

## **RISE ABOVE BE A CHAMPION SERIES LESSON 3 CHAMPIONING OTHERS**

*Memory verse: “Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.” (Matthew 20:26 NIV)*

### **Introduction**

In this lesson we talk about how Jesus put greatness within reach of all of us. Greatness is the opportunity to serve, add value, and champion the dreams, needs, and desires of others. To the degree we do this on a consistent basis, we rise in our influence with God and ability to fulfill His purpose for our lives.

### **Ice Breaker**

1. We discussed the story of the Good Samaritan. Can you think of an example of how both Jesus and someone you love, helped you in a situation where figuratively you were hurting on the side of the road and someone chose to do something for you, you couldn't do for yourself?
2. As you think of the contrast between a self-centered mindset of greatness and a servant mindset, what is the biggest difference you can see? Has the Lord ever challenged you to set your ego aside so you could do God's work in a better way? What do you think of the difference between seeking to be famous and the willingness to be useful (faithful)?
3. Discuss the difference between a “vertical” only view of spirituality and the “horizontal/vertical” perspective Jesus introduced. What in your mind does it mean to love God by loving others?
4. As we reflect on the priest and the Levite, can you think of excuses or ways fear has sometimes talked you out of stopping to help? Give an example of one of the arguments you have had to overcome in your thinking to stop and take the risk of loving your neighbor as yourself?
5. Who might be someone the Lord has been speaking to you about as a person or group on the side of the road that you might be called to help? What would it possibly mean if you thought of how Jesus might respond as a neighbor to those who live in your neighborhood?

As I mentioned, I want to give an application for mentoring the champion in our kids and students. So, I'm adding a training idea with each lesson. For this lesson, I'm adding the story I read in my sermon about Shea. It is a good story to read to young people to create a discussion about this form of greatness. Another idea I had is based on the saying, “a candle never loses light by lighting another candle”. You might give each person in the group a candle and only light one candle. You could ask the question, “How could you make your light shine brighter?” You could add to the lesson that as they light another candle, you also give them another candle.

After this exercise you could discuss the question, “What are some ways you lit other people’s candle this week?” What is the benefit you see from that? Can you see where God has given you more candles?

### **SHEA STORY**

Shea is a student at a Jewish school for special needs children in Brooklyn, New York. Recently, Shea’s father was speaking at a fund-raising banquet, telling a story of how he and his son, Shea had been walking through the neighborhood a week before. They had stopped to watch a group of boys playing baseball. Shea, who does not communicate well, let his father know in his own special way, that he so wanted to play baseball with those boys. The father thought, “Oh my goodness, what am I going to do?”

The father decides to explain the situation to one of the pitchers. The pitcher makes a quick decision, saying, “You know, it’s the eighth inning. We’re down by six. What have we got to lose?” “Come on in, Shea, we’ll let you bat at the bottom of the ninth.” Shea is ecstatic!

Well, they were losing by six runs in the eighth inning, but by the bottom of the ninth things have turned around. They have gained three runs, and the bases are loaded. If they get a home run, they win.

Now, as promised, it’s Shea’s turn to bat. Realizing their predicament, the team has a huddle. The father’s heart is thumping, “Will they let him bat?” As the team breaks huddle, the father hears them calling, “Come on, Shea. It’s your turn to bat”. Shea smiles with delight as he clutches the bat. But he’s got it all askew and he’s holding it too tight.

The pitcher from the opposite team takes several steps forward and amazingly lobs an easy one right over the plate. Shea swings wildly and misses widely. One of the players from Shea’s team comes up behind him and gently wraps his arm around Shea’s arms. Together, they hold the bat while the pitcher lobs another one. They bunt it! And it rolls up right to the pitcher’s feet.

It’s an easy out, but everybody’s screaming, “Run to base! Run to base, Shea!” The pitcher throws it far and wide. Shea makes first. They say, “Run to second, Shea. Run to second!” The guy out in the field is going to zing it into second, then realizes what’s going on and throws it far and wide. Shea makes second! “Run to third! Run to third!” The other players who were on base are coming into home plate. Shea makes third! “Run home, Shea! Take it home!” Just as he hits home plate, the ball zings in. An uproar from both teams goes up, and they mount Shea on their shoulders and parade him as a hero.

As the father shared the story at the banquet, he said: “That day, 18 boys reached their level of heaven’s perfection. Because when heaven puts one, such as my son on this earth, perfection is measured by how others react to him.”