

humiliation as far as the Son went, for no one has come from as high as he came. Before he received, he gave; before it benefited him, it cost him; before he was exalted, he was humbled. In sincere faith and confidence in his Father, he waited his turn. And in due time, it came, as it always does in God's economy:

*Weeping may remain for a night,
but rejoicing comes in the morning. (Psalm 30:5)*

Note the sequence: What's liberating and expansive comes last; what's painful and confining comes first. Paul says in Philippians 3 that he wants

to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings...

But in this order:

becoming like him in his death in order to attain—somehow—to the resurrection from the dead.

It's an un-American way of thinking. If your life is hard because you are trying to live as a faithful disciple of Jesus, it shouldn't come as a great surprise. Count it an honor to live through the same season, the same estate, Christ lived through. And with one eye on the latter season of pure joy he moved into, and lives in yet, wait your turn. When you die, you'll go immediately into Christ's presence, and when he returns, your body will be raised from the dead—indestructible—and you'll inherit the world. The wait will be worth it.

—Ron Lutjens



When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Isaac Watts (1707, 1709)

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.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

Seventh Sunday After Epiphany
Old Orchard Church
February 23, 2014
10:15 — 11:50 a.m.

**He
humbled
himself—**



for a season.

Celebrating Jesus Christ In His Estate of Humiliation And the ordination of elder-elect Matt Philip

At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,
Every tongue confess him King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
Who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

At his voice creation sprang at once to sight:
All the angel faces, all the hosts of light,
Thrones and dominations, stars upon their way,
All the heavenly orders in their great array.

Humbled for a season to receive a name
From the lips of sinners, unto whom he came;
Faithfully he bore it, spotless to the last,
Brought it back victorious when from death he passed.
—*Caroline Noel (1870)*



Scripture Readings Gospel Reading: John 13:1-17

Sermon

“Serving Others: The False and the True”
Mark 1:21-42
Ron Lutjens, lead pastor, preaching

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

Waiting Our Turn

March 9, the Sunday after next, is the first Sunday in Lent, the six-week time of preparation for our yearly celebration of our Lord's Passion and Resurrection. Over the next two Sundays our worship will be a fitting prelude to Lent as we celebrate what has come to be called the two “estates” of Christ. Jesus Christ moved from one estate, or condition, into another in the process of saving us—a movement which is basically from weakness to power, from humiliation to exaltation, from tears to laughter. Our Westminster Larger Catechism summarizes the biblical teaching this way:

Q. 46. What was the estate of Christ's humiliation?

A. The estate of Christ's humiliation was that low condition wherein he, for our sake, emptying himself of his glory, took upon himself the form of a servant—in his conception and birth, life, death, and after his death, until his resurrection.

Q. 51. What was the estate of Christ's exaltation?

A. The estate of Christ's exaltation comprehends his resurrection, ascension, sitting at the right hand of the Father, and his coming again to judge the world.

The thing to grasp is the sequence here: *first* one estate, *then* the other. The order is crucial: before things are high, they're low; before ecstasy, there's agony.

But what does this have to do with Monday morning, or your irritable employer, or your lonely nights? The Bible's answer is that just as Christ went through this sequence, so must we. That's our honor, to go the way the Son of God went: first we suffer, then God confers glory on our heads. And these “estates” are seasons, and that implies duration of time. The last estate, that of exaltation, lasts forever, but the first isn't over till it's over.

Christ is past his humiliation now, having been exalted to the supreme place of power in the universe. But his pain and humiliation are not over yet: his suffering is not complete until his people, in their own lives, follow him into the estate of his pain and humiliation as far down as their Father wills them to go. The apostle Paul wrote:

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, that is, the church. (Colossians 1:24)

Paul's ambition was to move through the same sequence Christ moved through: to pass, after death, from one estate into the other, from suffering to glory. Do you want a share in Jesus' glory? That's the right thing to want; but for now, you have to follow Christ and carry your cross. Jesus was not exalted to the place of power until he had gone down into the depths of humiliation as far as the Father willed him to go—and no one is ever called to go down into