

20 September 2015 – 17 Sunday after Pentecost.

Readings: Jeremiah 11:18–20; Psalm 54; James 3:13 – 4:3, 7, 8a; Mark 9:30–37.

Theme: *The greatest* – Mark 9:34, “But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about **who was the greatest.**”



I. THE LOWEST/LAST.

Matthew 18:3-4, “Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever **humbles** himself like this child is **the greatest** in the kingdom of heaven.”

Mark 9:35, “If anyone would be first, he must be **last of all...**”

Philippians 2:8, “being found in human form, **he humbled himself** by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

James 4:8, 4:10, “**Submit** yourselves therefore to God... **Humble yourselves** before the Lord, and he will exalt you.”

Matthew 11:25, “At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, **and revealed them to little children.**”

James 1:5, 3:17, 4:2, “If any of you lacks wisdom, **let him ask God**, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him... the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, **open to reason...** **You do not have, because you do not ask.**”

Martin Luther, “Unless I am convinced **by Scripture and plain reason...** my conscience is captive to the Word of God.”



II. THE RESISTANT.

Matthew 16:23, “he turned and said to Peter, ‘**Get behind me, Satan!**’”

James 4:7, “**Resist** the devil, and he will flee from you.”

Cf. Baptism vow. “Do you reject the devil and everything he does, so that you will no longer be led by him” (Then say, “**Yes, I do.**”).

Martin Luther, “I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other.”

Cf. M. Scott Peck, “I believe that a **strong will** is one of the two greatest blessings that can be bestowed upon a being.”

Philippians 2:13, “it is God who works in you, both **to will and to work** for his good pleasure.”

Titus 2:11-12, “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to **say “No”** to ungodliness and worldly passions.”

Unbroken – True story of Survival, Resilience, Redemption.



III. THE SERVING.

Mark 9:35, “If anyone would be first, he must be... **servant of all.**”

Luke 22:27, “For 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.**”

James 3:13, 17, “Who is wise and understanding among you? **By his good conduct let him show his works...** the wisdom from above is **full of mercy and good fruits**”

2 Timothy 4:7, “**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.** Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.”

CONCLUSION: May we all be such humble, resistant, and serving children, in the name and for the sake of Jesus our Lord. Amen. ☺