

Luke 14:11

by Chuck Smith

Jesus teaches that humility is the key to being exalted by God, while pride leads to abasement.

Scripture: Proverbs 16:18, Proverbs 18:12, Daniel 4:34-37, Daniel 5:20-23, Matthew 5:16, Luke 14:10-11, Luke 18:14, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6

Topics: "Humility", "Exaltation"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the principle that true exaltation comes through humility, as demonstrated by Jesus during a dinner at a Pharisee's house. Observing the guests vying for places of honor, Jesus teaches that those who exalt themselves will be humbled, while those who humble themselves will be exalted. He illustrates this with the story of Nebuchadnezzar, who learned the hard way about pride and its consequences. Smith encourages believers to seek humility in their actions, reminding them that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Ultimately, the way up is down, and true honor comes from serving others rather than seeking personal glory.

Transcript

The Way Up is Down

Intro. Jesus has been invited to eat at a Pharisee's house. This is

the third time Luke tells us of Pharisee's inviting Him to

dinner. It would appear that this is a set up, for they had a

man with dropsy there at dinner, and it was the sabbath day.

We are told that they watched Him to see if He would heal on

the sabbath.

I. Jesus had been observing them. He watched how the invited guests picked

their places to sit.

A. At the Eastern feasts there were always places of honor to be

seated.

1. Often the seating was arranged in what was called the triclinium. Small tables for three, and the middle or second place at the table was the place of honor.

2. If you had 15 guests they would be numbered, and the guests with the numbers 2,5,8,11,14. would be the honored guests.

3. They had upper and lower rooms, the upper rooms more honorable.

B. He watched them how they were seeking to be seated in the places of honor.

C. In the 20th chapter of Luke Jesus said, "Beware of the scribes which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts."

D. The parable of Jesus was prompted by their vying for the seats of honor.

1. When you are invited to a wedding feast, He said, "Don't take a seat in the highest room, for you might be embarrassed when a guest of greater honor comes, and the host will ask you to step down.

2. Rather take a seat in the lowest room then if you are asked to take a higher seat, you will be honored.

3. This then brought forth the principle

II. Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased. A. How opposite this is from the philosophy of the world.

1. The world honors the go getter, the man who will push ahead, the aggressive. a. Note the politicians. b. The T.V. personalities. 2. They look at the humble man as rather wimpish. B. Surely history is full of illustrations of this principle. 1. Nebuchadnezzar who was perhaps the greatest monarch who ever lived, who built Babylon to it's zenith of glory. 2. He was warned by God in a dream concerning his pride, so he

sought to be careful, but one day as he was walking through the hanging gardens which were one of the wonders of the ancient world, he said, "Is this not the great Babylon which I have built by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty." 3.

At that moment God showed him who was boss, and how expendable he was. For He took his sanity from him for a period of time, and he began to dwell with the beasts of the field, and to eat grass like the oxen. The dew of heaven fell on him at night and his hair grew long, and his fingernails became as claws. 4. When he regained his sanity he proclaimed, DNL 4:34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion [is] an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom [is] from generation to generation: DNL 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth [are] reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and [among] the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

DNL 4:36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. DNL 4:37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works [are] truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase. 5. Later when Daniel was rehearsing these facts to his grandson he said, DNL 5:18 O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: DNL 5:19 And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

DNL 5:20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: DNL 5:21 And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling [was] with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and [that] he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. DNL 5:22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; DNL 5:23 But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath [is], and whose [are] all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: C.

Look at how many proud men have been abased. 1. In the political world. 2. In the financial world. 3. In the sports world. I was telling Kay, no matter how the jury decides, the world of O.J. Simpson is over, he will never be able to return to N.B.C. or jump over suitcases in airports again.

III. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

A. The prophet Samuel said to King Saul, "When you were little in your own sight the Lord made you king over Israel.

B. There is a proverb, 18:12, Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honor is humility.

1. Another well known proverb, "Pride cometh before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."
2. Basically what Jesus is telling them is that the way up is down, and the way down is up.
3. Take the lowest place and you will be invited to come up, but take the highest place and you will be asked to step down.

C. James said, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He shall lift you up."

D. Peter said, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

E. Both Peter and James tell us that God resisteth the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

1. If you are proud, God is resisting you.
2. Any pride is the exalting of yourself against God.
3. God is the only one to be glorified, and any glory you take for yourself is taking away from God.

F. In another place we read how that Jesus was observing how they gave their offerings in the temple.

G. Seek to do your righteous acts so that you do not call attention to yourselves.

1. Let your light so shine before men, that when they see your good works, they glorify your Father which is in heaven.

- a. You can shine your light upon yourself, so that you draw attention to yourself and men glorify you.

b. Or you can shine your light on Him, so that men glorify him.

2. So what Jesus is saying is that if you keep shining your light on yourself, He is going to punch your lights out.

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