

The Knight Who Wouldn't Bow

Once upon a time, as all good stories begin, there was a palace servant who longed more than anything else in life to be a knight.

He yearned to represent the king and vowed within himself that if he ever had a chance to be a knight, he would serve his king as the noblest knight who ever lived. His dream came true. His great day came.

At his knighthood ceremony, the former servant, now a knight, made a special oath within himself. He vowed that from that day forward, he would bow his knees and lift his arms in homage to no one but his king.

As a knight, he was assigned to guard a remote city on the edge of the kingdom. On the day he took up his duties, standing at attention in full armor at the city gate, an elderly peasant woman passed by on her way to the market. In a rickety cart, she carried some vegetables she had grown and hoped to sell.

As she passed the knight, her rickety old vegetable cart hit a bump in the road and turned over. Potatoes, onions, carrots, and peas spilled everywhere. The peasant woman scurried to get them all back in her cart but to no avail.

She looked toward the knight in hopes he would help her, but already he had forgotten what it was to be a servant. The knight stood there, unmoved, holding his pose. He would not bend to help her. He just stood at attention, keeping his vow to never again bow his knees or lift his arms in homage to anyone but his king.

Years passed, and one day an elderly one-legged man hobbled by on his old crutch. Directly in front of the knight, the old man's crutch finally gave out and broke in two.

"Sir knight," the old one-legged man begged, "please reach down and help me to get up again." The knight, unmoved by the old man's predicament, made no response. He held his pose proudly and remembered he had vowed that he would neither stoop nor lift a hand to help anyone but his king.



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Decades passed, and the knight grew older. One day, his granddaughter came by and said, "Papa, pick me up and take me to the fair." But even for his own granddaughter, the knight would not stoop, for within himself he had made a vow to bow only to his king.

Finally, the day came for the king to come. This was the day for which the knight had longed since the time of his knighthood. As the king approached to inspect him, the knight stood proudly and stiffly at attention.

As he did, the king noticed a tear rolling down the proud knight's cheek. "You are one of my noblest knights," said the king. "Why are you crying?"

"Your majesty," the knight replied, "I took a vow that I would bow and lift my arms in homage to you alone, but now that you are here, I am an old man, unable to keep my vow anymore. The years of standing here stiffly at attention, waiting for you to come, have taken their toll. The joints of my armor are rusted, and I can no longer lift my arms or bend my knees."

The wise king replied, "Perhaps if you had knelt to help all those people who passed by you and lifted your arms to reach out to all the people who asked for your help, you would have been able to keep your vow to pay me homage today."

The associates of Life Care and Century Park have discovered this truth. We pay homage to the King of kings by serving others – reaching down to give a hand to someone in need, sacrificing their wants for the needs of another, practicing the act of humility.

Jesus called His 12 disciples together and said ...

If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all (Mark 9:35 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter