

When Pride Gets in the Way

a Modern Day Parable inspired by Matthew 21:33-43

There was a landowner who opened a snow cone stand on the banks of Pride Lake. He put beautiful hedges around it, dug a beautiful, colorful flower bed, added a fun little playground for the children, and built a tremendous lookout tower for patrons to watch the boats on the water. He knew this would be a great investment and a winning business venture. He would hire teens and college students to run the place each summer, and his company would oversee the property. It would not be a difficult job.



When the end of the summer season drew near, the business hadn't made as much profit as he had anticipated, and there had been huge turnover in staff. So, he sent his associates to the snow cone stand to obtain his profits, and see what might have been the issue. But, the summer workers lied to one associate about being robbed, another they sent on a wild goose chase for the hidden money and receipts, and a third they actually tripped and made him fall! All three left the property abruptly and were confused by what had happened.

Again the landowner sent other, more experienced associates, but the summer workers treated them in the same way. Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, "They will respect my son. He represents me, and he is also learning to be a shrewd businessman. This is a simple snow cone stand. Surely, these young summer time employees cannot outsmart him!

But, when the workers saw the son, they said to one another, "This is the heir. One day he will own this snow cone stand and find out we have been skimming profits, giving away free snow cones to our friends, and overcharging others." They seized him, began saying hateful things to make him feel inadequate, and they killed his spirit.

They said things like, "Your father will never see you as an equal. He will always think you failed to make this snow cone stand profitable. You can't win. There are too many of us, and only one of you. Just look at you...you are so small and incapable of being a true success like your dad!"

What will the landowner do to those summer workers? Will he fire them and hire new ones who will turn a profit for the business? As for the son, he confronted the dishonest summer workers and asked, “Have you ever read the Scripture, *‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes?’*”

“Therefore, I say to you, this opportunity to help grow a new business will be taken away from you and given to other honest workers who will produce a profit. As for me, I will abide by my father’s rules and live as his example, and I will be successful like him.”

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