

## CHANGING PLACES

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*The last will be first, and the first will be last.*

—*Matthew 20:16*

### INTRODUCTION

One day, Jesus was teaching a large crowd of people in a remote place. It was getting late, and everyone was hungry. The disciples told Jesus to send the people away so they could get something to eat. Jesus asked the disciples how much food they had. They replied, “We have five loaves of bread and two fish.” Jesus took the food, sat down, and started to eat, telling the disciples that when he was full, they could give the leftovers to the people. And so ... wait a minute! That’s not what happened at all, is it? In fact, it’s hard to even imagine Jesus acting so selfishly. But isn’t that what we are doing anytime we have a “me first” attitude and act as if we’re more important than anyone else? Well, today we’re going to talk about what kind of attitude Jesus had and what happens to people who try to put themselves before others.

Today’s devotion is based on Matthew 20:16, which says, “The last will be first, and the first will be last.” The devotion is called “Changing Places.”

### DEVOTION

Libby rang the doorbell of the house in front of the apple orchard. Her best friend, Alayna, had invited some kids over for a hayride-and-bonfire birthday party. “Hello, Libby,” said Alayna’s mom, opening the door. “I’m glad you’re here. Alayna was worried that you weren’t coming.”

Libby smiled. “Hi, Mrs. Johnson. Sorry I’m late.”

Alayna’s mom said, “You’d better get out back. They’re loading up the wagon.” Libby hurried to join everybody else. The horses hitched to the wagon shook their manes and pawed the ground as Alayna’s dad sat holding the reins. Alayna sat on the hay, near the front of the wagon, and the other kids were climbing aboard. Libby wanted to scramble for a seat next to Alayna. But she knew that everyone wanted to be close to the birthday girl. So she sat near the back instead.

“Libby, you made it!” Alayna said. “Come up here. I want you to sit beside me. Make room, everybody!”

When it’s time to line up or choose a seat or find a place to stand, do you say, “Me first” or “After you”? Jesus taught his disciples that people who say, “After you” will someday hear God say, “You first.” And to the “Me first” people, God will say, “After them.”

## WORDS TO TREASURE

*For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled,  
and those who humble themselves will be exalted.*

—Luke 14:11

## QUESTIONS

1. You probably almost fell out of your chair when you heard, “Jesus took the food, sat down, and started to eat, telling the disciples that when he was full, they could give the leftovers to the people.” That’s because everyone knows that Jesus wasn’t that kind of person. But how do we know this?

Answer: We can see what type of person Jesus was by reading in the Bible about the things he said and did. Also, other parts of the Bible, such as Philippians 2:5–11, describe what type of person Jesus was.

2. Jesus was the most important human being who ever lived, yet he had a humble attitude, serving people and meeting their needs instead of demanding to be served and worrying about his own needs first. Why, do you think, was he like that?

For a clue, either have children look up Philippians 2:5–11 or read this passage to them. The answer is that Jesus, who is God, loves people and humbled himself and came to earth in order to save them from their sin, teach them the right way to live, and set a good example for them.

3. What happened to Jesus because of his unselfish attitude, according to Philippians 2:5–11?

Answer: God exalted him, or lifted him up, to the highest position in heaven, right next to God’s throne.

4. The Bible says we should have the same kind of attitude Jesus had. According to today’s main verse (Matthew 20:16) and today’s “Words to Treasure” verse (Luke 14:11), what happens to people who have that kind of attitude? What happens to people who don’t? Use your own words in your answers. Don’t just quote the verses!

5. Why does the Bible focus on our *attitude*, and not just on our *actions*, when it comes to how we treat other people?

Answer: Because our attitude goes deeper and is more important; it has to do with how we think and feel. If our attitude is good, our actions will be good too.

Consider spending some time playing a game or doing an exercise to help children memorize the “Words to Treasure” Scripture verse.