



## Daily Verse and Comment

### [Luke 22:24-26](#)

(24) Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. (25) And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ (26) But not so *among* you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.

*New King James Version*

[God](#) does not want anybody in His Kingdom who is only good at following orders. He wants sons and daughters who have taken on His values and character and made them their own so that they will always choose the right way of their own volition. His purpose requires that we be able to choose between life and death, blessing and cursing ([Deuteronomy 30:19](#)). If our every word and deed are regimented—whether by God or by a human government—then we do not develop character. Thus, God is working with us to help us make the right choices *without* having to be controlled externally.

The carnal mind, though, really only understands external control. In Christ's teaching, He uses the Gentiles to exemplify those who do not know God, who govern by "exercising lordship" and "exercising authority." Matthew's account says that they "lord it over" the people.

Then [Jesus](#) declares that those who exercise authority in this way are called "benefactors." The basic meaning of the Greek word is "a worker of good." Lording authority over people could be considered "good" only in the sense that it enforces order and discipline rather than chaos. Yet, the real issue is *how* that order and discipline are brought about. If it is done in the Gentile way, it is achieved through force, coercion, oppressive legislation, threats, and fear. However, if God's way is followed, order and discipline may take

longer to accomplish, but they will endure because they come from *within* the people rather than being *imposed on* them.

Another way that "benefactor" can be understood is as "one who provides for another." In collectivist political systems, the government is seen as the benefactor of the people because it "guarantees" things like jobs, food, healthcare, retirement, security, and so on, in return for allegiance. The Gentiles rule by causing the people to depend on them for everything, and they appear to be generous and benevolent by "giving" things back to the people.

In either application, Christ says, "but *not so among you*." Recall that His teaching began with the disciples arguing over who was the greatest. They were focused on their *position* and their *status*—like those who do not know God—and Jesus had to direct them back to their *responsibility*. His instruction to those who would have authority in His church was to *serve*, not to *rule*.

The service of the church is geared toward helping the members toward "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" ([Ephesians 4:13](#)). He clearly does not mean "serving" by establishing iron-fisted control and ruling the members by fear, nor does He mean "benevolently" doing for them what they can and should do for themselves. Both of those extremes stunt character development, leaving the people unprepared to live eternally. Instead, He means serving by applying those gifts that have been given for the edification of the body (verse 16), and not taking more authority than He has given.

— David C. Grabbe

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