~Matthew 23:11–12
11 The greatest among you will be your servant. 12 For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted. {NIV}

~1 Corinthians 10:23–24
23 "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is constructive. 24 No one should seek their own good, but the good of others. {NIV}

~Ephesians 4:1–3
1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. {NIV}

~Colossians 3:12–14
12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. {NIV}

✝ **Prayer:** Father, thank You for showing us through Jesus what real greatness looks like. Help us notice people, serve willingly, and give freely. Work in us until love becomes action and humility becomes a way of life. Give us the courage to do what is right and trust You with what happens next. Use what You've placed in our hands to help, strengthen, and bless somebody else. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Message Notes:

When You Change the Question, You Change the Direction
Series: Keep Moving
Dr. John Frank Howard
Kingswood Church
Rural Hall, NC
September 27, 2026

Philippians 2:1-13
1 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.
5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:
6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!
9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.
{NIV}

Mainline: Real _____ begins when we _____ asking, "What do I _____?" and _____ asking, "What can I _____?"

✝ **The Word…on the Word:**

Many times we walk into a conversation, a relationship, or a situation thinking about one question first: **"What do I get out of this?"** Philippians 2:1–13 gives us a better question. Paul points us to Jesus. Jesus had every right to be honored, served, and recognized. But He chose humility. He chose obedience. He chose to serve. He used what He had to help others. That is what real greatness looks like. Greatness is not about getting everybody to notice you. It is about noticing somebody else. It is not about asking, **"What can they do for me?"** It is learning to ask, **"What can I do for them?"** Paul invites us to live the same way. Look around. Notice people. Use what God has given you to encourage them, help them, and lift them. And here is the good news: **God does not ask you to live this way by yourself.** God is already working in you. He is giving you the desire. He is giving you the strength. He is giving you what you need to become the kind of person who can walk into any place asking, **"What can I give?"**

✝ **Questions for Further Reflection:**

(1) How should what you have received from Christ change the way you treat other people? **{Philippians 2:1–2}**

(2) Where are you most tempted to put your interests ahead of someone else's? **{Philippians 2:3–4}**

(3) What did Jesus choose to do with His position, power, and privilege? **{Philippians 2:5–8}**

(4) What does Jesus' example teach you about trusting God with recognition and results? **{Philippians 2:9–11}**

(5) Where do you need to trust that God is already working within you to help you obey Him? **{Philippians 2:12–13}**

✝ **Put It Into Practice:**

(1) Ask a Better Question

Instead of asking, "What do I get?" and start asking, "What can I give?"

Before you walk into a conversation, meeting, meal, worship service, or difficult relationship, ask yourself: **"What has God given me that I can give here?"** Give encouragement. Give patience. Give attention. Give forgiveness. Give help. Sometimes the greatest gift you can give is simply listening. Choose something you can give, and give it.

(2) Use What You Have to Help Somebody Else

What God puts in your hands can become a blessing in somebody else's life.

Jesus didn't use His blessings for Himself. See what happens when you follow His example. Look at what God has already given you: time, experience, influence, ability, resources, or opportunity. Then use it. Lift somebody. Help somebody. Encourage somebody.

(3) Serve Without Needing to Be Seen

Do the good God puts before you and let Him handle who notices.

Serve somebody without needing credit. Encourage somebody without expecting praise. Give without needing an acknowledgement. **You do the serving. Let God handle the seeing.**

✝ **Bible Passages for Further Study:**

~Luke 22:24–27

24 A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was
considered to be greatest. 25 Jesus said to them, "The kings of the
Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them
call themselves Benefactors. 26 But you are not to be like that. Instead,
the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who
rules like the one who serves. 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. {NIV}