

## Growing in Greatness

### *2 Samuel 5*

For many of us, I'm sure, we shy away from thinking about becoming great. Isn't that contrary to humility and all that we've been taught? And yet Jesus himself spoke about greatness in the kingdom of God (Matt. 5:19; 11:11). There is a kind of greatness that is good and right to which we should aspire to as believers. It is a very different thing than what the world thinks about greatness. As we will see in our study today, David became greater and greater because God was with him. May we long for and experience a growing greatness in our lives as we experience God's work in our lives.

**Opening Question:** How does the world tend to define greatness?

**Read 2 Samuel 2:1-4; 3:1**

1. How do these passages reveal that God was fulfilling his promise to David to make him king over all of Israel?

**Read 2 Samuel 5:1-12**

2. What do the tribes of Israel say to David (v. 1-2) and how is David's greatness revealed in what they say?
3. Verse 10 says that "David became greater and greater." As you think back over our study of David, how has he grown in greatness?
4. What does verse 10 say was the source of David's growing greatness?

Steve said:

Even though David was flawed and inconsistent, he "became greater and greater, for the Lord God of hosts was with him." Whereas the Spirit had departed from Saul, the Spirit was mighty in David's life. David proves that you don't have to be perfect to become "greater and greater." What really matters is that the Lord God of hosts is "with you" and that you participate with His work in your life.

5. In what sense, is God "with you" as a New Testament believer (see Matt. 28:20; John 14:16, 17)?
6. How does God's indwelling presence help us grow in kingdom greatness?

Steve said:

David was 37 when it was written that he “became greater and greater because the Lord God of hosts was with him.” Quite honestly, by the time many believers have reached the age of 37, the dream of greatness in the kingdom of God is a distant memory. Actually, I’ve talked with lots of believers in their 30s, 40s, and 50s who feel that their glory days (spiritually speaking) were in high school or college. There’s certainly nothing wrong with having powerful spiritual experiences in high school or college, but God **never** meant for us to peak spiritually in our early twenties.

7. Have you ever sort of thought that your best days, spiritually speaking, were behind you? Why or why not?

Steve said:

We get more guarded and cautious in relation to God and church and all things spiritual. When I was in college the attitude was, “All-night prayer? Sure, I don’t have class until 8 in the morning.” But now, it’s a big deal to commit to praying for 30 minutes on a weekend. My hunch is that God wants me to be somewhere in between where I was in college and where I am now. We become more cynical (some even become scoffers – mocking those who aren’t cynical). We become less spontaneous – perhaps less sensitive to the leading of the Spirit. We often have less anticipation that the Spirit of God within us might do the miraculous and extraordinary in our lives. Some of us need to fight these tendencies.

8. Do you sense a need to fight this tendency to become more guarded and cautious? Why or why not?

### **Read Matthew 18:1-4; Matthew 20:25-27**

9. What do these passages say about greatness in the kingdom of God?

Steve said:

How might God want you to grow in greatness? What is God stirring up in your heart? In the kingdom we can be great in a lot of ways: in love, humility, servanthood, faith, a shepherd’s heart, purity, zealous for good works, patience? I’m convinced that God wants to give us these things far more than we could ever want them. As with David, if we become “greater and greater” in the kingdom of God, it will be because of the presence of God in our lives. And so ultimately, the challenge to pursue greatness in the kingdom is a challenge to experience God.

10. What is God stirring up in your heart in terms of growing in greatness?
11. Are you experiencing God these days in a way that is helping you grow in greatness?