

SPEAKER: Scott Beckenhauer

DATE: May 11, 2025

SERIES: Upside Down

Sermon Title

“Upside Down Influence”

Introduction

This week, we started a new sermon series called “**Upside Down**”. Throughout this series, we are going to be unpacking the things Jesus taught that at first glance are not just counter-cultural, but seemingly counterintuitive. Much of what Jesus said seems backwards and confusing and it's easy for us to write those off as things we cannot apply to our lives. But when we actually see the truth of what Jesus said and see what happens when we put those things into practice, we notice that letting Jesus turn our world **Upside Down** brings about so many great things that God wants for us. To get started this week, answer this icebreaker question with your group:

- If you could have any superpower or ability to help you serve others, what would it be and why?

Seek the Word

Read Matthew 6:9-10 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does it mean to pray for God's Kingdom to come and for His will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven?
- How does that request to God differ from what the world might seek in their own lives?

Read Matthew 20:17-19 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- In this passage, Jesus predicts His suffering and death. How does this prediction set the stage for His teaching on servanthood?

Read Matthew 20:20-28 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What are the “asks” you habitually make of God that are more focused on self-promotion and status increasement than serving others and “descending” into greatness?
- How does Jesus redefine greatness in His Kingdom, and what example does He set for us?

Going Deeper

- Consider a time when you prioritized your own status or desires over serving others. How might embracing Jesus' model of servanthood change your approach in similar situations?

Talk About It

- How does the concept of “descending into greatness” challenge societal norms about leadership and success?
- In what ways can we apply the principle of servanthood in our daily interactions with family, friends, and colleagues?
- How can the example of motherhood, that we recognized and celebrated on Sunday, inspire us to live out humility and service in our own lives?

Wrap Up

Reminder: Greatness in the eyes of Jesus is not defined by status or earthly-measure of quality, but by service. Unlike the world around us, greatness for a follower of Jesus is defined by our servant-minded and humble approach to the people and world around us. In Jesus' **Upside Down Kingdom**, humility is the pathway to true greatness and should be our mindset as we strive to follow Jesus daily. As we take time out of our daily lives to intentionally seek ways to serve others, we must do so not to “lord it over” others, but to serve them with the same mindset as Christ, who came to serve us. The King descended from glory into greatness for our sake, and calls on us to do the same.

Challenge for the Week: **Christ-Like Service**

1. Reflect on Your Influence
 - a. This week, take a moment to think about your areas of influence, whether that is home, work, school, or in the community. Ask yourself, “How can I use my influence to serve others to help them get ahead?”
2. Practice Humility
 - a. Find one way to practice humility in your daily life. This is an act of worship, which goes beyond just the Sunday morning songs, and should be a daily part of our walk with Jesus. Maybe it means listening more than you talk, helping someone without expecting anything back, or giving credit to others for their contributions where it is not expected.
3. Serve Intentionally
 - a. Pick one person or group of people to serve this week. Think about how you can meet their needs in a real, practical way like Jesus would, and then.... GO DO IT!
4. Pray for a Servant's Heart
 - a. Make it a part of your daily routine this week to pray for a heart that's ready to serve. Ask God to help you put others first, just like Jesus did for you.

Prayer: Close your time together by praying for the strength and humility to serve others as Jesus did. Ask God to help you see opportunities to put others first and to live our His Kingdom values in your daily life. Pray for the mothers and mother figures in your lives, thanking God for their example of service and love that exemplifies the service and love Christ showed us.