

...so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

from Colossians 1:18

"It's all about you! We've been waiting for."  
 "We are the ones who've been waiting for."  
 "It's not your fault."  
 "I'm worth it!"

# First Place

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.

*Philippians 2:3*

From television commercials, billboards, radio ads, and presidential hopefuls the poisonous rhetoric of a self-absorbed society is drilled into our brains from birth. There is no escape from it. If it is not from the lips of a self-important narcissist running for office, it is pouring forth from ad agencies peddling products by priming their potential suckers with, "You are worth it," "You *deserve* it."

There is no escape from it—except in the family of God in Christ.

That is not to say that that corrosive philosophy doesn't exist in the community of believers. It certainly did in the first century church—

I wrote something to the church; but Diotrefes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.

*3 John 1:9*

—and it certainly does today. Most every local church body will have someone who likes to have his own way, who likes to get the credit, who imagines his opinion to be worth more than the opinions of others.

But the earnest believer endeavoring to live as the Lord would have him, has at least a fighting chance of keeping his head above the raging torrent of preening self-absorption and self-promotion flooding the rest of the world, in only one place: the body of Christ.

For a righteous, if ancient example, we can take our cue from John the baptizer,

who, though a spiritual leader in his own right, understood his proper place once he recognized Jesus as the true Messiah.

"He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all."

*John 3:30-31*

This same Jesus, Son of God, taught His disciples, through both word and deed, that God's economy is diametrically different from that of the world at large.

Sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

*Mark 9:35*



This counsel is utter nonsense to the world's minions, but fits perfectly and exquisitely into the eternal kingdom of God, where first place is reserved for only one, the One exalted by God the Father, who

bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

*Philippians 2:9-11*

