

Legend of the Beggar and the King

There was a king who had no sons to succeed him on the throne. So he sent his messengers out to the countryside to spread this notice: "Wanted: a young man with these qualifications should report to the king for an interview as a possible successor to the throne:

- 1- must love God
- 2- must love his fellow man.

A young man realized that while he did love God and his fellow man; but he was so poor that he did not have the proper clothes to appear before the king, nor did he have the provisions to make the journey to the castle. But somehow he begged, borrowed and emptied his little savings to buy a new suit and the necessary supplies for the journey and he set out. Near the end of his journey there was a beggar by the side of the road, just outside the king's castle. He was dressed in rags and very thin. He extended his hand to the young man saying "I am poor, hungry and cold. Please help me. The young man's heart was filled with compassion for the beggar and he gave him his new clothes and all his provisions. He put on the rags of the beggar and continued on to the castle. Upon arriving he was greeted by the king's attendant and told to wait until he was called. When he was finally allowed to enter the king's throne room, he bowed low before the king, who was sitting on the throne in regal robes and a golden crown. When he raised his eyes he was astonished to discover that the beggar he had met on the road was really the king. The young man wondered why the king had done this. The king replied "So I could find out if you truly love or merely say you love. I knew that if I came to you in the robes of a king you would have been overwhelmed by my majesty. So I came to you in the rags you are now wearing. I have discovered that you really do love and you will have and rule my kingdom.