

## THE ACCEPTANCE OF SELF

This is one of the problems of the church. Many times men and women are not willing to accept themselves as they really are. The Bible teaches that we have different talents and degrees of ability (Matt. 25: 14 - 30; I Cor. 12: 13 - 27). If we find that we are one-talent men we need to accept that fact gracefully. It will not help to grumble and gripe about it, or close our eyes to the fact that we are one-talent men -- nothing is worse than a misfit! If there is one man on an assembly line in a factory who is incapable of doing his job because of lack of ability, the production of the whole line is slowed down and the company does not get the full benefit of the men who are capable because of this one misfit.

Some are unwilling to accept the inferior and second place in life (or at least what they consider to be second place), and as a result are often prevented from reaching the higher goal. Daniel Webster wanted to be president. He was sought twice for the job of vice-president, but declined both times -- each time he would have become president due to the death of the man who was in office. A failure on our part to take second place often keeps us from rising to first place. Jesus teaches us a great lesson along this line in a parable recorded in Luke 14. The tenth verse says, "*But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh he may say unto thee, friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee*". In the acceptance of self we will realize our handicaps and make of them stepping stones and not stumbling blocks.

If we fail to examine ourselves in the kingdom of God to truly know our abilities and limitations we can, through that failure, impair its work. Many men who have aspired to preach the gospel could have been more useful in the kingdom serving in some other capacity because of lack of ability. It was no fault of their own that they lacked the ability to effectively do the work of an evangelist, but it was their fault that they were not willing to accept themselves and the fact that they could not do the work. The same can be said of elders. No organization is going to do more or rise above its leadership. Many men have been appointed to the eldership who were wholly incapable of doing that work, and because of inefficient leadership the church has been held back and souls have gone to hell as a result. It was no fault of the man that he did not have the quality of leadership. It was his fault that he did not recognize his inability and was unwilling to accept self.

In closing, let us read the words of Paul, "*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*" (II Cor. 13:5).

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