

Jesus Teaches About Humility and Servanthood Luke 14:1-14

by David Servant

Jesus teaches that true humility involves serving others with a pure heart, motivated by love for God, rather than seeking to exalt ourselves.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:7, Proverbs 19:17, Matthew 6:1, Matthew 12:10, Luke 14:7, Luke 14:12, Philippians 2:3, James 4:6, 1 John 3:18

Topics: "True Humility", "Selfless Service"

Description

David Servant preaches about Jesus' sinless nature and how the Pharisees criticized Him for virtues rather than faults. He exposes the Pharisees' false humility and desire for human praise, contrasting it with true humility that seeks God's approval. Jesus teaches the importance of genuine love and service without hidden motives, encouraging selfless acts towards those who cannot repay. He challenges believers to show love to the neglected and marginalized, reflecting God's pure love and rejecting selfishness disguised as love.

Transcript

Just the fact that the only fault the Pharisees could find with Jesus was that He healed on the Sabbath tells us that He must have been a very good person. (We know that he was sinless). Jesus wasn't content to let them think that He was guilty of even one little sin, so He explained that the fault they'd found in Him wasn't a fault at all. Rather, they were criticizing Him for a virtue. He was helping someone who needed help on the Sabbath, just as they would do for their sons or animals if they were in need on the Sabbath. So Jesus proved that their only criticism of Him was unjustified. He was sinless.

As we've previously seen, the religion of the Pharisees was mostly just a show. They worked hard at looking good on the outside, but their inward motivation was all wrong. They were seeking the praise of men rather than the praise of God, something that usually characterizes religious people who are not born again. Jesus saw through them, and noted that their desire to be honored before others was evident even in how they seated themselves to eat a meal together. Each one tried to sit near the head of the table where the most "important" people sat, and Jesus seized the opportunity to teach a lesson about humility. When we exalt ourselves, we run the risk of being humbled, just like the man who takes a seat of honor at a wedding feast. It's much better and more pleasing to God if we will humble ourselves. If we will, we're more likely to be exalted.

Humble people are always thinking, not of themselves, but of others. For that reason, they have a servant's attitude, looking for opportunities to be a blessing. However, just because someone serves others isn't sure proof that he's a true servant. Many people outwardly seem to be kind and generous, but often they are just acting in order to gain people's favor. They are hoping to personally benefit in the long run. For example, people sometimes give gifts in order to make others feel indebted to them. That is one reason Jesus told us to give secretly. Secret gifts are motivated by pure love.

That is also why Jesus told the host of the dinner not to invite his friends, brothers, relatives and rich neighbors when he gave a dinner. They could and would repay him for his kindness. A higher, more godly love would be demonstrated by giving a dinner for those who could not repay him. Jesus told him that if he would give a dinner for people who could not repay him, such as the poor, crippled, lame and blind, God would reward him at the resurrection of the godly.

This doesn't mean that it's wrong for us to show love to our friends, brothers, relatives and neighbors. But our love for them could be just selfishness disguised as love if we have hidden motives. God is calling us to a higher love, one that is pure like His. He wants us to show love to those whom most people neglect, ignore, and even hate.

Q. What do you think God would say to a person who wants to look good in the eyes of others when he humbles himself with the hope of being exalted?

A. God would say that person is guilty of false humility. True humility has no plans for being exalted by other people. It only desires the praise of God.

Q. How do you think God feels about social cliques, small groups of exclusive people who look down upon or don't associate with those who don't meet their standards for acceptance?

A. He's against them, because they are held together by selfishness and convey hatred toward people He loves.

Application: Is there anyone you know that most people ignore, a person who receives very little love from others? It may even be someone in your school or church who is a little different from everyone else. In light of what Jesus said, what do you think He wants you to do? Will you?

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