# THE SMALL WHO SHALL BE GREAT

*Kenny Chumbley*

The opening lines from Charles Reade’s tragic story, *The Cloister and the Hearth*, bears repeating:

**“Not a day passes over the earth, but men and women of no note do great deeds, speak great words, and suffer noble sorrows. Of these obscure heroes, philosophers, and martyrs, the greater part will never be known till that hour, when many that are great shall be small, and the small great.”**

We are surrounded by greatness and often don’t realize it because it is the greatness shown by the overlooked, the ordinary and the insignificant, who quietly make life better for those around them by the service they render.

“*Whoever among you wants to be great must become the servant of you all…just as the Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many*” (Matthew 20:28).

By taking the form of a servant Jesus proclaimed the law of rank in the church of Christ. Christ found glory in service. No word better summarizes the nature of His love than ***service***. And no phrase better defines the nature of His service than ***sacrifice*** (to give His life).

Paul spoke of such greatness when he urged the Ephesians to “*remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive*’” (Acts 20:35).

Here is an authentic saying of Jesus, which the Holy Spirit chose to reveal through Paul rather than through Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Christ’s words are a beatitude (a word of blessing) – the only beatitude that involves a comparative. It is blessed to receive (everybody amen’s this), but it is ***more*** blessed to give.

“*It is more blessed to give than to receive*” has been called the supreme beatitude of the Bible. Does anyone give more than he gets than God? No!

Does anyone give more than he gets than Jesus Christ? No!

And have you noticed that God built this very beatitude into nature itself by creating for us a world that gives?

"*Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness*." (Acts 14:17)

The measure of greatness is always determined by the measure of giving.

And so is the measure of happiness. I’ve seen mothers worn to a frazzle from trying to care for children who demand too much and give too little. Yet, if you try to sympathize by telling them that they’ve had a rough day, more often than not they will blink in surprise, look at you like you need psychiatric help, and tell you that it’s been a pretty good day.

I’m not a great person; I’m too selfish to be great. But I know great people (like my mother). In fact, the only times I’ve ever felt like imitating Cornelius when he fell at the feet of Peter and worshipped have been the times when I’ve been in the company of those whose heart bled sacrificial service.

Reade was right. The hour is coming when the small will be made great (Rom. 8:19 “*For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God*.”). And when that hour comes let no one be surprised to see that it is a group of no-name servants who shine in the presence of Him who served all.