Showing Humility
Luke 14:7-14
SS Lesson for 01/19/2014

Devotional Scripture: Phil 2:1-8

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Introduction

Overview and Approach to Lesson

The lesson teaches how we as Christians always be found Showing Humility. The study’s aim is to understand what Jesus really wants to see in those who choose to follow Him and to see that a follower of Christ must endeavor to be as much like Jesus as he can possibly be. The study’s application is to consider what changes we need to make in order to be like Jesus.

Key Verse: Luke 14:11

11 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

Looking around, Jesus noticed how the guests picked the places of honor. The closer a person was to the host, the greater was that guest’s position of honor. As people entered the room in the Pharisee’s house where the table was spread, they must have scrambled for seats at the head of the table. The parable Jesus then told was designed to get them to think about spiritual realities in relation to the kingdom message He had been preaching. Verse 11 records the point of Jesus’ parable: Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. This recalls Jesus’ earlier statement that those who are last will be first and those who are first will be last (13:30). The Pharisees, assuming they would have important positions in the kingdom, would be humiliated if they were pushed aside for someone else (14:9). However, if they would humble themselves, then they would perhaps be honored (v. 10). Then Jesus spoke to His host, telling him that if he would invite the outcasts of society (the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind)—people who could never repay him for his generosity—this would show that he was ministering to them for the Lord’s sake and not his own (cf. Matt. 6:1-18; James 1:26-27). He would be laying up for himself treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20) and would be becoming rich toward God (Luke 12:21). Inviting the outcasts would not make the man righteous; it would testify that he was in a righteous standing before God. This is shown by Jesus’ statement that the repayment would not come at the present time but at the resurrection of the righteous.

Commentary from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Jesus gives very practical advice: rather than risk the embarrassment of being asked to give up a place of honor, begin instead at a more humble place. If this strategy is followed, there is not only no risk of humiliation, but also there is the possibility of being promoted to a higher place at the table, a public honor. Proverbs 25:6, 7 indicates that what Jesus is teaching is nothing new. The Pharisees, who pride themselves in their meticulous attention to the law, should already know this! But Jesus is offering far more than social advice here. His parable is intended to compare this situation with a principle in God’s kingdom: the self-promoting person will eventually be humbled, whereas the person who acts with humility will eventually be honored (exalted). This is an example of what is sometimes called “the great reversal” in the Bible. The world teaches us to push to the front, to seek honor and glory, but God overturns the world’s rules and expectations. Ultimate honor is a gift of God that is not earned through striving for attention. God honors the humble, not the proud (see Luke 1:52; 18:9-14; 1 Peter 5:5). True exaltation is for God and from God, not a gift we bestow on ourselves (1 Samuel 2:7).

Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson

The outline of the lesson came from a previous SS Lesson dated 02/17/2008 and from the points revealed by the study of the Scriptural text.

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| | go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. | 

14  And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just. | Humility through Service |

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

*From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*

In his book *The Life You've Always Wanted*, John Ortberg asks, "We'd like to be humble—but what if no one notices?" If we take pride in our giftedness, why not be proud of our humbleness? And if no one notices how humble we are, shouldn't we point it out? To anyone with a biblical perspective on humility, the idea of trumpeting humbleness as a prideful accomplishment does not make sense. It is an oxymoron—a self-contradiction. Pride and humility are not good partners. "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble" (James 4:6). This week's lesson takes us to some of Jesus' instructions in this regard. Today's lesson takes us into a period of time known as the later Peren ministry of Jesus (compare Luke 13:22; John 10:40-42). During this time, in Jesus' third year of ministry, he was invited to a Sabbath-day meal at the home of "a prominent Pharisee" (Luke 14:1a). As in the lesson from two weeks ago, this proves to be a test as to whether or not Jesus will heal on the Sabbath. Jesus was under close observation (v. 1b), but the subsequent healing seemed to have been done without overt controversy (vv. 2-4). Instead, Luke's focus is on the dynamics of the meal itself. Before diving into today's text, knowing a few things about these village meals-by-invitation will help us understand what was going on there. The meal at issue in our text happened in a private home, thus sharply limiting the size of the guest list. Luke does not say how many guests were there, but probably no more than about a dozen were at the table, reclining on cushioned benches. Therefore it is a mistake to think of these local dinners as "banquets" in the modern sense of hundreds of guests situated in a hotel ballroom. The meal would have been served by women of the household or by servants. It is also likely that there were others present who were not at the table, but were standing or sitting around the edges of the room. This arrangement indicated a pecking order: the most-honored guests were at the table, while the less honored were not. The host presided from a central position at the table, and the closer one was to the host, the more prestigious his status at this dinner. Meals-by-invitation in the village would have been of differing size and scope depending on the occasion. A weekly Sabbath meal (like the one in our text) would have been less elaborate than a wedding feast.

**Major Theme Analysis**

*Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV*

**Humility through Choice (Luke 14:7-11)**

7 So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: 8 "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him;
9 "and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.
10 "But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you.
11 "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

The folly in seeking honor (7-9)

Seeking honor makes one have a haughty spirit and that leads to destruction (Prov 16:18)

18 Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.

Seeking honor because of pride never makes sense (Isa 10:15-16)

15 Shall the ax boast itself against him who chops with it? Or shall the saw exalt itself against him who saws with it? As if a rod could wield itself against those who lift it up, Or as if a staff could lift up, as if it were not wood! 16 Therefore the Lord, the Lord of hosts, Will send leanness among his fat ones; And under his glory He will kindle a burning Like the burning of a fire.

Seeking honor makes one think more highly of himself than he ought (Rom 12:3)

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

Seeking honor keeps one from seeking God (Ps 10:4)

4 The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.

Seeking honor makes one a fool (Prov 26:12)

12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

The reward of seeking humility (10-11)

The reward of seeking humility comes from submitting to God and others (Eph 5:21)

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

The reward of seeking humility comes from walking humbly with God (Mic 6:8)

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Seeking humility rewards by knowing that in our weakness God's strength makes us strong (2 Cor 12:9-10)

9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Seeking humility rewards by knowing that God uses the lowly people and things (1 Cor 1:26-31)

26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things-and the things that are not-to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."
Seeking humility rewards by knowing that everything is a loss compared to knowing Jesus (Phil 3:8-9)

8 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

Humility through Service (Luke 14:12-14)

12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.
13 "But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.
14 "And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

Service that does not seek rewards on earth (12)

Seeking rewards on earth is behaving like unbelievers (Luke 6:32-35)

32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners ' love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners ' do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners ' lend to 'sinners ,' expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

Seeking rewards on earth is seeking to be honored by men not God (Matt 6:1-4)

6:1 "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Seek the kingdom of God versus seeking rewards on earth (Matt 6:31-34)

31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Service not seeking rewards on earth result in praises and thanks to God (2 Cor 9:12-13)

12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

Service that does not seek rewards on earth seeks God's commendation versus man's (2 Cor 10:18)

18 For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.
Service that seeks rewards at the resurrection (13-14)

Rewards at the resurrection through being seated with Jesus in heavenly places (Eph 2:5-7)

5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Rewards at the resurrection through being raised with Christ because it is the goal of our faith (Col 2:12)

12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Rewards at the resurrection proving that our faith was not futile (1 Cor 15:12-19)

12 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

Rewards at the resurrection when we attain the resurrection from the dead (Phil 3:9-11)

10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Rewards at the resurrection that fulfills the living hope about the future (1 Peter 1:3)

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Delayed Compensation (from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Frank Capra’s 1946 film It’s a Wonderful Life is a classic, often seen on TV during the Christmas season. It tells the story of George Bailey, who has given up his dreams in order to run the family-owned lending institution. When thousands of dollars are misplaced and his business is about to be shut down, George considers suicide because his life apparently has been so worthless. Then Clarence, George’s guardian angel, intervenes. Clarence shows him how the entire town would have been different in George’s absence. Rather than being worthless, George’s life has been a blessing to the town. One thing leads to another, and many friends give him money. Even the crusty bank examiner, moved by the town’s love for George, puts his own money into the hat. The fictional George Bailey was a selfless “giver.” In the end he experienced a reward that he could not have imagined. Our heavenly Father is willing and able to reward us in the end. Any blessings we have been denied on earth will be compensated in ways that we surely cannot now imagine!

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thought From Bob Deffinbaugh


What a lesson the words of our Lord in this text conveyed to the Jews of that day. They assumed that they had a place at the “table,” that is in the kingdom of God, and their only concern was which place that would be.
They were concerned with their position in the kingdom, while it never occurred to them to be concerned with their possession of the kingdom. These Jews were not atheists, nor great “sinners” in any outward way (such as the tax gatherers and the prostitutes were, in the minds of some), they were very religious people, in fact leaders of their religion. They had no doubt about their salvation, but they were wrong. The last section of our passage is a solemn warning to the Jews that they will miss out of that which they presumed they had. For the Gentile readers of this gospel, they find an explanation of the reason why the Gentiles have been privileged to enter into the blessings which God promised His chosen people, Israel. It is, however, not a flattering text, one which ridicules the Jews for their unbelief and which praises the Gentiles for their greater discernment, as evidenced by their faith in Israel’s Messiah for salvation. The Gentiles are those who are compelled to come, from the highways and byways. They are, as it were, the “bums” along the roadway. Note, too, the insight which we gain from this passage on the interplay between the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. Our text attributes the failure of Israelites to enter into the blessings of the kingdom of God to their rejection of the invitation given to them. Luke does not tell us that the Jews were kept from the kingdom by God’s choice (election—which is, you understand, a biblical truth), but by their own choice. On the other hand, the salvation of the Gentiles is not attributed to their choice, but to divine compulsion. The sovereignty of God is thus emphasized with respect to salvation; the responsibility of man with respect to condemnation. Both doctrines are true, though they must be held in tension. Let us keep the perspective and the emphasis which we find in Luke’s account. Luke does not trade of God’s sovereignty for man’s free will, nor vice-versa. Indeed, he holds both in tension (cf. Acts 2:23). Let me pause right here for a moment. The reason why the Jews lost out on the kingdom of God was because they rejected God’s clear invitation, in the person of Jesus Christ, the King of Israel. Christ is still the key to man’s salvation, or may I say, more bluntly, your salvation. The only way men go to heaven (get into the kingdom of God—sit at the banquet table, as our text symbolically portrays it) is by receiving Jesus Christ as the Son of God, God’s King, God’s Savior. In the Gospels, God is declaring to you an invitation to “come to dinner at His house,” as it were, to become a member of His kingdom, to sit as His table forever, forgiven of your sins, righteous in His sight through the work of Christ, and free to enjoy intimate fellowship with Him. If I have failed to make this invitation clear to you elsewhere in my exposition of Luke’s gospel, let me do it now. The “good news” of the gospel (for this is what “gospel” means) is that God wants you to enjoy fellowship with Him, in His kingdom, forever. To accept His Son at His invitation is to obtain the right to enter in. To reject His Son, or even to put off a decision to accept Him, is the cause for being condemned to eternal separation from Him and His kingdom.

A number of years ago, I taught a Bible study in our home. It was a study of the gospel of John. One of the couples that attended came to faith in Christ during the study. When the husband shared his testimony with me, he described his conversion in a way I had not heard before. He said that he could not identify a specific time when he was saved, although he knew it was in the last several weeks. He said that his conversion came “somewhere between chapter 3 and chapter 7 (I confess, I’ve forgotten the specific chapters). What an interesting way of viewing one’s conversion, and yet a very reasonable one, for the person who has studied through a particular gospel account. The gospel accounts are written to build to a conclusion. They are written to bring us to certain conclusions, foremost among them is the conclusion that we are a sinner and that we can be saved only by trusting in Jesus as the Son of God who died in our place, bearing our penalty. I pray that as you have traveled through the chapters of Luke’s gospel the light has somehow come on, and you now know that you, too, are a child of God, assured of a place at His table.

There is yet another lesson, which is as applicable to men today as it was to the Israelites who listened to these words of Jesus centuries ago. The “external glue” of our text, which gives it a unity, is the dinner table. Everything which is said here is said at or near the dinner table, and about the dinner table. But there is an “internal glue” which should be recognized as well, providing us with an even deeper unity. That “silver thread” is the concept of self-interest. Think about the ways in which self-interest can be found at the heart of every sin which our Lord condemns in these verses. In verses 1-6, self-interest is at the heart of the sinful actions and attitudes of the Pharisees. Self-interest caused the Pharisees to reject Jesus, angry that He spent great amounts of time and energy with “sinners” and the unsuitable people, rather than with them. Self-interest caused the Pharisees to want Jesus out of the way, lest He overthrow their system, and prevent them from all the “perks” which it afforded them. Self-interest was undoubtedly the motivation for their asking Jesus to dinner, and for “using” a sick man’s ailment in an effort to entrap Jesus in some technical legal
infraction. So, too, it was self-interest that enabled the hypocritical Pharisees to excuse their acts of labor (pulling their son or ox from the well) on the Sabbath. It was also self-interest which motivated each person to seek to sit in the places of honor at the dinner table (verses 7-11), which very likely left Jesus at the place of lowest honor, in a way fittingly appropriate, given the teaching of Philippians chapter 2 pertaining to the humiliation of Christ, leading to the cross. Once again, self-interest is the culprit, a root evil, in verses 12-14. The reason why we are tempted to invite our friends, relatives, and the affluent, to our feasts, is that they can be counted on to return the favor. Self-interest will always invite those who can pay us back, reciprocate, rather than to “waste” a meal on someone too poor or unable to return the favor.

Finally, in verses 15-24, it was self-interest that caused the Israelites of Jesus’ day to reject Him as Messiah. In the parable which Jesus told (vv. 16-24), three individuals are said to have accepted (by inference, at least) the invitation to attend the feast, and yet the excuses for not attending were all matter of self (selfish, if you prefer) interest. It is self-interest which keeps men from coming to Christ for salvation. Men wish to enter into the kingdom, but do not wish to create any pain, displeasure, or sacrifice for themselves. Thus, self-interest plays a prominent role in keeping men from Christ and thus from His banquet table, the kingdom of God. Our culture is perhaps more permeated by self-interest than any other people at any other time in history. We have a magazine on the rack at the grocery store entitled “Self.” We may laugh at the antics through which the Pharisees went to get the best places at the dinner table, but we also sign up for classes which teach us how to assert ourselves, so that we can be more successful. Nearly every problem which man experiences today is now linked (in some mysterious way) to a poor self-concept. That which plagues the world is not self-seeking, but rather the lack of self-love and self-assertion. We are truly a self-oriented society, just as Paul described the culture of those in the last days (2 Timothy 3:1-5). But I do not wish to dwell on the self-orientation of the unbelieving world, as evil as this is. I wish to draw your attention to the way self-interest has become a primary motivation in the church, and in the lives of countless Christians (myself included). While we may not fight for the chair of honor at the dinner table (only because there is none), we will find Christians lining up for leadership training classes, for positions of prominence and public visibility. At the same time, those tasks which call for menial service, for little recognition or power or prominence seem to go begging those who would faithfully carry out this non-glamorous ministry. We avoid ministry which has little immediate returns (such as praise, or increased numbers or growth). Ministry to those who are unable to pay us back, even with conscious gratitude, is shunned like the plague. Ministries where people don’t seem to appreciate us and our contribution are quickly left behind, replaced by some ministry which is more “fulfilling.” I say to you my friend that “self-interest” literally abounds in the church and in our lives. This is one of the reasons for the strife which the New Testament writers describe (cf. Philippians 2). Paul had to look long and hard to find a man like Timothy, who would be “genuinely concerned for your welfare” (Philippians 2:20). The reason for this is also given by Paul in this same text: For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:21). What a sad commentary! Let us recognize how much self-interest paralyzes and perverts our ministry, our worship, and our Christian walk. Let us learn from our text that our reward in heaven will be great, and that it comes to those who “give up their life” to gain it, while those who seek to save their lives lose them. May the Spirit of God work through the Word of God to replace self-seeking with self-sacrifice, to the glory of God and for our own good as well.

From URL: https://bible.org/seriespage/table-talks-luke-141-24

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

High-profile athletes are rarely known for their humility. The sports star who acts with humility seems to be the odd exception. One such exception was Roger Maris. In 1961, Maris gained national attention because he was hitting home runs at a pace to break Babe Ruth’s record of 60 home runs in a single season. On October 1, 1961, Maris smashed a pitch over the right-field wall of Yankee Stadium, and the record was broken. If you look this up on the Internet and watch the video of the event, you won’t see Maris high-stepping around the bases or calling attention to himself. He looks almost embarrassed as he rounds third base and ducks straight into the dugout. A few seconds later, he reappears to acknowledge the applause of the crowd, but he seems to have been shoved into view by his teammates. Jesus taught that we should not seek to exalt ourselves. We
should take humble positions of service with joy and grace. Paul reminds us that even though Jesus was God, he became like a servant so that we might be saved through his death on the cross (Philippians 2:6-8). May we constantly and consistently examine our lives for ungodly pride and find ways to serve others with humility motivated by Christlike love. Ask yourself a few questions as you consider this lesson. Is my church a welcoming place for people with disabilities? Do I welcome a diversity of races and nationalities in my church? Do I have a desire to share the gospel with those who are not like me? God is the Lord of people of all shapes, sizes, languages, ages, and skin color. Should we be any less welcoming than he?

**Concluding Thoughts from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator**

Pride is one of what are called the seven deadly sins. The book of Proverbs says, "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him" (6:16). The first sin mentioned is "a proud look" (vs. 17). There is no doubt that pride is an attitude God hates. The setting of the Scripture text is Jesus' telling of a parable about a wedding. That may seem a rather unlikely scenario, but in those days people sat in certain places when at a social gathering. There was always an order in the seating at these gatherings. When people came in, they would often sit in the best seats. But this could be a problem. If a more important guest came along, he was seated in an important place. If someone was already there, he was moved to a lower place.

There is a similar discussion of this in the book of James. James discussed the problem of favoritism in chapter 2. There was obviously a problem in some churches of favoring those who were well-off. James mentioned the poor, but the point is not as much about favoring the poor as it is about treating people equally. Discrimination is what is wrong. It always has been and always will be. It is wrong because it is based on pride. No one knows just when Satan fell, but Scripture does tell us why he fell. It was because of pride. He was created as the most beautiful of all the angelic host. He was blessed with wonderful abilities, but that was not good enough. He wanted more. The only one greater, however, was God. That did not stop Satan. He was still determined to be even greater than God: "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God" (Isa. 14:13). His pride was his downfall. Pride is still the downfall of anyone who allows it to consume him. Pride is wrong. But the text does not just condemn pride; it also praises humility. It has been said that humility is a quality that once you realize you have, you no longer do. Aside from the humor, there really is truth in that. God desires that we live humble lives. Again, the book of James teaches us about humility as it teaches us about pride. God sets Himself against the proud, but He gives "grace unto the humble" (4:6). We need to humble ourselves before God, and the way we do that is by submitting to Him (vs. 7). When we submit to Him, we are showing that He is more important than we are. That is true, but it is important for us to be reminded of it. Only God is great. We are His creatures. Humility also enables us to live holy lives. By living in humility, we are able to "resist the devil" (Jas. 4:7). We cannot defeat Satan on our own. Thinking we can is simply another form of pride. It is humility in serving God that gives us the grace to live the Christian life. The text says that by humbling ourselves, we will be exalted. That may seem to be a contradiction of terms, but God does want to exalt us. Certainly heaven is an exalted life. It is far greater than anything we can imagine in this life. Pride leads to destruction. Humility leads to exaltation. That is God's way, and it always works.

**Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator**

1. Never seek to take glory for yourself (Luke 14:7-8)
2. Pride comes before a fall (vs. 9)
3. Let another person give you honor, not yourself (vs. 10)
4. Selfishness always leads to pride and division, whereas selflessness leads to harmony in relationships (vs. 11)
5. Invest your life not in those who are able to return the favor but in those who are not able to pay you back (vss. 12-13)
6. God rewards humility and Christ-like service (vs. 14)