

## **Home Church Study Guide—March 21, 2010**

### **“Let This Sink In—I Will Die” (Luke 9:44-62)**

The concluding verses of chapter 9 are painfully relevant. Unfortunately, they all deal with common misconceptions of the kingdom and our role in it. The first deals with an issue that will be a problem up until the time that Jesus is arrested—the disciples wanted to know which of them was the most important. Though we may not ask the question of greatness directly, the idea of established “pecking order” continues to be a major issue in many churches today. It is human nature, when separated from God, to want to be able to use power to control others.

Jesus offers a view of greatness that is absolutely counter to everything they valued. He put a small child by His side. In terms of comparison, there could be no wider gap in value to the apostles’ mind. Here was Messiah, the greatest man to ever walk on the earth, next to a child, who had no value whatsoever. The child had potential value, but no immediate value. Jesus said, in essence, “if you want to host me because you think I am important, and by being a friend of mine that makes you important—then befriend this child. In terms of greatness, these actions (welcoming a child and welcoming Jesus) are equal.” In the kingdom of God, it is absolutely true that the least is indeed the greatest. Why? Because greatness is found in serving, not in being served. As difficult as it is to believe, we manifest the image of God more in loving a child than in being what the world would see as a “great leader of men.” We must not miss the application of this episode to our own lives. Surely all of us can reflect on how often we have limited God’s power by our own desire for attention and glory.

Luke constantly reminds us that Jesus knew exactly where He was going. His face was “set on Jerusalem.” He knows it is time for Him to make the ultimate sacrifice. As His journey continued, we again see the tragic mistakenness of a self-focused ideology. A Samaritan village had the opportunity to host the Messiah on His way to death, but because He was affirming the importance of the temple at Jerusalem rather than their place of worship on Mount Gerizim, they would not allow Him to stay or rest in their town. Their desire to be right excluded their opportunity to host the Savior. James and John again demonstrate their misunderstanding of the proper use of power. They want to destroy the village. But Jesus rebukes them and simply moves on to another village. A sense of urgency is clearly evident. Jerusalem is on the horizon.

#### **“So What” for Home Church discussion:**

1. In what way do we evade hearing what Jesus has to say to us about our lives? What things in our lives keep us from hearing what Jesus has to say?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. If Jesus walked resolutely to Jerusalem in order to accomplish the will of God— where are we called to walk resolutely in today’s world? What can we do this week that shows this commitment? What might get in our way?