

## THE WAY UP IS DOWN

TEXT: (Proverbs 25:6-7, NIV)

<sup>6</sup> Do not exalt yourself in the king's presence, and do not claim a place among his great men; <sup>7</sup> it is better for him to say to you, "Come up here," than for him to humiliate you before his nobles.

### INTRODUCTION

1. "When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: 'When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, "Give this man your seat.'" Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, "Friend, move up to a better place.'" Then you will be honored in the presence of all your fellow guests. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 14:7-11, NIV).

### I. THE PARADOX OF HUMILITY

1. "The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up. The LORD sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor" (I Samuel 2:6-8, NIV).
2. "The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted" (Matthew 23:11-12, NIV).
3. "Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all'" (Mark 9:35, NIV).
4. "Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it" (Luke 17:33, NIV).
4. "For when I am weak, then I am strong" (I Corinthians 12:10, NIV).
6. "Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy" (James 1:2, NLT).

#### A. Transparency

1. "I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12, NIV).
2. "I do not think I am in the least inferior to those 'super-apostles.' I may indeed be untrained as a speaker, but I do have knowledge" (II Corinthians 11:5-6, NIV).
3. "When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling" (I Corinthians 2:1-3, NIV).
4. "For some say, 'His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing'" (II Corinthians 10:10, NIV).
5. "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed" (James 5:16, NIV).

6. "Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth" (Numbers 12:3, NIV).

#### B. Genuineness

1. "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power" (I Corinthians 2:4-5).

#### C. Honesty

1. "We have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God" (II Corinthians 4:2, NIV).
2. "[We] have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (II Corinthians 4:2, KJV).
3. "For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts. You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. Instead, we were like young children among you" (I Thessalonians 2:3-7, NIV).

### II. KNEE COLLEGE IS AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING

1. "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isaiah 55:8-9, NIV).
2. "Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross" (Philippians 2:6-8, NLT).
3. "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up" (James 4:10, NIV).

#### A. Humility Brings Prosperity

1. "Humility and the fear of the LORD bring wealth and honor and life" (Proverbs 22:4, NIV).
2. "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36, NIV).
3. "The earth is the LORD'S, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1, NIV).

#### B. Humility Brings Greatness in the Kingdom

1. "They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?' But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all'" (Mark 9:33-35, NIV).

2. "At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'

He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: 'I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven'" (Matthew 18:1-4, NIV).

### C. Humility Allows Grace to Operate

1. "Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble'" (1 Peter 5:5, NIV).

## III. EXAMPLES OF HUMILITY

### A. John the Baptist

1. "Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, 'I am not the Christ'" (John 1:19-20, NIV).
2. "He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me" (John 1:15, NIV).

### B. Syrophenician Woman

1. "Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an evil spirit came and fell at his feet. The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.

'First let the children eat all they want,' he told her, 'for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.'

'Yes, Lord,' she replied, 'but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.'

Then he told her, 'For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.'

She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone" (Mark 7:24-30, NIV).

### C. Paul

1. "I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault" (Philippians 3:5-6, NLT).
2. "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" (Philippians 3:8, NIV).