

The Measure of Greatness

Some years ago, Saint Paul School of Theology in greater Kansas City, Kansas, was seeking a new president.

More than 100 candidates applied for the position. The search committee narrowed the list to five eminently qualified persons. Then somebody came up with a brilliant idea: "Let's send a person to the institutions where each of the five finalists is currently employed, and let's interview the janitor at each place, asking him what he thinks of the man seeking to be our president."

This was done, and a janitor gave such a glowing appraisal of William MacElvaney that he was selected president of Saint Paul's School of Theology.

Somebody on that search committee understood, in a flash of genius, that those who live close to Christ become so secure in His love that they no longer relate to other people according to rank or power or money or prestige. They treat janitors and governors with equal dignity. They regard everybody as a VIP. Children seem to do this intuitively; adults have to relearn it.

Greatness is found in service to all. After a presidential debate, a reporter for a news magazine asked a young woman, "What do you think of the candidates?"

She didn't say a word about their positions on the issues or their skill at debate. She simply remarked, "None of them seems to have any humility."

Benjamin Franklin, the early American statesman, made a list of character qualities that he wanted to develop in his own life. When he mastered one virtue, he went on to the next. He did pretty well, he said, until he got to humility. Every time he thought he was making significant progress, he would be so pleased with himself that he became proud.

Humility is an elusive virtue. Even Jesus' disciples struggled with it. They even discussed who among themselves was the greatest.

You will recognize greatness when you look for it in the humble acts of love and service shown every day by the associates of Life Care and Century Park.

Jesus addressed the issue of greatness and humility in a discussion with His disciples:

Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant (Matthew 20:26 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter