

(Matthew 20:20-28, NIV84)

Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom." "You don't know what you are asking,"

Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?" "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father."

When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers.

Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave- just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

July 31

Afraid To Be Humble?

Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 1 Peter 5:5

Yes, we might as well admit it: There are times when we are afraid to be humble, afraid that if we don't sing our own praises, the song will never be sung! Afraid that our own virtues and accomplishments will go unnoticed. Afraid, lest, like the desert flower, we be born to blush unseen and waste our fragrance on the desert air.

Simon Peter once had those fears. Whenever he tried to overcome them by asserting his own virtues, he made a sorry mess of things. But Simon Peter learned his lesson, and it was an altogether different Simon who in the late years of his life wrote to his Christian friends: "Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

Robert Louis Stevenson once said to a friend: "The most dangerous height which I ever climbed was Mount Ego." Pride, and not humility, is the thing to be feared! The great church father St. Augustine once exclaimed: "Should you ask me, What is the first thing in religion? I should reply, The first, the second, the third thing-nay, all-is humility."

The apostle Paul points to the Savior as the perfect example of humility which we should follow. A paraphrase of Paul's words would be: "Let this

mind be in you which was also in Christ, who, although he was true God, stepped down to the status of a mere man, and then willingly humbled himself, becoming a servant, obedient until death, yes, even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:5-8). What an example to keep before us!

As we contemplate the unsearchable love of him who humbled himself for us, even to death on a cross, let us say with the poet:

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

God, be merciful to me, a sinner. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)