

THURSDAY DEVOTION - GATEKEEPERS WORKCAMP 2017

Luke 14:1, 7-14: On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching him closely. When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher,’ then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

We live in a world that encourages us to feel good about ourselves, to celebrate our accomplishments, to do what we have to do to get ahead even if it means putting others down. Our Christian faith teaches us that God loves us and we should love ourselves, but it tells us that we ought not think of ourselves as better than anyone else and to live based on the example of Jesus who humbled himself for our sake and the sake of the world.

Humility is difficult to define and even more difficult to achieve. Humility means not thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought. It means recognizing the worth of others and seeing them as equals. With humility, the more you think you have it, the less you probably actually have. Humility may be one of those things that it's easier to describe what it's not. Even though he was the Son of God, Jesus came to dwell among us as the son of a lowly carpenter. He never put others down in order to elevate himself. And he went out of his way to be a servant to others by giving of himself for the sake of others. We are called to follow the example of Jesus by making humility one of the building blocks of our life of faith.

How would you define or describe humility? Can a person have a strong sense of self-worth and still be humble? Why is humility an important characteristic of Christian love? Why was it important for Christ? How is humility related to doing justice and loving kindness?

Gatekeepers should help all of us to discover a sense of humility. Although we will have a tremendous sense of accomplishment when we are done, we will also find out that there is still much for us to learn. We will get our hands dirty and work alongside people who are different from us. We will learn that there are some things we cannot do on our own and that we need one another to accomplish worthwhile tasks. We will learn that being obedient to God means giving of ourselves. Pray that God will help you to learn humility, seeing yourself and others as children of God, and pray that in all things, you will learn to follow Christ's example of humility and obedience.