

Bowing Down

Scripture Reading — Luke 14:7-11

*“All those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”
Luke 14:11 —*

In the book *Descending into Greatness*, Bill Hybels notes that we don't tend to think highly of the word “down.” “Feeling down,” “downsizing,” or “heading down-hill” are all negative expressions. In contrast, we don't mind being called “up” or “upbeat.” And if people say we're “up and coming,” that's a compliment.

Remarkably, though, the way to true greatness is down, not up. Hybels writes, “If you want to be truly great, then the direction you must go is down. You must descend into greatness.” Of course, our motive in this must be to serve God, not ourselves.

In the story Jesus told in our reading for today, he warned that scrambling for the seat of honor will only lead to humiliation. Choosing the lowest place is the way to genuine honor, “for all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

The Spirit of God wants to develop in us a humble spirit. This connects with the quality of gentleness or meekness (Galatians 5:23), which has to do with bearing injuries with patience and without resentment. That's what Jesus did for us. An old saying teaches that “the most heavily laden branches bow the lowest on the tree.” So in honor of Jesus and all he did for us, we bow down—in gratitude—to bear challenges for him.

Prayer

Spirit of God, wherever there is a pushy, aggressive, or proud spirit in me, be at work cultivating instead the Christlike quality of gentleness and humility. In Jesus's name, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Galatians](#)

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