

## Luke 22:24-30

**24** Also a dispute 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. **28** You are those who have stood by me in my trials. **29** And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, **30** so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

My assignment was to give our new manager a quick tour of my State Farm Insurance division. As we were making the rounds, the lead worker from our mail/forms area passed us, and we exchanged greetings. After she continued on her way, the manager turned to me and asked, "Do I need to know that person?"

"Yes," I replied, "she's probably the most important person in the division. If she weren't here, the entire area would be negatively affected." But when I added that the person she'd just met was in our mail/forms area, she had a puzzled look on her face, as if to say, "Why should I be concerned with one of the lower-level employees? How can she help me move up the corporate ladder?"

This encounter brought my philosophy about living out my faith at work into sharp focus. Whether you are an entry-level employee or a CEO, your position in Christ is the same. How you treat others and view them profoundly affects whether others see Christ in you or view you as just another employee willing to step on them as you claw your way up in the company.

## Mark 5:21-24;35-43

**1** My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. **2** Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. **3** If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," **4** have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? **5** Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? **6** But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? **7** Are they not the ones who are slandering the noble name of him to whom you belong?

**8** If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. **9** But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

During a student's second month of night school, the professor gave a pop quiz. The conscientious student breezed through the questions until the last one: What is the first name of the woman who cleans this building?

Surely this was some kind of joke. He'd seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, brunette, and in her 50s, but how would he know her name? He handed in the paper, leaving the question blank. Before class ended another student asked if the last question would count.

"Absolutely," the professor answered. "In your lives, in your careers, you'll meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say hello."

The professor communicated a powerful truth. It's easy to overlook people and fail to see their worth. The world tends to judge worth based on wealth, appearance, and status. In the corporate environment, such prejudice often forms a "glass ceiling" that bars qualified people from top positions.

How radically different is the kingdom of God where God places great worth on every person, where "the last will be first, and where the first will be last (Matthew 20:16), and the greatest are those who serve others (Mark 9:35).