

Endowed with Humility

Key Verse:
“Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”
—Matthew 23:12

Selected Scriptures:
Matthew 23:2-12;
Mark 12:38-44

IN TODAY’S KEY VERSE WE find the characteristic of humility contrasted with the quality of pride. Our selected Scriptures point out the pride and ambition of the scribes and Pharisees, who loved the uppermost rooms and the chief seats. Of these Jesus said, “All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”—Matt. 23:3

In contrast to the vanity and conceit of these religious rulers, we read consistently of the humble character of our Master. “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who . . . made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”—II Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-8

Here we have an example of the relationship between humility, pride, and being exalted. While the scribes and Pharisees exalted themselves due to pride in their

position, Jesus was exalted by God for his humility and obedience to him. Paul continues by saying that God highly exalted Jesus, and gave him a “name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth; . . . And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:9-11

Any, who by pride seek to exalt themselves, do so in a desire for present honor. We should avoid this weakness of the flesh, as Jesus instructed his disciples: “When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, . . . that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.” (Matt. 6:2) Our exaltation is not to be expected in this life, but the next—after our sacrifice has been fully consumed. “When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. . . . Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”—I Pet. 5:4-6

Jesus gave an important lesson, through the example of a small child, as to how we might receive a heavenly exaltation. “At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”—Matt. 18:1-4

A further example of one endowed with humility is provided in our selected Scripture of Mark 12:38-44. In this passage, we find the poor widow’s “two mites” a more generous gift than that of all the wealthy, who gave “of their abundance.” Let us strive to be of the same humble character as illustrated by the poor widow and a little child. ■