

The Best

I. Introduction

a. Beauty and the Beast –

LeFou: Wow! You didn't miss a shot, Gaston! You're the greatest hunter in the whole world!

Gaston: I know.

LeFou: No beast alive stands a chance against you. Ha ha ha! And no girl, for that matter.

Gaston: It's true, LeFou. And I've got my sights set on that one.

LeFou: Hm! The inventor's daughter?

Gaston: She's the one - the lucky girl I'm going to marry.

LeFou: But she's –

Gaston: The most beautiful girl in town.

LeFou: I know, but –

Gaston: That makes her the best. And don't I deserve the best?

II. KEY THOUGHT: If we are seeking significance through being recognized as the best at something, we are asking for frustration, and need to be looking for something better than being the best.

III. The Best is not all it is cracked up to be

a. It is hard to be the best

i. Best shot – Jud. 20:16

ii. Super warrior – 1 Sam. 17:4-7

iii. Strongest – Jud. 16:2-3

iv. Wisest – 1 Kings 3:12; 4:29-34

v. Most beautiful – Gen. 2:21-23

vi. My own experience

1. At High school

a. Best at math

b. Best at brain bowl

2. Got to college

a. It's a lot harder to be the best, when you are among the best

b. My college roommate, better at everything that I prided myself on being the best at

c. So I acted like being the best meant doing well with the minimum of effort

i. That didn't work

b. It's hard to convince everyone that you're the best

i. There can be only one best

1. Boasting

2. Arguing

3. Striving

4. Fighting

ii. Ugly

1. Matt. 23:6-12 – the Pharisees

2. Matt. 20:20-24 – James and John
 3. Mark 9:33-37 – All the disciples right after transfiguration
 4. Luke 22:24-26 – after Lord’s supper
 5. 1 Cor. 3:1-4; 2 Cor. 12:20 – Corinthians
 6. Gal. 5:20 – works of the flesh
- c. Bad things happen to the best
- i. Benjamites – 94% of their army killed wiped out by Israel while defending their wicked brethren - Judges 20
 - ii. Goliath – killed by David
 - iii. Samson – beguiled and betrayed by women
 - iv. Solomon – led from God by women
 - v. Eve – deceived by Satan, cursed by God
 - vi. All the rest (Eccl. 9:11) – time and chance happen to them all
 1. Time – You will not always be the best
 2. Chance – Even at your best you will not always succeed
- d. If our significance depends on being recognized as the best, we will likely lead lives of disappointment, frustration and fear
- i. Disappointment and frustration
 1. Because we are usually only second best at best
 - ii. Fear
 1. When we are at our best
 2. Who or what will take us down?
 3. How long will I retain my ability/prowess/skill before it is taken away from me?
- IV. A better way of being the best
- a. Changing the field of competition
 - i. There are many, many things that I cannot be the best at
 - ii. But there are some that I can
 1. The best husband to my wife
 2. The best father to my children
 3. Doing all I do the best I can
 4. That is where the most difficult and most meaningful victories are won
 - iii. Kurt Warner
 1. Super Bowl champion
 2. Has seven kids
 3. He and his wife Brenda wrote a book called “First things First” discussing how they keep their faith and family ahead of the demands of his pro-football, celebrity career.
 4. Your kids don’t care how good you are on the football field
 - iv. If we expect our successes in the world to give us bragging rights or automatic respect and love at home, we will be confused, disappointed and frustrated
 - b. Christian are the best at making the best of the worst
 - i. God does that with us
 1. He takes a shepherd boy and makes him a giant killer

2. Takes a fugitive killer and shepherd and makes him the leader of a great nation
 3. Takes a persecutor and make him an apostle
 4. Takes fishermen and makes them fishers of men
 5. Takes sinners and makes them saints
 6. Takes the foreigners and outcasts and makes them sons and daughters of God
- ii. We do that
1. With ourselves
 - a. When we crucify the old man (Rom. 6:6) and allow Christ to live in us (Gal. 2:20)
 - b. When we put to set aside the works of the flesh and begin bearing the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:19-25)
 - c. When we stop seeking significance through being better than others and begin seeking significance through being like Jesus (2 Cor. 10:12)
 2. With our relationships
 - a. When we bless those who curse us and pray for those who despitefully use us (Matt. 5:43-45)
 - b. When we stop needing others to acknowledge us as better than them and start serving them in the name of Jesus Christ (Matt. 20:25-28)
 3. With our circumstances
 - a. When we do not demand the best from this life, because we already have something infinitely better than the best this world can offer, Jesus Christ
 - b. When we joyfully accept trials, pain and suffering because of what we have in Christ (2 Cor. 12:9-11)
 - c. Phil. 4:11-13
- V. Christians may not be the best, but we have the best
- a. The best promises
 - b. The best faith
 - c. The best hope
 - d. The best Savior
 - e. God gives the best, Himself
 - f. God cared enough to send the very best
- VI. Conclusion
- a. Are trying to be best yourself?
 - b. Or trying to have the best in Jesus Christ?
 - c. Invitation