

Humility Brings Honor - Ron Stullenbarger -

“A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor” (Proverbs 29:23-NASB).

ALMOST FORTY THOUSAND men had died in the battle of Gettysburg. Now, four months later, the governor of Pennsylvania and many others gathered for the dedication of the cemetery where many of those men were buried.

Thousands of people came to the dedication, not just to honor the dead, but also to see and hear the famous speaker Edward Everett. In those days, people attended speeches like they attend baseball and football games today, and it was not unusual for a speech to last as long as today's rock concerts — two or three hours.

Thousands of people came to hear Everett. Everett, the main speaker, had left early in a carriage. Another participant in the event — President Abraham Lincoln — had to ride a horse to the event. Lincoln, the president of the United States, waited patiently while many dignitaries were escorted to the ceremony.

Everett spoke for two hours, during which time the president waited humbly. Then, following a rousing ovation for Everett and the singing of a hymn, Lincoln stood and gave his *“dedicatory remarks,”* which had been planned as a mere formality, like the ribbon cutting at a store opening. Lincoln spoke for less than three minutes, and it was reported that he sat down to a smattering of applause. To many, it may have seemed that Everett was the star of the show.

But, of course, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address has become one of the most famous speeches ever given. But perhaps more impressive than the words Lincoln spoke is the fact that he — the president of the United States — did not insist on being the main speaker that day. He had not insisted on riding in a fancy carriage as many other guests did, nor had he insisted on being treated like a great man. Instead, he spoke great words and acted like a great man, and his humility was part of his greatness.

The Bible says, *“A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor”* (Proverbs 29:23-NASB).

One reason Abraham Lincoln is so respected and revered more than one hundred years after his death is his character. He was a man who chose to be humble, even when it may have been difficult. A lesser man might have demanded to be treated like a great man. But Lincoln acted as though he knew that humility invites respect, while pride and self-centeredness invite only scorn.

Humility means not showing off or trying to be the center of attention. Humility also means allowing other people to receive honor. Do you have trouble in any of those areas? If so, how can you behave more humbly in the future?

Fill in the blank: “God, help me to be humble, not self-centered and prideful, especially when I _____.”