

A place of honor

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Jesus told a parable in our Gospel reading this past Sunday about not seeking the seat of honor at a gathering—because someone more important might come in and you could be asked to give that seat up to them. Far better, Jesus advised, to take a lowlier seat and then be asked to move up to a place of higher honor.

□ This parable is similar to the Old Testament reading from Proverbs that we heard, and both of them encourage us to not be proud or boastful, but rather to have a humble attitude and to consider others more important than ourselves.

As Christians we are to have an attitude of humility rather than seeking to exalt ourselves. “He who humbles himself will be exalted” Jesus says, perhaps in reference to the heavenly banquet that he has planned for his followers.

□ We need to understand though, that it is not because someone humbles himself sufficiently that they can then expect to be exalted by God.

Our invitation to Heaven doesn’t depend upon how deserving we can prove ourselves to be; but only upon what Jesus did by offering up his own holy life on the cross in payment for our sins. This is what works an attitude of humility in our hearts—realizing that we who were dead in sin and enemies of God by nature were so loved by our Savior, that he willingly suffered and died to earn us a place in his heavenly home.

It is with a deep sense of humility and gratitude that we stand before our Lord, knowing that all we have is a gracious gift from him; even the lowliest seat in his kingdom would be far more than we have deserved.

□ I’m not so sure that this parable is really about us though. When it comes to humility and putting others before oneself, who fits the description better than Jesus? He who is King of kings and Lord of lords was pleased to come to this world as one of us—in order to be our Savior. And it is he who has reclaimed his seat of power and glory and honor at his Father’s right hand—after having humbled himself as he lived and walked for a time among us.

He now reigns forever as our living Savior, and promises to guide and guard all of our days as we entrust ourselves to his loving care!