

## From Good to Great

Luke 7:24-30

There is a book written for organizations and businesses by author Jim Collins entitled *Good to Great*. The premise the book is a simple but startling statement for businesses: *“Good is the enemy of great.”* He wrote, *“Few people attain great lives, in large part because it is just so easy to settle for a good life.”* Too many of us settle for being *good Christian people* when the world needs **great Christian people**. *“Good is the enemy of great”* in the kingdom of Christ. Jesus Himself tells us the difference in this text.

*There is none one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is **greater than he**.* Who is John the Baptist? He is an earth-shaker, a renowned prophet, a man of God revered and feared.

- (1). He spoke with passion - “A reed shaken by the wind” (gesticulations). Does this impress?
- (2). He cared not for fashion - “A man dressed in soft (plush) garments.” Is this what you wanted to see?
- (3). He received Divine acclamation - “Among those born of women there is no one greater...”

*“Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he”* (Luke 7:28).

### I. You are greater because of the part you have in God’s kingdom.

The Old Testament prophets looked forward to the coming of God’s kingdom; Jesus announces it. John said, *“Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand”* (Matt. 3:2). Jesus said, *“I must preach the kingdom of God, for I was sent for this purpose.”* Jesus is the **King**. His **dominion** is in your life.

The best eschatology is a proper Christology. The Old Covenant (every jot and tittle), Christ fulfills.

#### (A). The kingdom of the nation of Israel is at the center of the Old Covenant.

God gave Israel Law - *“Do this...and live”* (Lev. 18:5). Israel said: *“All this we will do”* (Ex. 19:8).

The Old Covenant is based on conditional promises; *“If you will do this... then I will do this.”*

#### (B). Old Covenant Israel is but a foreshadowing of the coming true Israel, Jesus Christ.

*“Israel is my firstborn son”* (Ex. 4:22).” But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, *born under the law”* (Gal. 4:4). I will compare Old Covenant Israel with Jesus.

- (1). Israel was born in Canaan, but spent it’s early years in Egypt - so too Christ (Matt. 2:15).
- (2). Israel left Egypt and crossed the Jordan at *Betharaba*, where Jesus was baptized (John 1:29).
- (3). Israel worshipped God through festivals; Jesus’ life fulfilled them all (all seven festivals).
- (4). Israel built a Temple with stones; Jesus is building the true Temple (Matt. 16:18; I Cor. 3:16).
- (5). Israel failed to keep the Law and received judgment; Jesus kept the Law for us (Phil. 3:9).

### II. John the Baptist represents a Great Divide between the Old and the New.

He is the prophet between the Law of Israel and the true Israel (God’s Son). The person who comes to faith in Jesus is *greater* than the greatest Old Testament saint (who lived by Law to be blessed).

I used to work in Colorado. The Continental Divide runs north/south along the the crest of the Rocky Mountains. At Loveland Pass and there’s a sign that says: *“The Continental Divide, Elevation 11,992 ft.”* To the west all the rainfall flowed toward the Pacific Ocean. To the east the runoff flowed into either the Gulf of Mexico or the Atlantic to the east. That invisible line defines the direction of flow. The reason Jesus assigns John such a high position, *and then make him least in the Kingdom of God* is because John preceded and heralded the watershed of history, the Great Divide between the Old Covenant (Testament) era and the New Covenant. The age of Law gave way to the age of Grace.

### III. You are greater because of the promises you have from the King.

*“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “YES” in Christ.”* Through Him the *“Amen”* is spoken by us to God’s glory” (II Cor. 1:20). That’s what it means to go from good to great.