, “You fool! Don’t you realize the meaning of new covenant in my blood? Don’t you know that I will be crucified in a day? Don’t you still realize it? How blind you are!”

Rather Jesus simply explained to them who was greatest in the sight of God by using the contrast.

First, Jesus explained the worldly concept of being greatest. **“Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.” (v.25)**

In the world, people in the position of authority such as kings and lords and presidents exercise their authority over those under them but they claim that they do so for the benefit of those under their authority. So they call themselves ‘benefactors’. Is it true that the people in the position of authority exercise authority over them for the benefit of those who were under their authority? Not necessarily.

# For example, in Turkey, a few days ago, there was a military coup d'état.

Turkey’s president suppressed it. Then immediately he began to purge those who participated in the coup d'état. But does he do for the benefit of people under his authority or does he do for his own benefit? According to the news, there is great possibility that he would exercise his authority for his own benefit. But of course he calls himself as ‘benefactors’ for his people.

Politicians run for elected positions. In their campaign they claim they ran for the positions for their countries. Partly it can be true. But partly we know that they do for their own benefit, which is to exercise huge authority.

American president has huge authority. He has executive power, veto power against legislation. In addition he can appoint 6,000 federal positions and some of them requires Senate’s approval. For his executive branch he can also appoint 7,000 position in his government. He has such authority and power. Indeed American president is considered as the man who has the greatest authority among all men on earth. And some political leaders especially from under developed countries exercise authority over others for the benefit of themselves rather than that of people under them.

Secondly, Jesus explained the true greatness to his disciples. Verses 26-27 reads, “**26But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. 27For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.”**

Jesus taught his disciples that the greatest among them was the youngest, and the great man was the one who serves rather than the one who rules. This is opposite teaching of the worldly concept of being great.

Therefore, Jesus was teaching his disciples that they should seek more ‘service’ rather than ‘authority’ in order to be great.

What do we seek? Do we seek authority? Or do we seek ‘service’? Or do we seek ‘authority’ in the name of ‘service’?

What do you think is the main difference between the one who exercise authority and the one who serves? Probably the main difference is who gets the benefit.

The kings of the Gentiles and those who exercise authority over others call themselves ‘benefactors’. It means they claim that they give benefit to others. But we know many cases that is not true. The truth is who receives benefit should be determined not by those who claim but by those who receive benefit.

Jesus used the example of the one who sit at the table and the one who serves in order to teach who is greatest among them. He said, “Who is greater, the one who is at the table or the who serves?” Usually who is at the table? They are customers if the place is restaurant. They are owners if the place is house. At a restaurants or house, those who sit at the table receive benefits from those who serve. Those who serve are waiters or waitresses or servants or slaves.

Those who sit on the tables are greater because they exercise authority over waiters or servants asking them to bring this kind of food or that kind of food.

But Jesus said, “I am among those who serves.” In another words, Jesus set up an example before he taught them about who is greatest. Jesus revealed that greatest man is the one who serves.

Jesus said the same truth in Mark 10:45.

So Jesus said in **Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”**

Jesus’ life as ransom sacrifice is ultimate service because all peoples on earth can receive the benefit of salvation through Jesus.

What is the main point which determines who exercise authority over others or who serve? It is ‘who gets the benefit.” Those who exercise authority over other call themselves benefactors. But that does not mean it is true. Those who receive benefit will tell it is true or not.

Why does serving others make us great? It is because we reveals the image of Jesus who did not come to serve but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. All believers received the benefit of salvation through Jesus’ service.

Surely those who serve are great men.

But to serve is not easy whereas exercising authority is easy. That was why the devil tempted Jesus to prove himself as the Messiah by jumping himself from the top of the temple rather than going through the crucifixion.

How nice and easy it would be for Jesus to jump from the top of the temple and prove that he is the Messiah! But he proved himself to be the Messiah by being crucified, going through the pain and suffering of death. He was abused by men.

Because he was abused we received the benefit of salvation. Only through Jesus’ service we all receive benefit, one blessing from another.

Now when we try to serve others through bible study and helping them to grow to be Jesus’ disciples we know how challenging it is to serve.

No one is perfect. So we all have weaknesses. So we can make mistakes. We can misunderstand others or be misunderstood. Sometimes we are falsely accused or blamed. And there can be many challenges which all includes pain and suffering. Sometimes those pain and suffering is too severe that we want to give up. It is as if Jesus might be tempted when people insulted him, saying “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and prove it.” But Jesus did not come down from the cross. By not retaliating them and by not using his authority as the Son of God, he proved himself as the very Messiah. By dying as a weak and powerless man, by dying under great insult and humiliation and pain and suffering he proved himself as the promised Messiah.

When he entrusted himself to the Father, Father proved him to be the Messiah.

**1Pe 2:21-24**

**21To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 22“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” 23When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. 24“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”**

So when you insult somebody by mistake and if the person does not retaliate and does not threaten you, you know he has the image of Christ. Christ did not retaliate when people hurled insults at him. When he suffered he made no threats to those who gave him suffering out of anger or pain. What did he do? He humbly entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

There is a person who judges justly. We need to believe he judges justly and he can establish justice. We cannot establish justice because no one is perfect. But our heavenly Father is perfect and he is the only perfect judge, and he will judge justly.

**Part II. You may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom (v.28-30)**

Look at verses 28-30.

**28You are those who have stood by me in my trials. 29And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, 30so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

Here Jesus said his disciples stood by him in his trials. Why did Jesus go through trials? It is because he served. If Jesus exercised authority for his benefit he did not need to go through so much trials. But since he served he went through so many trials.

Jesus’ trial did not end when he was crucified. It continued even when he was hung on the cross. People hurled insults at him. “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and I believe you. You weak and powerless man. I regret I followed you.” But Jesus did not retaliate. He made no threats. He entrusted himself to God who judges fairly.

**1Peter 2:21-24**

**21To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 22“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” 23When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. 24“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”**

If you hurt someone and if that person does not retaliate and if he does not make threat, that person is great. He reveals the image of Jesus Christ who did not retaliate, and make any threats. Rather he entrusted himself to God who judges justly. Indeed God judged justly and raised Jesus from the dead in three days.

If we are harmed and insulted and if we do not retaliate and make any threat, we reveal the image of Jesus Christ as well.

Jesus’ trials did not end in his own life. It continued in the life of his disciples. So he told them, “If the world persecute you, remember that it persecuted me first.” When Jesus’ disciples served others by following Jesus’ example, such as teaching the word of God, healing people, and raising up disciples, they went through a lot of trials.

So probably whey Jesus said, ‘You are those who have stood by me in my trials’ although they all ran away in his last trial. But they stood by Jesus in his eartly ministry.

To serve is not easy. It comes with a lot of trials. When Jesus taught the word of God, healing people, raising up disciples, there was a lot of opposition, troubles, pains and sufferings and trials.

Because Jesus knows serving comes with a lot of trials which he personally went through he also promised great reward for those who serve.

What would be the reward for those who have stood by Jesus in his trials? Great one. First of all they will eat and drink at Jesus’ table in Jesus kingdom. Jesus said,   
“**28You are those who have stood by me in my trials. 29And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, 30so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”**

Conferring his kingdom on his disciples comes because his disciples stood by him in his trials although standing by him is by God’s grace.

Jesus would confer a kingdom to his disciples who stood by him in his trials.   
“Trials” are challenging and it comes with pain and suffering. But it has great benefit. It is the basis of receiving a kingdom from Jesus.

Those who have stood by him in his trials will receive kingdom from him. It is just as the Father conferred one kingdom to Jesus. The blessing to receive the kingdom of God is great. It is unbelievable. In Jesus’ table in the kingdom of God, those people who have stood by Jesus in his trails would be present. They will eat and drink together with Jesus and they will sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

In the table of King David, there were people who ate with him. Who are those? His own children and privileged people. So Mephibosheth was thankful when he was invited to eat at the king’s table because he knew he did not deserve.

There is such a song called, ‘To the table”. Greg Newmaster sang as a special song. I reveals grace to be invited to Jesus’ table and eat and drink with him.

In addition, Jesus’ disciples will sit on thrones and judge twelve tribes of Israel. There are thrones other than the throne of God.

**Revelation 4:4**

**“Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.”**

Jesus’ disciples who stand by Jesus in his trials in the course of serving others will sit on thrones and judging others. In life, they were judged by other people. But in Jesus’ kingdom, they will sit on throne judging twelve tribes of Israel.

We all experience trails in the course of serving others, our bible students or our children or others. We can be misunderstood or we can be condemned or betrayed. But Jesus said in **Mt 5:11-12** **“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”**

Today’s passage reveals what is great reward in heaven.

Great reward in heaven also revealed in other parts of the bible.

**Romans 8:18**

**“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”**

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

**“[16] Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. [17] For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. [18] So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”**

Therefore we should not lose heart or give up because of trails that comes from serving others. But rather we need to remember the promise of great reward for those who serve and even rejoice greatly.

Today we learned that serving others makes us great because it reveals the image of Jesus. Serving comes with trials but it bring greater reward.

One word: I confer on you a kingdom