



Sabbath Keeping Youth

Shepherds. Does anything glamorous and wonderful come to mind when you think of a shepherd? Not really. It's not like a doctor who saves lives, or a rich president of a big company who makes lots of important decisions.

A shepherd is just someone who watches sheep. If one of the sheep gets hurt or wanders from the flock, the shepherd's job is to bring them back. It's not the kind of job you dream about when you're a kid!

Why do you think God chose shepherds in the field to hear the good news of Jesus' birth? The shepherds were minding their business, and taking care of their responsibilities, when whamo! an angel appeared to them out of nowhere. Those shepherds must have been shaking in their sandals. But, the angels said not to be afraid, and then they told the shepherds about the birth of Jesus!

The shepherds were amazed, but believed! They quickly got their things together, and went to see this precious baby, Jesus, the Savior of the world. The Bible says that God used the shepherds to deliver the angel's message to Mary. We know Mary was glad the shepherds believed the angels, because she treasured that message in her heart.

The shepherds could have chosen not to go into Bethlehem and search for Jesus. They could have even ran for fear and not believed in what they saw, but they didn't. They got excited and believed what they heard from the angels!

Let's get excited about who Jesus is and how great a thing it is that Jesus came to earth as a baby for one reason, to die for us so we could live forever with Him!!!



The Parents Corner

Our children need to know they are gifts from God and were specially created by God. However, they need to be taught not to think more highly of themselves. Teach your children to reflect the life of Christ through humility. Here are a few suggestions:

- Teach your children that serving others is one way of serving God.
- Teaching them "to give is to receive."
- Teach them, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3)
- Teach respectful speech. Not only should their speech be respectful, but also their tone of voice.

Strength in Humility

As a parent, is humility a character trait you would like your child to have? Do you tend to believe humility means one is passive or weak? The Bible is replete with examples of how God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. One such place is the story of Moses and the example of Christ our Savior.

While Moses was a humble man, he was also influential and powerful. Let's remember he was the one who told the Pharaoh, "Let my people go!" His humility came from his ability to seek God's honor and see himself as God saw him. Moses was teachable because of his humble heart. He appreciated the mercy of God and sought the wisdom and reputation of Him rather than his own. In I Peter 5:6-7 it says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." Moses was this kind of humble man who was willing to be under God's authority.

As Christians, we should seek to follow the example of Christ. Philippians 2:5-11 is a beautiful passage from Paul about our Savior. The passage tells how Jesus was the essence of true humility. While Jesus knew He was the Son of God, He did not cling to His greatness, but took the human form of a servant. He never flaunted His power or His position. Jesus was humble through His obedience to God. He submitted completely to God's commands. Jesus did not exalt himself. He waited patiently and quietly upon His Father to lift Him up. Jesus came to earth in the weakest of forms, an infant. He labored as a humble servant obeying and submitting to the will of His Father. He is now seated at the right hand of God interceding on our behalf.

What is the best way for a parent to teach his child humility?

- Teach your children it is OK to take pride in using the gifts God has given them. As an example, your children do well academically. Be sure they realize they have used the brain God gave them to achieve. God gives them the strength and coordination they use to do well in sports. In other words, God gives everyone special gifts, and He wants us to use those gifts.
- Teach your children that God is the source of their greatness. How they acknowledge praise is a good way to teach this. When they receive a compliment,

- ◆ teach them to say "thank you" and then give praise to God and others who are responsible for their success.

- ◆ When one accepts praise, it is only natural to take pride in the accomplishment. But, if one can sincerely deflect praise by giving credit to God and others, he demonstrates humility and gratefulness. An example of an answer to teach your children when praised is to say, "Thank you, but I am grateful to my parents and teachers who have given me so much."

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 - Teach your children to see greatness in others. A small-minded person will put others down. A humble person will acknowledge the bigness of others.
 - Teach your children to do their personal best and not compare themselves with others. When they do well in math, they should not think of themselves as better than a friend who may struggle. Rather, they could help a friend with math. While their friend may not do well at math, chances are the friend does well at something else.
 - Teach your children to respect authority and the experience of others. This is achieved through respectful speech. Children should never tell their parents, they should always ask.
 - Teach your children to admit when they are wrong. A humble person is always aware he could be in error.

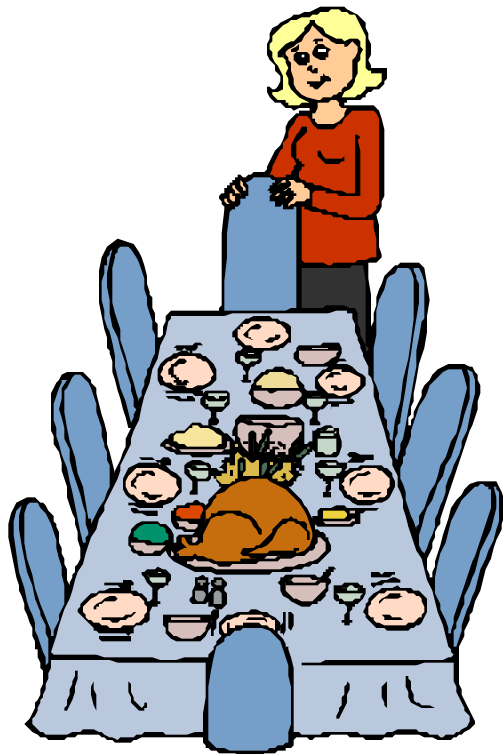
- ◆ In the end, the best way to teach humility to our children is to patiently teach and train them quietly and respectfully. Humility is one of the greatest gifts we can give our children.

Take the Lowly Place

Luke 14:7-14

Jesus was invited to a meal by a Pharisee. A Pharisee (FAIR-uh-see) was a strict and influential group of Jews. They did not like Jesus because He did not follow their very strict laws of keeping the Sabbath. There were other Pharisees present at this meal. They had been watching Jesus to find fault in Him, but He had also been watching them. The story begins with Jesus telling the Pharisees a parable. A parable (PAIR-uh-bul) is a story that teaches a lesson.

Jesus told them that when invited to a banquet, they should not seat themselves in places of honor in case someone more important came. Then, the host might ask the first person to move to a less famous seat and give the more well-known individual his seat. Better, Jesus said, to first take the lowest seat, so that the host would come and say, "Friend, move up higher." The guest moving up would then be honored before the other guests.



Jesus summarized His point, "All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

Jesus continued to advise them. They should not invite their friends, families or rich neighbors to their banquets. These people could also invite them to a banquet in return and they would be repaid. He told them to invite the poor and the disabled instead. These people would be unable to repay their host and the host would be blessed by being repaid by God at the resurrection of the righteous.

It's not that Jesus was condemning association with friends and family, but He warned of ignoring those in need. There are many places in the Bible that speak to the caring for people in need. Examples; Matthew 15:40; Proverbs 19:17; Isaiah 58:6-7.

There are two lessons Jesus was teaching in the parable. The first lesson was for the guests. He admonished them not to seek a place of honor. Service is more important than position. The second lesson was for the host. He encouraged the host not to exclude the less fortunate. God opens His door to the Kingdom to everyone.




Do you try to impress others with your possessions and knowledge? Rather than do that, find places you can serve others in need. Do you try to show humility by putting yourself down? To be a truly humble person you must only compare yourself to Christ. You must also realize the gifts and talents God has given you and you be willing to use them. Humility is the ability to assess who you are and then make a commitment to serve.




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Jesus advised the dinner guests, "Do not invite only those persons who can invite you in return."



Add or subtract words and letters to fill the blanks.
Then write the words below to finish what Jesus said.

①  -T +  -DO = _____

②  + I +  +  -AR + D = _____

③  -EL +  -NT +  -VEN + D = _____

④  -TE +  -N + Y = _____

⑤  -N +  -A + EOUS = _____

Invite the ① _____ and ② _____ .

You will be ③ _____ because they cannot ④ _____ you.

You will be repaid at the resurrection of the ⑤ _____."

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