

**"A sunflower in a corn field
is a weed."**



**Greatness cannot be defined
outside a context of values.**

**Mother Teresa
Frank Lloyd Wright
Tiger Woods**

**Jesus calls us to be great
with respect to the values
of his Kingdom.**

**This means we
may look like a
weed in this world.**

Mark 9

"³³ And they came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house, He began to question them, "What were you discussing on the way?" ³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which of them was the **greatest**. ³⁵ And sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be **first**, he shall be last of all, and servant of all." ³⁶ And taking a child, He set him before them, and taking him in His arms, He said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me."

Three observations

1. **Greatest** - Selfish ambition (to be greater than all others) is what makes the world go round.

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- ✓ Selfish ambition is a foundational value in **evolutionary theory & free market capitalism** - our modern world's major meta narratives.
- ✓ The greatest is identified through **COMPETITION**.



How is a Christian to view COMPETITION?

Selfish ambition is something we (like the disciples) tend to feel ashamed of.

Competition without the cooperation and compassion of community is worldly.

1 Corinthians 4

“ 6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn not to exceed what is written, **in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.** 7 For who regards you as superior? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?”

- ✓ The Corinthians were **competing** with one another before human standards.
- ✓ The Corinthians had a **worldly view of spiritual assets.** 12:14-31
- ✓ Worldly greatness is about **honor**, spiritual greatness is about **humility.**

Competition and the Disciple

1. Do we avoid comparing ourselves with others?
2. Do we seek justice for those not gifted & privileged?
3. Do we maintain a classless spiritual community?
4. Do we avoid selfish pride and a sense of entitlement?

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2. **Greatness** - Godly greatness is counter intuitive to this world.

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 2. **Greatness** - Godly greatness is counter intuitive to this world.
- ✓ Jesus does not discourage the desire to be great but challenges a certain **understanding of greatness.**
 - ✓ **Seeing** ourselves as “last of all” leads us to **live** as “servant of all.”

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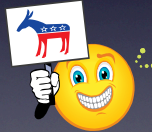
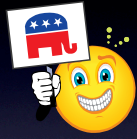
Was **Marx** right when he claimed that Christianity was a drug to keep the masses poor and content?

Not if the **Spirit of Christ** was installed in the hearts of both the rich and the poor?

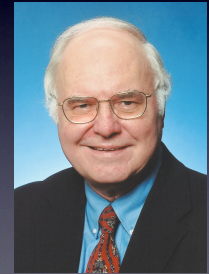
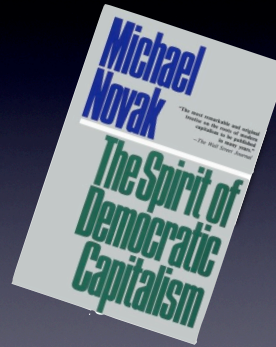


Christians and Capitalism

- ✓ Christians on the **political right** need to be more critical of raw capitalism!
- ✓ Christians on the **political left** need to realize that socialism is not a spiritual answer!



Christians and Capitalism



Democratic
Government

Capitalistic
Economy



Christian
ethical spirit

Without a Biblical ethical spirit:

1. **Capitalism** becomes the exploitation of the economically weak by the economically powerful.
2. **Democracy** becomes an endless litigation of rights and the manipulation of the naive by the clever.
3. **Pluralism** dignifies every kind of divergence as a form of creativity.

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3. **Graciousness** - Godly greatness is revealed in who we receive and how.

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 - ✓ Note those to whom **Jesus** was drawn.
 - ✓ Note the people God **calls**. 1 Cor.1:26-31
 - ✓ **How** we receive the least among us is how we receive the greatest among us - **Jesus**. Matt.25:31-46

**Spiritual greatness
is measured by**

- 1.
our response to life's
circumstances, and**
- 2.
our reception of the least
among us.**

**Our heroes shape
our values
and our guests
show them.**

**Example
of Jesus being IN but not OF
the world.**

**Disciples are willing to be
weeds in this world to be
flowers in the Kingdom.**



Easter is a reminder that

**We bear a cross
to a banquet.**



Romans 8:18

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

Philippians 3:10

“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;”