

God Exalts the Humble, but He Brings Down the Proud

Luke 14:7-11

In this text Jesus is addressing religious people (Pharisees) who have little concept of the Kingdom:

1. The Pharisees considered themselves the best of the best in terms of people.
2. They felt they deserved the place of honor, and fought to be recognized as first in all things.
3. The ways of Jesus are opposite of the world, and God exalts the humble and brings down the proud.

In the system of this world, the way up is to fight and claw up. In Christ's Kingdom *the way up is down*. *"Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted"* (Lk. 4:11).

Christ's Kingdom is so opposite of this world. To live life fully, you must die to yourself (Matt. 10:39). This world revels in strength, but Christ says when you are weak, then you are strong (II Cor. 12:10). Grace is the ability to see life in the manner Christ intends, and to know the world is vanity (Eccles. 1:2).

Jesus teaches us about humility in life using a parable and then a principle. This morning we will look at both to see how we are living our lives. Just a word of caution; people with "low-self esteem" often wrongly consider themselves humble. Not so. Low self-esteem is the flip side of pride. The humble are deemed lowly by others and don't care; the humble are overlooked and are content. Are we humble?

I. Christ's parable teaches us that exalting oneself above others is natural to us all.

Jesus never taught in a vacuum. He came to "fulfill the Law." He quoted often quoted Deuteronomy. So when Jesus gives the parable of the wedding He might have had in mind the words of Solomon. *"Don't exalt yourself in the king's presence, and do not claim a place among his great men; it is better for him to say to you, 'Come up here,' than for him to humiliate you before his nobles."* (Prov. 25:6-7).

- A. Humility is contrary to our nature.** *"Humility is the queen of the Christian graces."* J.C. Ryle
The root of the biblical word "humility" is the word "knowledge." Right knowledge humbles us. Evolution has man at the center of the universe, the captain of his destiny, but this is not right. The person who really knows himself/herself, and who really knows Christ, this person is humble. This person says, "I am vile." He cries, like Paul, "I am chief of sinners." (Job 40:4; 1 Tim. 1:15).
- B. Our self-exaltation will always come to an end,** either through conversion or a self-inflicted crash. Those who don't know Christ are chasing self-exaltation from one room to another. There is never enough. A day is coming when the words of Christ with which the parable concludes (v. 11), will be seen in every person; He's the King before whom the proud fall and the meek are exalted.

II. There is a principle that brings humility to every person who is seeking to be exalted by God.

"He who humbles himself" – He who humbles himself, will be exalted (by God). Here's the principle. It's far better to humble myself by changing how I think than for Christ to humble me Himself. "Don't conform yourself to this world, but be transformed by renewing of your mind" (Rom 12:2).

What I am to think: I will consider anything good enough for me, and indescribably better than I deserve. In lowliness of mind I will esteem my brothers better than myself (see Philippians 2:3).

"Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling. It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud." **Prov. 16:18-19**

"But God gives more grace. For God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble" (Jam. 4:6).