

Feasting on Gratitude

Stewardship Reflection Series

The greatest among you will be your servant...



In the culture of sports, it is proclaimed by owners, players and fans: “We’re Number One!” This declaration is accompanied by holding one’s hand up in the air with the index finger pointing to the sky. So, “who’s Number One?” In the time of Jesus, the Pharisees were among the groups in Jewish society with prominent place and power. Certainly, this was deserved due to historical heritage, scriptural knowledge, and spiritual piety. The Pharisees wore liturgical vestments in public that were “broad and long” in order to demonstrate “We are Number One!” Jesus the One Son of God and One Son of Man warned the disciples and those in the crowd against seeking to be Number One. Jesus used the misdirected beliefs and misguided practices of the Pharisees as a caution. The Pharisees had built a discipline that contradicted the very teaching they espoused. The Pharisees did not seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, rather human recognition. The Pharisees were more concerned about making a fashion statement than engaging a faith commitment.

Jesus is our Teacher who invites you and me to a faith commitment. We are called to believe the words of Jesus. We are encouraged to practice discipleship founded on Christ. We are to have a faith based in the Oneness of God in Christ. God in Christ is Number One! This Divine Oneness binds us in spiritual unity as people of God. Making a pledge commitment through intentional and proportional giving is indeed faith commitment. We know that like the Pharisees, it is easy to be seduced by property, power and prestige. We can be easily seduced by money, using it to seek out not just human recognition, but our very identity. The greatest challenge of the spiritual life is to claim the identity of Jesus for ourselves, to affirm again and again that through our baptism we are one in Christ.

In the city of San Antonio, there lives a man named David Robinson. While a member of the Spurs professional basketball team, Mr. Robinson heard the teachings of Christ and turned his life to the Holy One. Servanthood and stewardship in Christ became Number One for Mr. Robinson. His faith commitment has led to the giving of millions of dollars to combat hunger and support the homeless, children, and an inner-city school. David Robinson has learned that the “greatest among us shall be servant.” The servant who gives, offers, and shares is “Number One in Christ.”



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Each time we feast at the Lord’s table we receive the body of Christ and become the Living Christ. Through the bread and wine, we celebrate a meal of gratitude for a life of gratitude for our oneness in Christ.

Reflection Questions

1. How do our choices about giving reflect our baptismal identities?
2. What does oneness in Christ mean to you?