

The Messenger

By Phillip Rutledge

Recognizing Humility

Luke 14:11 (NIV) *For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.* Leading up to this statement we find Jesus having something to eat at the home of a prominent Pharisee. Jesus noticed how the guests picked the places of honour at the table.

In Luke 14:7-11 Jesus teaches about seeking honour. The Life Application Study Bible (NIV) draws to our attention that, *Jesus advised people not to rush for the best place at a feast. People today are just as eager to raise their social status, whether by being with the right people, dressing for success, or driving the right car.* Jesus' words were counter-cultural then and they remain that way even today; maybe more so.

People marketing products to the consumer today attempt to convince their audience that "It's all about you", "You can do it", "if it feels good – do it", "be your own person" and "you have to look after number one – You". This kind of attitude leads us away from humility and into self-centredness. In God's eyes the two don't mix.

As we observe the culture these days it appears the word humble is not as "friendly" a word as it once was. Our highly sophisticated society seems to accentuate the negative meaning of humble (being "low or inferior", to "degrade somebody" or humiliate them). These definitions were never based on scripture. The biblical roots defining the word *humble* can still be found in any good dictionary as, "marked by meekness or modesty" or "respectful". I wonder how the opposite definition came to be?

I heard a speaker on the radio recently define *humble* as "recognizing the sufficiency of Christ". I think that's very accurate from a Christian perspective. The act of humbling oneself has to do with our attitude towards Christ, not how we appear before our peers.

Listen as Jesus humbled himself, recognizing God the Father in his life.

John 5:19 (NIV) *Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.*

John 5:30 (NIV) *By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.*

John 5:41 (NIV) *"I do not accept praise from men,*

John 7:16 (NIV) *Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me.*

Would you like to know the perfect example of perfect humility? You guessed it. Imitate Jesus Christ. I offer you a word of caution though. The minute you think you are humble – you're probably not. You'll be running the risk of becoming prideful. Don't attempt to change on your own but do it through prayer; ask the Holy Spirit for help.

An Anglican prayer that is offered unto God before communion is affectionately referred to as the *Prayer of Humble Access*. If you would like to read it, write me and I will gladly send you a copy.

If you would like to leave a radical impression on the world today, I encourage you to seek a humble heart, in Jesus' name I pray. - S.D.G.

Your thoughts or comments are always welcomed. My email address is TheMessenger@staidansministries.com