



Humble Pie(ty)

The Expression of True Humility

Scripture

- *Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in **Moses’ seat**. (Matthew 23:1 2 NIV)*
- *So you must **obey them** and do everything they tell you. But do not **do what they do**, for they do not **practice what they preach**. (Matthew 23:3 NIV)*
- *They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are **not willing** to lift a finger to move them. (Matthew 23:4 NIV)*

Scripture

- *“Everything they do is done for **men to see**: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; (Matthew 23:5 NIV)*
- *they love the **place of honor** at banquets and the most **important seats** in the synagogues; (Matthew 23:6 NIV)*
- *they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them ‘**Rabbi**.’” (Matthew 23:7 NIV)*

Scripture

- *“But you are not to be called ‘**Rabbi**,’ for you have only one Master and you are all brothers.” (Matthew 23:8 NIV)*
- *“And do not call anyone on earth ‘**father**,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called ‘**teacher**,’ for you have one Teacher, the Christ.” (Matthew 23:9-10 NIV)*
- *“The greatest among you will be your **servant**. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” (Matthew 23:11 12 NIV)*

Introduction

- Have you ever had to “eat humble pie?”
- Most of us have heard this expression.
- It’s an **idiom** meaning “to face humiliation for an error or wrongdoing, something for which we must apologize, often in some public way.”



Introduction

- Far fewer of us, however, know the origin of this odd phrase.
- According to **etymologists**, the phrase derives from *umble pie*, which was a pie filled with nasty stuff like liver, heart and other entrails, especially of cow but often of deer or boar.
- **Umbles** evolved from *numble*, (after the French *nomble*) meaning “deer’s innards.”

Introduction

- **Umbles** were considered inferior food.
- In medieval times, the pie was often the only meat dish available to people of the **lower economic class**.
- For someone of **noble rank** or **superior station** in the Middle Ages to be publicly humiliated would be akin to them having to sit down with a **commoner** and have a bowl of umble pie.

Introduction

- The umbles and the word “humble” appeared with and without the initial “h” up until the 19th century.
- Thus, while umble is now gone from English, the “**humble pie**” phrase remains, and etymologically speaking, it still links to a meal comprised of the less desirable animal parts.

Introduction

- Other **colloquial idioms** that have similar meanings are:
 - Eating Crow,
 - Eat Dirt,
 - Eat Your Hat (shoe),
 - Eat one's own words.
- The point of all these phrases is this: don't act like you're a **somebody**, when you are actually a **nobody**, or you may become subject to public disgrace.

Introduction

- Recently, Alabama Gov. **Robert Bentley** has resigned after pleading guilty to abusing his office, allegedly to conceal an affair with a political adviser.
- His **humble pie** meal was a four-course dinner, including
 - resignation as governor,
 - pay back of campaign funds totaling nearly \$37,000,
 - his performance of 100 hours of community service as a physician (which he is), and
 - his not being allowed to seek public office again.



Jesus' Lesson

- In our gospel reading for today, Jesus says that those who **exalt themselves** will eat humble pie, while those who **eat humble pie** will be exalted.
- Actually, that's not what he said, but sometimes that's how we hear it.
- What he said was, "All who **exalt themselves** will be humbled, and all who **humble themselves** will be exalted."
- His meaning was that the truly great among us are those who choose to serve others and not go in for self-promotion.
- In fact, in our reading, Jesus said: "The greatest among you will be **your servant**."

Jesus' Lesson

- In fact, Jesus wants his **disciples** to be just the opposite of the Pharisees, who loved **public admiration** more than anything else.
- He specifically tells his **disciples** not to seek places of honor, titles, or positions.
- Instead, he wants his **disciples** to not be about being served, but about serving.

Jesus' Lesson

- ❖ Unfortunately, many people want **positions of power** for its privileges and rewards, instead of its responsibilities to do good.
- ❖ I don't know if you know this or not, but the **mayor, governor, legislators, and bureaucrats** are all called public servants.
- ❖ So then, when someone goes in to politics and gets elected and become not only rich, but a multimillionaire, I wonder what is going on.
- ❖ Perhaps this is why so many politicians of late are having to eat so much **humble pie**.



⇒ HUMBLE PIE ⇐

DO YOURSELF A FAVOR
&
HAVE A SLICE OR TWO!



Jesus' Lesson

- ❖ While there is nothing wrong with wanting to be **governor**.
- ❖ If properly executed, it's a place of service to the residents of the state.
- ❖ Just because a person seeks that office doesn't mean they are doing it for **reasons of self-exaltation**.
- ❖ Done right, fulfilling the duties of governor can illustrate service and the humbling of oneself.

Jesus' Lesson

- ❖ In other words, Jesus was talking about the **intent** of our actions and attitudes, not the status assigned to our positions.
- ❖ The kind of reversal Jesus had in mind was to move **service** from its maligned position at the bottom of public perception, to the top, and to, on the other hand, *devalue* **self-promotion**.

Jesus' Lesson

- According to the Gospel of Luke, *a dispute arose among [Jesus' disciples] as to which of them was considered to be greatest.* (Luke 22:24 NIV)
- Jesus *[Immediately gets involved and]* said to them, *"The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.* (Luke 22:25 NIV)
- The Greek word of **Benefactor** is the word, *euergetes*, which means "workers of good."
- QUESTION: Who calls who, "worker of good?"

Jesus' Lesson

- *But you are not to be like that. Instead, the **greatest** among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.* (Luke 22:26 NIV)
- Jesus wanted to make it very clear to his **disciple** and to those who would be his apostles, **servanthood** was to be the goal of all those who wanted to be great in his kingdom.

Advent

- This Advent Season, we celebrate the birth of a **Savior**.
- We should also recognize that there would have been no Savior, if there wasn't also a **Servant**.
- Someone willing to put aside self interest for the interest of the Father and for those the Father would call into His Kingdom.



Advent

- According to the Apostle Paul, *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a **servant**, being made in human likeness.* (Philippians 2:6-7 NIV)
- *And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!* (Philippians 2:8 NIV)

Advent

- Therefore God **exalted him** to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11 NIV)



Advent

- The moral of the story is that God exalted His Son, not because He was His Son, but because Jesus **humbled** Himself.
- In fact, the Apostle Paul starts out this passage by saying, *Your **attitude** should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: . . .* (Philippians 2:5 NIV)
- The point is that if we humble ourselves, we too will be honored by God and won't have to eat any **humble pie** either.

The Blessings

- *You save the humble . . .* (Psalms 18:27 NIV)
- *He guides the humble . . .* (Psalms 25:9 NIV)
- *The LORD sustains the humble . . .* (Psalms 147:6 NIV)
- *. . . he crowns the humble with salvation.* (Psalms 149:4 NIV)
- *. . . gives grace to the humble.* (Proverbs 3:34 NIV)

Summary

- So then who is a **humble** person?
- They are people who don't think of themselves so much that they are unwilling to help and encourage others.
- They are the ones who the Lord **graciously helps, guides, sustains**, and never feeds them **humble pie**.

Summary

- Being served “**Humble Pie,**” is nevertheless not the end of the world.
- For us “**in Christ,**” it is a sign of the Father’s love, who disciplines us for our own good.
- Later on, however, it produces a **harvest of righteousness** and **peace** for those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11 NIV)

Conclusion

- Jesus came to this earth to become a **servant** for mankind and by completing that task has been **rewarded** for his humility and exalted to the right hand of God.
- We too can **experience** the same praise from the Father as well, if we become **servants** first in our lives.
- As Jesus has said, “*Take my **yoke** upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will **find rest** for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*” (Matthew 11:29-30 NIV)