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Sunday School Lesson

TOPIC:

“Instructions on Humility”

Luke 14:7-14

VERSE DISCOVERY: Luke 14:7-14 (KJV, Public Domain)

Prepare

- **Pitfalls and Promises** – write these words on the board. Ask your class, what are some pitfalls that people face daily that can impede their walk with Christ? (With such an opened question, be prepared for a variety of answers). Then ask, what are some of your favorite promises in the Bible?

Many of us want to get to the promises of God, but there are obstacles, or pitfalls that get in the way. (Reiterate some of the things your students spoke of). Some of these pitfalls are easy to spot in life, while others are a little harder. Pride is one pitfall that many don't see. It can often hide in plain sight and presents itself mostly by focusing on the advancement of anything self-worth and “me” related. And, because “self” and “me” is so close to home for most, we often don't see it until it's too late.

In our lesson, Jesus is teaching us to take the humble road of life and let God worry about our promotions and advancement. Our focus should be on pleasing Him and not how others, or even we, view ourselves.

- For younger students, present a picture of a male peacock spreading his feathers wide. Discuss how they put their feathers on display to gain the attention of a female peacock (also why they are sometimes referred to as being “proud”). What are some things that people do to gain attention for themselves? Today, we are going to learn what Jesus has to say about that and how we should be living with the right perspective before God.

Explore – Printed Lesson Available on pages 6-11

Self-promotion, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and self-exaltation. These are things the world screams for. Put yourself out there. Be the best. Seek the best is their motto, no matter what harm or cost there is to another. But, as with most things in life, God's perspective is way different and His thoughts are definitely higher than our own on all subjects of life, including those that deal with “self” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Previously, I wrote an article titled *The High Horse* that I will share in full length here to explore and prepare for this lesson. It reads:

“For everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted,” Luke 18:14b

We’ve all heard someone express at one time or another, “You need to come down off that high horse!” Whether it was said to us or another, the challenge is still implied for one to not think highly of him or herself, Romans 12:3. People that are boastful and proud have a way of thinning out the crowds. Their attitude is not attractive; therefore, others will find an excuse to disassociate themselves from that person.

Us, who are saved by grace, also have to fight the urge to take on this superiority complex. Too often we are just as prone to mount that high horse and ride off into the sunset, singing in a school girl tone, “We’re saved and you’re not... la la la la la la!” Okay, so maybe we don’t sing in childish tones but that doesn’t mean we don’t act in childish ways; looking down our nose at a lost world as if we obtained this great salvation on our own. Rather, we should be humbled by what God has so graciously done for us and wills in His heart to do for others also (2 Peter 3:9).

The Bible is full of references that explain God’s feelings toward this particular subject: He hates it! 1 Peter 5:5 states, “God resisteth the proud!” Those that display this ugly characteristic are not amusing God, rather they are pushing Him away. He does not tolerate it at all.

In light of all that He has done for humanity God’s view is this: NO ONE has the right to think he is something or somebody more special than all others. Jesus hits the nail on the head in this story found in Luke 18:9-14. Here He denounces the prideful Pharisees’ attitude of self-righteousness and He proclaims the greatness of the one who had a humble heart. Did it seem that He was being too hard on the Pharisees; the ones who were the religious leaders of the day?

Not in the least. Verse 9 tells us how their position changed their view of their relationship with God and with man. First, He stated, they “trusted in themselves that they were righteous.” Their rituals, rules, and regulations were how they measured and viewed their righteousness. Their so-called ability to dot every “I” and cross every “T” ranked them above all others, securing their own righteousness. No humbleness of heart was present. No attributing their standing to the grace and mercy of God. They “trusted in themselves.”

Secondly, their view caused them to “despise others.” Since nobody was as presumably holy as they were, they thought themselves to be on a higher level than everyone else. They rode that high horse and they rode it a lot.

These two very wrong suppositions of themselves caused them to break the two greatest commandments that were ever written:

*“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”
Matthew 22:36-40*

We all have to take careful heed to view our position in Christ in the proper way:

“To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:2-7

Not one of us has the right to ride the high horse!” (©WordforLifeSays.com)

Activities

- Use **Adult Journal Page** focusing on our base verse Luke 14:11 to highlight important notes from this lesson for personal reflection or to bring out a point of your choosing (also see **Life** section below for an idea to use with the adult journal page). The **Kid’s Journal Page** focuses on Jesus teaching us to be humble. Students can write some things we can do to make sure we are living the way Jesus wants us to.
- Younger students can use the **Draw the Scene** activity page to make a picture of a special party or dinner where they “invite” all kinds of people to their special event.
- Alternate activity sheets such as **Word Search, Crossword, and more** can be accessed on site for those who want to work with printed materials.

Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: **“Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted,” Luke 14:11.**
- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 12)

Life

Find several verses that deal directly with pride and humility (what not to do-pride vs. what to do-humility). Compare the two side by side and keep them as a reference to help keep “self” in check with a right, God-honoring perspective. You can even use the blank or the **Adult Journal Page** (above) to record your findings and to keep them in one area.

TOPIC:

“Instructions on Humility”

Luke 14:7-14

VERSE DISCOVERY: Luke 14:7-14 (KJV, Public Domain)

Have you ever been around that one person in the crowd that always needs to be heard? They stand amid a circle of onlookers boasting about all the what’s going to be. They are people with a lot of talk and little action, when, actions really do speak louder than words.

Jesus was the epitome of humbleness and humility. Philippians 2:7 says, “But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” The King of all kings stepped down from His throne in heaven and stooped down to the rags of earth and put on humanity. The King who could’ve demanded all demanded nothing.

In John 13:15 He told them, “For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” Though that was written after the washing of the disciples’ feet the same principle of humility and how one lives their life applies here.

Prominence is not a new and now thing. Wanting to be seen and noticed by others is something that mankind has before and continues to struggle with today. Jesus instructs us on how to seek the humble road to walk and let God exalt us in due time.

HUMILITY DOES NOT EXALT ITSELF

Luke 14:7 “And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,”

“I only want the best for my...” you fill in the rest. It’s something I’m sure we have all said at one point or another. The best is a symbol of status. It is thought of to be in a more favorable condition than another. The best for the purpose of showing off was not something Jesus supported, but for those who attended these events, they fervently sought for it.

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“He marked how they chose out the chief rooms.” Jesus pays attention to the dealings of man. He has a very astute eye for detail. Attending the weddings and/or events He observed how people clamored for the best; **“the chief rooms.”** Many may not see a problem with wanting choice seating but let me unwrap it a bit and show you this in another perspective.

Imagine a concert with people fighting and pushing their way to get as close to the front as possible. Not caring for others, they would trample and step over others to get to that prominent place. Or, let me pick with some other folk. Imagine... are you ready for it... BLACK FRIDAY SHOPPING! Enough said.

Seeking after these chief rooms was seeking after the world’s symbol of being lifted above another. The attitudes represented didn’t give thought or care to their human counterparts. Getting to that prominent position is all that mattered.

Luke 14:8-9 “When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.”

It’s the “not’s” of life that people don’t want to hear about. But Jesus, with His wise perspective, instructs the people to live opposite of their natural inclinations. Naturally, people seek the higher, the better. True humility doesn’t vie for the best for oneself; it vies for the best for others.

One teaching I have always heard and still remember to this day is that none of us are the end all to everything. What that means is that God can raise up someone off the streets or wherever to take anybody’s place and fulfill a ministry, calling, etc. if one is unwilling to do so on their part. There is always someone who can take over the place where we fight to sit or someone in the wings whom others may view as more important. Therefore, to vie for the temporary of our own accord means that we will not have the strength in and of ourselves to retain that so-called “seat of honor” if the one who bids decides that we can be swapped out and made to move and give room to another.

Jesus’ advice was not to put oneself in that situation where instead of the honor they fought of themselves to obtain, they actually have come to know shame by being made to move. This reminds me of the naughty dog who walks away with his tail tucked between his legs;

NOTES:

ashamed and put out. Jesus was trying to help Christians save themselves from shame through the fruit of humility. In our success-driven generation more of this fruit needs to be eaten more often, and with careful regard. The thrill to seek the “**high**” will quickly be overtaken when one is forced to take the “**lowest**.”

Luke 14:10 “But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.”

The way to up is down. How backward that is to the thinking of many today? But how glorious it is that when one is in the “**lowest**” to have another come and place him in the “higher.” This is how things work in God’s economy. Notice in the Bible, it is the lowliest of people that are entrusted with the greatest honor.

People will take notice of the one who is lifted. “**Then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.**” Notice the opposites of God’s economy. Those that seek to be noticed in the “presence” of people are the same ones that can be overlooked or even made to move lower. Yet, at the same time, those who are not worried about self-glorification and such are the ones who are now noticed in the “presence” of all. “Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen,” (Proverbs 25:6-7). Choose what Proverbs calls the “better!”

A good biblical representation of this is the story of Joseph. He was forced into servitude yet through it all he kept his cool and let God work in him where he was be it the pit, Potiphar’s house, or the prison. God moved him “higher” in each circumstance until eventually, Pharaoh declared, “Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou,” (Genesis 41:40). Now, Joseph was honored or “worshipped” as second in command of Egypt. He didn’t exalt or seek the higher for himself; God was responsible for bidding him to come “higher.”

Luke 14:11 “For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

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Through stories of parable or through a direct command of the Word, Jesus is making His point: if one decides to lift themselves up God can and will bring him/her down!

Obadiah 3-4 says, “The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, *thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD*” (emphasis mine). Arrogance and self-exaltation are deceptive. It is a lie that will fade as fast as any fake substance that tries to stand before a very real God. That’s God’s economy!

When one seeks to exalt themselves not only is it prideful, something that God is dreadfully against, but it shows that one trusts in themselves over God’s sovereignty. “**Whosoever**” means absolutely anybody! There are no exceptions. Nobody is exempt. Any who would seek to lift himself will be “**abased**,” God will put them down. But, for those that are humble God shows special favor. “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones,” (Isaiah 57:17). These are revived. These are exalted.

HUMILITY TREATS OTHERS FAIRLY

Luke 14:12-13 “Then said he also to him that bade him, **When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:**”

Instructions for humility also include how we treat others. One who is prideful and operates for self-advancement will put on a show for those who can help them reach their goal. Shaking the right hands and scratching the right backs can lift one in certain social circles. It propels them further up the ladder of success.

Humility, as what Jesus was teaching, operates with compassion and is based on love. Love that wants to see others treated fairly. Love that is not concerned with who approves of the guest list. Love that sees people for who they are and not the badges of afflictions such as

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maimed, lame and blind; and not for the labels of being “poor.” These people, despite how society looks on them, are to be welcomed to come to the feast!

Are we not a people who will experience the same benefits that Jesus is teaching in this parable? Revelation 19:9 says, “...Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb...” Were we not the unloved? Were we not the ones maimed by sin and the degradation of this world? Were we not the ones who bore afflictions and were outcast yet when He saved us we became “blessed?” We have received our open invitation to the “marriage supper of the Lamb” which we could never have been counted worthy of or repay. Jesus is saying for His people to start practicing what He already was going to do for all those who are “called.”

Luke 14:14 “And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.”

If you will allow me to paraphrase, Jesus was saying, “They can’t repay you, but I can!” Isn’t that exciting? **“Thou shalt be blessed!”** The Bible declares, “Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repayed,” (Proverbs 13:21). Too many are worried about the idea of losing out. They allow thoughts of being shortened by someone or not receiving a return for their supposed good that they do. But our God is faithful, and He is the one that will reward!

“Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ,” (Colossians 3:24). When one loves people enough to invite those whom to others seem unworthy, they are showing that they are true servants of Christ because this is what Christ did for all. And, because they “serve the Lord Christ” they “shall receive the reward of the inheritance.”

If you have ever read *The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom, you know that the Ten Boom family was a family that was used to opening their home out of their meager means to feed any who knocked on the door – people who could not repay them for their kindness. Then, during the German occupation, they rescued, saved, and cared for countless Jews while they themselves suffered loss. God does not soon forget such kindness toward one of His own. On this earth, it may have appeared that this family lost all, when, in actuality, they have their reward that will be **“recompensed at the resurrection of the just.”** In humility, they were just happy to be servants of Christ that could reach out and help others. They were

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never worried about a here and now reward. They just wanted to help any way they could. That's compassion. That's the love of Christ in operation, which to me, is the meaning of true humility.

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Please Answer the Review Questions Below

1. **T** or **F**. Humility does not exalt itself.
2. He is the epitome of humbleness and humility. (Philippians 2:7)
A. Jesus B. Joshua C. Job D. None
3. What is some reasons Jesus stated for not sitting down in the “**highest room**”?

4. What Bible character discussed in the lesson (although not related to the lesson) is a good example of humility, and why?

5. When one humbles themselves, the Bible promises they will be _____.
A. Glorified B. Remembered C. Exalted D. None
6. **T** or **F**. People were encouraged to only invite the rich, well to do, and popular to their feasts.
7. Jesus promised, “**thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just**” (Luke 14:14). How does that encourage you to remain humble in your service toward God and others?

