

HUMILITY

“The moment you think you’ve got it; you’ve lost it!”



The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28).

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Introduction

This class is based on the book “Humility” by Andrew Murray, a Scottish missionary to Africa, written over 100 years ago. He felt that the subject of humility was seldom taught in churches, nor was it a virtue commonly sought after. It seems he was right, and that, that has not changed.

Dictionaries define humility in a variety of ways, such as freedom from pride and arrogance, not thinking you are better than other people, having a modest view of one’s importance and of one’s own worth. While these are proper definitions, a Christian understanding of humility takes on a deeper meaning, based on one’s relationship with God.

In their book “Character Makeover”, Katie Brazelton and Shelley Leith provide a definition of humility from a Christian perspective:

Humility is a natural result of having an accurate view of who God is and having a right perspective of who you are in relation to Him.

Humility is Difficult to Maintain

As the saying goes, “The moment you think you have humility, you have lost it.” Yet, it is vitally important, and should be one of the main virtues we seek after as the distinguishing feature of a disciple of Jesus. **It is the cardinal virtue**, the main root from which Godly graces can grow and a very necessary condition for true fellowship with Jesus. Meekness and lowliness of heart are the chief mark by which they who follow the meek and lowly Lamb of God are to be known.

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:8).

The concept of humility is contrary to how we naturally think. Similar to Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, His teachings were completely contrary to what was being said in society at that time; contrary to those who were saying, “Blessed are the Romans—the proud, & haughty & powerful. Look what they've done. They've conquered the whole world. It pays to be a Roman.” Yet, humility in itself is a mighty power, as it is the power of love, the creative force of the universe and can change the world once again if we walk in true humility!

Blessed are the poor in spirit, (the humble) for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. — Jesus

Chapter 1

Reasons for and Benefits of Humility

The number one reason to strive to be humble is to be more like Jesus, who was the greatest example of humility. Jesus said “Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy burden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: And you shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:28-30).

Lasting rest and peace of mind comes through “coming unto Jesus.” This is one of the greatest riches you can have, rest unto your souls. Money and power cannot give you peace, but walking in a humble and meek spirit will bring a “peace that passes all understanding” (Philippians 4:7).

He loves us unconditionally and shed His blood for us so we could have life eternal. This in itself should humble us. We are recipients of the greatest Love there is and when you meditate on this, your heart will overflow with joy.

An excellent reason to strive for humility is to realize that God actually resists the proud. Can you imagine having God resisting you? If you don’t humble yourself, maybe God will have to humiliate you.

For God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble (1Peter 5:5b).



To be Humble is to Be More Loving

Love and humility are connected. Without deep humility your works of love will be “as a tinkling cymbal.” They will not reflect the Spirit of His love if you try to take credit for what He does through you. (See 1Corinthians 13:1–7.)



The Benefit in Seeking Humility is that God Himself Lives with the Humble

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones (Isaiah 57:15).

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O

God, thou wilt not despise! (Psalms 51:17).



Understanding Our “Fallen State” Helps Us to be Humble

We are made in the “image of God” but we are “flawed images” due to the sins of Adam and Eve.

No tree can grow except on the root from which it sprang. When the Serpent, who was cast out from heaven for his pride, spoke his words of temptation to Eve those words carried with them the very poison of hell. And when she listened, yielding her desire and will to the idea of being as God, knowing good and evil, the poison entered into her soul, destroying forever that blessed humility and dependence upon God which would have been our everlasting happiness. Instead of this, her life and the life of the race that sprang from her became corrupted to its very root with the most terrible of all sins and all curses, Satan's own pride.

The only way out of our fallen state is by “coming unto Jesus.” If we can truly comprehend our fallen state it will greatly humble us, as we see how weak we truly are.

In the Epistles, Christ is referred to as the second Adam. Through Adam came death, through Christ came eternal life.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5:12).

The following verses bring out that our only goodness is found in Jesus:

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6).

That no flesh should glory in his presence. He that glories, let him glory in the Lord (1Corinthians 1:29-31).

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord (Jeremiah 9:23,24).

Jesus is our righteousness, nothing else. When we truly realize this, we are in awe and worship Him in all humility because He saved us. If you are going to

boast, boast in the Lord!



We Receive God's Guidance When we are Humble

When we are not humble we're not desperate with the Lord, thus we miss things the Lord tries to tell us and we cannot be the blessing to others that we could be. When we are not humble, we are usually self-righteous, which makes us hard to live with, often harsh, insensitive and critical—all of which hinders our communication with others and with the Lord most of all.

The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek He will teach His way (Psalm 25:9).

In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in your own eyes, fear the Lord and depart from evil (Proverbs 3:6-7).



Humility Brings Freedom from Fear

Those who are following God's Spirit closely and are trying to emulate His ways don't have to fear losing their image, because they're trying to make His image their image.

The humble are not afraid because they've already accepted that they are nothing, know nothing, and can do nothing without Jesus and the love and help of others. They know they need Jesus and they readily acknowledge this. 1John 4:18 says that "there is no fear in Love." The humble are set free from fear.



Humility Brings Unity

Humility is a key factor in answering one of Jesus' final prayers.

Neither I pray for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; That they may all be one; as Thou Father are in Me, and I in them, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that You have sent Me (John 17:20,21).

How do we obtain this humility that we so desperately need? A good way is simply to "fall in love" with Jesus. Nothing is more beautiful than to realize that we are nothing and that God is everything, and there is nothing that we can do to deserve this wonderful Love.



Be Clothed with Humility

All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble (1Peter 5:5).

By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life (Proverbs 22:4).

God has two dwelling places ... Heaven and the humble heart and He has this favor for the humble. “This is what the high and exalted One says—He who lives forever, whose Name is holy: ‘I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite’ (Isaiah 57:15). — Eric Gilmour

Chapter 2

Humility – Our Duty and Our Glory

You are worthy, O Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being (Revelations 4:11).

We owe everything to God, our very life, our every breath. Our talents, abilities, and skills all come from Him. “Without Me, you can do nothing,” Jesus said in John 15:5.

For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not? (1Corinthians 4:7).

We are to present ourselves as empty vessels in which God can dwell and manifest His love and goodness. Humility, the place of entire dependence on God, is our first duty and the root of every other virtue. Pride, the loss of humility, is the root of every sin and evil. The lack of humility is the sufficient explanation of every human defect and failure.

The call to humility has been too little regarded in the Church because its true nature and importance has been too little understood. Humility is simply acknowledging the truth of our position and yield to God His place, which is first.

I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me (Exodus 20:2-3).

Today's idols also can be our stubbornness and our putting our own will before God's. (See 1 Samuel 15:22-23.) We seldom have the “Thy will be done” attitude of Jesus. God will not tolerate your putting anything else first before Him and His Work.

The most important time you have to spend is with the Lord. If you put anything else before the Lord, it has become your God. To neglect your fellowship with the King of kings because you're so busy with “the affairs of the kingdom” can be disastrous to your spiritual life and communion with the Lord. Christ is not valued at all unless He is valued above all.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:33).

If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the Earth (Colossians 3:1-2).



And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her (Luke 10:41-42).

The good thing Mary chose was to sit at Jesus' feet in fellowship and to listen to His Words. Those who work hardest for God are often furthest away in relationship.

The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever; and my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting places (Isaiah 32:17-18).

As Christ's humility came to man and brought man to God so a humble heart brings man to God and God to man. Humility is the point of contact with God.

Chapter 3

Humility: The Secret of Redemption

Jesus came to bring humility back to earth, to make us partakers of it, and by it to save us. In heaven He humbled Himself to become man. He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death. His humility made our salvation possible.

Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who emptied Himself; taking the form of a servant; and humbled Himself; becoming obedient even unto death. Wherefore God also highly exalted Him (Philippians 2:5,9).



The Secret of Our Redemption Came via the Path of Humility

After Adam and Eve rebelled in the Garden, the life of humankind was corrupted to its very root with the most terrible of all sins and curses, the poison of Satan's pride.

All the wretchedness this world has seen, all its wars and bloodshed among the nations, all its selfishness and suffering, all its ambitions and jealousies, all its broken hearts and embittered lives, with all its daily unhappiness, have their origin in what this cursed, hellish pride, has brought us.

Our insight into the need of redemption depends in large upon our knowledge of the terrible nature of the poisonous power that has entered our souls. The power that Satan brought into man's life is working hourly throughout the world. Men and women suffer from it; they fear and fight and flee it; and yet they know not whence it comes, whence it has its terrible supremacy. We must be aware of its Satanic origin. The supernatural power in which alone our deliverance is to be found is in the redemption of the Lamb of God.

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil (1John 3:8).

People often say that money is the root of all sin. Actually, the Scripture says in 1Timothy 6:10 that "the love of money is the root of all sin." Money buys you things that can minister to your pride, whatever it may be. You build up your image with things instead of seeking to be conformed to the image of God.

We need to think thoughts of what Christ is and His chief characteristic, His humility. What is His life on earth but humility; His taking the form of a servant? "He humbled Himself, therefore God highly exalted Him." Christ is the humility of God embodied in human nature; the Eternal Love humbling itself, clothing itself in the garb of meekness and gentleness to win and serve and save us.

The health and strength of our spiritual life will depend entirely upon making humility the chief thing we admire in Him and ask of Him.

Is it any wonder that the Christian life is so often feeble and fruitless, when the very root of the Christ life is neglected, is unknown, the joy of salvation so little felt? Until such humility is what we seek in Christ above our chief joy there is very little hope of a religion that will conquer the world.

Let us consider how all lack of love, all indifference to the needs, the feelings, the weakness of others; all sharp and hasty judgments and utterances, so often excused under the plea of being outright and honest; all manifestations of temper and touchiness and irritation; all feelings of bitterness and estrangement, have their root in pride.

Let us cry with our whole heart for the humility of Jesus to be manifest in our lives and in the lives of others. Study the humility of Jesus. This is the hidden root of your redemption.

Except a man deny himself, he cannot be My disciple (Luke 9:23, 14:33).

Let us flee to Jesus until we are clothed with humility. — Andrew Murray

I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith (Romans 12:3).

Chapter 4

Humility in the Life of Jesus

I am in the midst of you as he that serves (Luke 22:27).

In Jesus we see how He took the place of entire subordination, and gave God the honor and the glory due to Him. What He taught was made true of Himself. Matthew 23:12 says, “He that humbles himself shall be exalted.”

Listen to the words in which Jesus speaks of His relation to the Father, and how unceasingly He uses the words “not” and “nothing” about Himself.

The Son can do nothing of Himself (John 5:19).

I can of My own self do nothing; My judgment is just, because I seek not My own will (John 5:30).

I receive not glory from men (John 5:41).

I am come not to do My own will (John 6:38).

My teaching is not My own (John 7:16).

I am not come of Myself (John 7:28).

I do nothing of Myself (John 8:28).

I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me (John 8:42).

I seek not My own glory (John 8:50).

The words that I say, I speak not from Myself (John 14:10).

The word which you hear is not My own, they belong to the Father who sent me (John 14:24).

These words open to us the deepest roots of Christ's life and work. They teach that He became nothing that God might be all.



Reflect Upon the Life of Jesus

Wouldn't it have been much more respectable and acceptable for the King of

kings, Jesus, to have been born in a palace, with illustrious members of the court in attendance, and with all the honor and praise—instead of on the dirty floor of a barn with the cows and asses, and the smell of all that horseshit, wrapped in rags and lying in a feed trough, with a motley crew of poor little shepherd boys kneeling on the floor beside Him?

The manger has been so glorified by Man since then, that they've forgotten what it was used for. —Nothing but a rough bin for the cows to eat out of.

As a child Jesus had to flee with his parents to another country. He grew up in Nazareth, an obscure, backwater town on the Sea of Galilee. He worked for many years as a carpenter, a simple hewer of wood.



In his final visit to Jerusalem, he entered the city on a humble donkey, not a glorious stallion. He died a cruel death between two thieves ... not a life of pride and pomp.

Wouldn't it have been better for his father to have been a prominent potentate, instead of a humble hewer of wood? And wasn't that rather humiliating for His humble parents to become fugitives from injustice and flee the country like common criminals?

Jesus, the all-powerful son of God humbled himself in every way to take on the suit of human flesh in order to enter into our world to save us by dying the cruel death on the cross. Jesus was an example of humility, yet He was the bravest of the brave. He would not be intimidated by the most powerful people of His time. Clearly, the worldly opinion of humility as being a weakness is in error. (See Luke 13:32.)

Jesus was a continual sample of meekness, taking time for children, stopping to help those in need, regardless of the individuals' race, creed or position in society. He focused on helping the outcasts and rejects of society, bringing into His ranks tax collectors, fishermen and women of "ill-repute."



The humble and others-focused love Jesus showed from the cross is absolutely amazing. At His death He showed concern for both His mother and the disciple John. He asked His Father to forgive the Roman soldiers. He forgave the penitent thief. So whether it was the love that prays for enemies or the love that cares for friends or the love that rejoices over a penitent sinner that was being

cast out by others, in all Christ proved the cross to be a cross of love. The crucified One is the very embodiment of a love that passes all knowledge.

Our “religion” must be set aside to secure this, the chief of the marks of the Christ within us. A humble relationship with Christ and the Father is more important than religion.

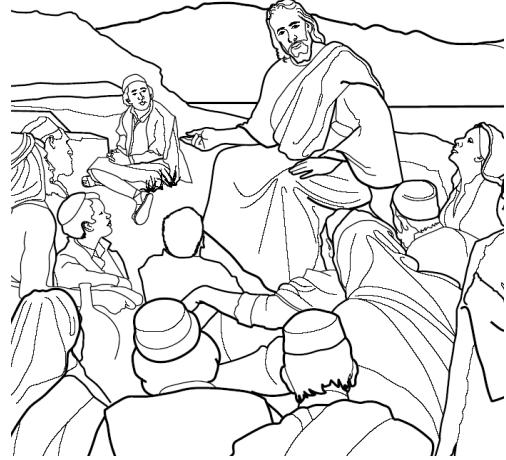
O Lord, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with thing too great and too marvelous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me. O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time forth and forevermore (Psalm 131).

Psalm 131; the shortest Psalm to read, but the longest to learn. — Charles Spurgeon

Chapter 5

Humility in the Teachings of Jesus

In His teaching, Jesus often and earnestly taught of humility. In the Beatitudes He said: “Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.” The very first words of His proclamation of the kingdom of heaven reveal the open gate through which alone we enter. The poor, who have nothing in themselves, to them the kingdom comes. The meek, who seek nothing in themselves, theirs the earth shall be. The blessings of heaven and earth are for the lowly and the persecuted



Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart (Matthew 9:29).

As written in Luke 9:46 and 48, and Matthew 18:3, when the disciples had been disputing who would be the greatest in the kingdom, and had agreed to ask the Master, He set a child in their midst and said, “Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, shall be exalted.” “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” “He that is least among you, the same shall be great.”

The sons of Zebedee had asked Jesus to sit on His right and left, the highest place in the kingdom. Jesus said it was not His to give, but the Father's, who would give it to those for whom it was prepared. And then He added, “Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came to serve” (Matthew 20:20-28).

Speaking to the multitude and the disciples about the self-centered Pharisees and their love of the chief seats in Matthew 23:11, Christ said once again, “He that is greatest among you shall be your servant.”

On another occasion in Luke 14:7-11, when in the house of a Pharisee, He spoke the parable of the guest who would be invited to come up higher, and added, “For whosoever exalts himself shall be abased; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted.”

After the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican in Luke 18:14, Christ again said, “Everyone that exalts himself shall be abased; and he that humbles himself

shall be exalted.” Everything is worthless that is not pervaded by deep, true humility towards God and men.

At the Last Supper in Luke 22:24-27 the disciples still disputed who should be greatest. Jesus said, “He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that does serve. I am among you as he that serves.”

Then after washing the disciples' feet in John 13:14, Jesus said, “If I then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.” Humility is the first and most essential element of discipleship and Jesus set the sample.

Humility will be the one standard of glory in Heaven—the lowliest is the nearest to God. There is nothing as heavenly as being the servant of all, which takes humility. The faithful servant, who recognizes his position, finds a real pleasure in supplying the wants of the master or his guests.

How little this is practiced. How few think of making it a distinct object of continual desire or prayer. The character of a faithful servant implies devotion to the master's interests; thoughtful study and care to please Him; and delight in His prosperity and honor and happiness.



We Need Now to Learn Another Lesson

Jesus calls us to be servants of one another, and that, as we accept it heartily, this service too will be a most blessed one, a fuller liberty from sin and self. At first it may appear difficult; this is only because of the pride which still counts itself something.

When our own heart is set upon this we shall study each word of Jesus on self-abasement with new zest. No place will be too low and no service too difficult if we may but share the fellowship with Him who spoke, “I am among you as he that serves.”

Here is the path to the higher life. Down, lower down. This is the nobility of the kingdom of heaven; to humble oneself, to become the servant of all.

Remember that love, humility, prayer, and good communications can solve all problems.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made

Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant ... and being found in the fashion of a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death—even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:5-8).

As we realize the great cost of Jesus' suffering for us, and that we are undeserving of it, we are truly humbled. — Andrew Murray

Chapter 6

Humility in the Disciples of Jesus

The Effect of the Holy Spirit

Let us look for humility in Jesus' companions. If, in the lack of it we find in them the contrast between Christ and men is brought out more clearly, it helps us to appreciate the mighty transformation which Pentecost wrought in them.

We have already seen the occasions where the disciples proved how entirely wanting they were in the grace of humility. —Not that there were not moments when they indeed humbled themselves before their Lord; as it was with Peter when he cried out, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man."

How much there may be of earnest and active religion while humility is still sadly wanting?

See it in the disciples. There was in them fervent attachment to Jesus. They had forsaken all for Him. The Father had revealed to them that He was the Christ of God. They believed in Him, they loved Him, they obeyed His commandments. When others went back, they clave to Him. They were ready to die with Him. But deeper down than all this there was a dark power—the existence and the hideousness of which they were hardly conscious—which had to be cast out before they could be witnesses of the power of Jesus to save.

Today, we may find professors and ministers, evangelists and workers, and teachers in whom the gifts of the Spirit are manifest, and who are the channels of blessing to multitudes, but when the testing time comes, it is only too painfully manifest that the grace of humility is nowhere to be seen.

Humility is the chief and highest of the graces, one of the most difficult to attain, one that only comes in power, when the fullness of the Spirit makes us partakers of the indwelling Christ and when He lives deep within us.



External Teaching and Personal Effort Cannot Conquer Pride or Bring Meekness of Heart

For three years the disciples had been in the training school of Jesus. He had told them what the chief lesson was: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." Time after time He had spoken to them of humility. He had not only

lived before them as the Lamb of God in His divine humility, He had unfolded to them the inmost secret of His life: “The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve.” He had washed their feet, and told them they were to follow His example. And yet had availed little—at the Last Supper there was still the contention as to who should be greatest.

Learn the much needed lesson of humility—that no outward instruction, not even of Christ Himself; no personal resolve or effort, however sincere and earnest, can cast out pride. Nothing can avail but this, that the new nature in its divine humility be revealed in power to take the place of our old nature, to become as truly our very nature as that ever was. We have to daily seek to put on His divine nature, the humble mind of Christ.



Only by the Indwelling of Christ Comes True Humble

Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them (John 14:23).

Pride rules in us with such terrible power because it is our very nature. Humility must rule in the same way; it must become our very self, our very nature. As natural and easy as it is to be proud, it must be to be humble. In His death it is said in 1John 3:8 that Jesus destroyed the power of the devil.

In His Ascension He received the Spirit of the Father, through whom He might do what He could not do while upon earth—make Himself one with those He loved, actually live their life through them so they could live before the Father in a humility like His because it was Himself who lived and breathed in them.

On Pentecost He came and took possession. The work of preparation and conviction, the hope which His teaching had effected, was perfected by the mighty change that Pentecost wrought. And the lives and the epistles of James and Peter and John bear witness that all was changed, and that the spirit of the meek Jesus had indeed taken possession of them.

It is only where we, like the Son, truly know and show that we can do nothing of ourselves, that God will do all.

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by His own glory and goodness. Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature (2Peter 1:4).

Chapter 7

Humility in Daily Life

Likewise, you younger, submit yourselves to the elder. Yes, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility. (1Peter 5:5-7).

The command is clear from the Gospels and the Epistles: humble yourself. That does not mean that it is your work to conquer and cast out the pride of your nature, and to form within yourself the lowliness of Jesus. That is God's work.



Humility in our Daily Lives

He that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? (1John 4:20).

By love serve one another (Galatians 5:13).

What a solemn thought, that our love to God will be measured by our everyday intercourse with men and the love it displays; and that our love to God will be found to be a delusion, except its truth is proved in standing the test of daily life with our fellowmen.

It is even so with our humility. It is easy to think that we humble ourselves before God, but our humility towards men will be the only sufficient proof that our humility before God is real.

The only humility that is really ours is not that which we try to show before God in prayer, but that which we carry with us, and carry out, in our ordinary conduct; the insignificances of daily life are the tests of eternity, because they prove what really is the spirit that possesses us. It is in our most unguarded moments that we really show and see what we are.

Humility before God is nothing if not proved in humility before others.

Paul writes:

In honor preferring one another ... set not your mind on high things, but condescend to those that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceit (Romans 12:10,16).

Doing nothing through faction or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, each

counting other better than himself (Philippians 2:3).

Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, even as the Lord forgave you (Colossians 3:12-13).

With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering; be patient, bearing with one another in love ... be ye kind one to another (Ephesians 4:2,32).

If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted (Galatians 6:1). (See also 2Timothy 2:25.)

It is in our relations with one another, in our treatment of one another, that the true lowliness of mind and the heart of humility are to be seen.

The question is often asked, how we can count others better than ourselves, when we see that they are far below us in wisdom, in natural gifts, or in grace received. The question proves at once how little we understand what lowliness of mind really is. True humility comes when we have seen ourselves to be nothing at all, letting God be all.

The humble man looks upon every child of God and prefers him in honor as the son of a King. The spirit of Him who washed the disciples' feet, makes it a joy to us to be servants one of another.



The Humble Feels no Jealousy or Envy

He can praise God when others are preferred and blessed before him. He can bear to hear others praised and himself forgotten, because he has learned to say "I am nothing."

The believer is often in danger of aiming at and rejoicing in what one might be called the more human, manly of the virtues, such as boldness, contempt for the world, zeal, self-sacrifice, while the deeper and gentler, the diviner and heavenly graces, the death of self, meekness, humility, lowliness, are scarcely thought of or as valued. Prove your Christ-likeness, not only in your zeal for saving the lost, but in your conversation with the brethren, forbearing and forgiving one another, even as the Lord forgave you.

Look upon every brother who tries or vexes us as God's instrument for our purification and let us only seek to serve one another in love.

Humility ... is the capacity to view everyone as ultimately equal. This doesn't mean denying differences between people, but it does mean looking past those differences to the underlying equality of all people.

There are two important senses in which we are all equal: As creatures made in God's image and as fallen creatures in need of God's grace. These two facts, in turn, are the foundation for true humility, because they radically level the playing field. — Todd Wilson

Chapter 8

Humility and Holiness

Which say, stand by yourself; for I am holier than you? (Isaiah 65:5).

In Jesus, a divine humility was the secret of His life, His death and His exaltation; the infallible test of our holiness will be the humility before God and men.

The chief mark of counterfeit holiness is its lack of humility. Every seeker after holiness needs to be on his guard, lest pride creep in where its presence is least expected. Pride can lift its head in the very temple of God, and make His worship the scene of its self-exaltation.

Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalts himself shall be abased; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted (Luke 18:9-14).



**THE
PHARISEE
AND THE
PUBLICAN**
(Luke 18:9-14)

God's Righteousness
vs. Man's Righteousness

Since the time Christ so exposed his pride, the Pharisee has put on the garb of the publican, and the confessor of deep sinfulness equally with the professor of the highest holiness, must be on the watch. Just when We are most anxious to have our heart the temple of God, we shall find the two men coming up to pray. And the publican will find that his danger is not from the Pharisee beside him, who despises him, but the Pharisee within who commends and exalts. In God's temple, when we think we are in the holiest of all, let us beware of pride.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them (Job 1:6).

It is in that which is just cause for thanksgiving, it is in the very thanksgiving which we render to God, it is in the very confession that God has done it all that self finds cause of complacency and in thanking God is congratulating himself. Pride can just as easily clothe itself in the garments of praise or of penitence.

Even though the words, “I am not as the rest of men” are condemned, their spirit may too often be found in our feelings and language towards our fellow-men. Listen to the way in which Christians often speak of one another. How little of the meekness and gentleness of Jesus is seen.

It is so little remembered that deep humility must be the keynote of what the servants of Jesus say of themselves or each other. Harmony has been disturbed and the work of God hindered because men who are counted saints have proved in touchiness and haste and impatience, in self-defense and self-assertion, in sharp judgments and unkind words that they did not each consider others better than themselves, and that their holiness has but little in it of the meekness of the saints.

We have as much of holiness as we have of God. Though the bare-faced boasting Jew in the days of Isaiah is not often to be found, how often his spirit is still seen, whether in the treatment of fellow saints or the children of the world.

Remember that “Love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, and seeks not its own” 1Corinthians 13:4-7.

In Matthew 26:41 Jesus told His disciples to “watch and pray” not to watch and criticize. God does not judge us until the day we die. Only God can see the heart of man and we often cannot fully understand why a person behaves in a certain way. Our duty as humble servants of Christ is to “watch and pray” for others.

Paul says in Romans 15:1 that “we then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.” We are not to build up our own self-esteem by criticizing others.



There is no pride so dangerous, so subtle and so insidious, as the pride of holiness.

There grows up, unconsciously, a hidden habit of soul, which feels complacency in its attainments, and cannot help seeing how far in advance it is of others. It can be recognized, not always in any special self-assertion or self-

laudation, but simply in the absence of that deep self-abasement, which cannot but be the mark of the soul that has seen the glory of God (Job 42:5-6).

Unless we make the increase of humility our study, we may find that we have been delighting in beautiful thoughts and feelings, in solemn acts of consecration and faith, while the only sure mark of the presence of God, the disappearance of self, was all the time wanting. Let us flee to Jesus, and hide ourselves in Him until we be clothed upon with His humility.

— Andrew Murray

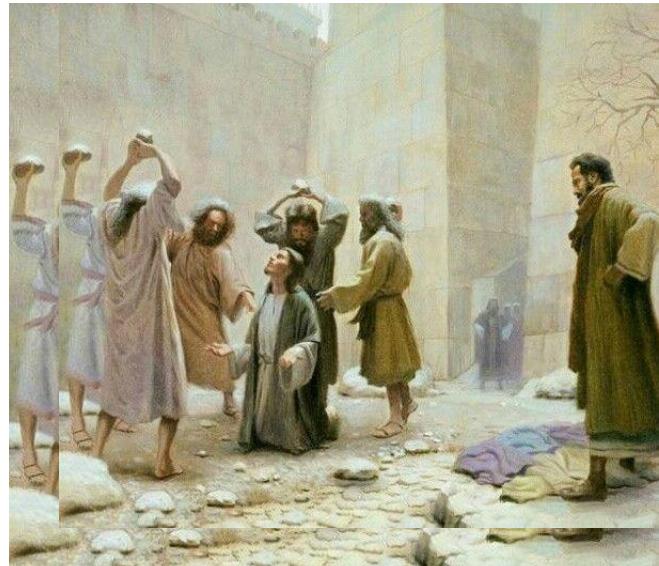
Chapter 9

Humility and Sin

Watch out for the trap that some people fall into thinking that if we keep sinning we keep humble. “My sins keep me humble.” We make enough sins at it is without “allowing” ourselves to commit more. We are deeply flawed by our inherent sinful nature, yet at the same time we are deeply loved by our Creator.

The Apostle Paul wrote “Sinners, of whom I am chief. I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief ... Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (1Timothy 1:13-15).

Humility is often identified with penitence and contrition. As a consequence, there appears to be no way of fostering humility but by keeping the soul occupied with its sin. Humility is something more. We have seen in Jesus’ teachings and in the Epistles how often the virtue of humility is taught without any reference to sin.



Humility is the Displacement of Self by the Enthronement of God

Look at a man like the Apostle Paul, one who once persecuted the church, to see the deep consciousness of having been a sinner:

I am the least of the apostles, that am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me (1Corinthians 15:9,10).

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach to the heathen (Ephesians 3:8).

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing: for to

will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 7:18,25).

Lest Paul should exalt himself, by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was sent him to keep him humble. Paul's first desire was to ask God to remove it and he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart.

The answer came that the trial was a blessing; that, in the weakness and humiliation it brought, the grace and strength of the Lord could be the better manifested. Paul at once entered upon a new stage in his relation to the trial: instead of simply enduring it, he most gladly gloried in it; instead of asking for deliverance, he took pleasure in it. (See 2Corinthians 12:7-10.)

God's grace had saved him; God remembered his sins no more for ever; but never, never could he forget how terribly he had sinned. The more he rejoiced in God's salvation, the clearer was his consciousness that he was a saved sinner. (See Hebrews 8:12.)

The true import of what Saint Paul teach us comes out all the more clearly when we notice the remarkable fact that, through his whole Christian course, we never find from his pen, anything like confession of sin. On the contrary, there are passages in which he vindicates himself before God and men.

You are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and righteously, and unblameably we behaved ourselves toward you (1Thessalonians 2:10).

Our glorying is this ... that in holiness and sincerity of God we behaved ourselves in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward (2Corinthians 1:12).

It is not in daily sinning that the secret of the deeper humility will be found, but in realizing that our one abiding position before God must be that of those whose highest joy it is to confess that they are sinners saved by grace.

In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing (Romans 7:18).

Though Paul had a weakness, a thorn in the flesh, he does not dwell on his weaknesses, but focuses on God's power and grace.

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has now made me free from the law of sin, which once led me captive" (Romans 8:2).

Where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly (Romans 5:20).

David in the Old Testament committed great sins, and thereby had to have a great humbling, a great judgment and eventually he had a great repentance. Therefore, God had a great forgiveness for him, because they had a great love for each other in spite of everything. From the squeezing and twisting of David's life came forth the sweetness of the Psalms and the fragrance of his praises to the Lord for His mercy. It was all God and all grace and none of David's own righteousness.

The process of humility takes a series of breakings and lessons, but David learned from his sins and mistakes, repented, and gave God the glory! God only uses broken men and women — no others will do. Others are too self-confident in their own flesh. God has to break them, melt them, and mold them in the hands of the Potter, to make them a better vessel. The breaking depends upon your willingness to be made willing to obey and to choose the path of humility!



God's Grace Showing You That You Are a Sinner Keeps You Humble

Being occupied with self, even amid the deepest self-abhorrence, can never free us from self. It is the revelation of God by His grace delivering from sin, which will make us humble.

The law may break the heart with fear; it is only grace that works humility which becomes a joy to the soul as its second nature. Not to be occupied with your sin, but to be occupied with God, brings deliverance from self. Get so full of the spirit and the Word you don't have time to worry about your own damn, stinking self—or how bad you are. Of course, you're bad! So are all the rest of us. Only Jesus is good. Give God all the glory for anything God about you! “Every good and perfect gift comes down from above.” (James 1:17)

Could there be anything more important than sitting in silence before God everyday? — A.W. Tozar

Chapter 10

Humility and Faith

How can you believe since you accept glory from one another but do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? (John 5:44).

Christians may see clearly the promises of perfect peace, of overflowing love and joy, of abiding communion, and yet feel that there is something hindering true possession. Pride hinders possession of these priceless virtues.

Galatians 5:6 tells us that faith works by love, and you cannot have love without humility. First comes grace, then comes the true good works. (See Ephesians 2:8-10.)

Jesus reveals to us that pride makes faith impossible. “How can you believe, which receive glory from one another?” (John 5:55). All credit in life for anything good we do belongs to God. Give God all the glory all the time and He will keep you and prosper you.

Pride and faith are irreconcilably at variance. Faith and humility have the same root and we never can have more true faith than we have true humility; We may indeed have strong intellectual conviction and assurance of the Truth, but while pride is kept in the heart, which will greatly hinder living faith.

Faith seeks the glory that comes from God. As long as we take glory for ourselves, from one another, the honor and reputation that comes from men, we do not seek, and cannot receive the glory that comes from God. Our faith is so feeble when pride still reigns so much.

Humility and faith are more allied in Scripture than most Christians realize.



There are two cases in which Jesus spoke of a great faith and in both cases these are marvelous examples of humility.

In Matthew 8:8-10 did not the centurion, at whose faith Jesus marveled, saying, “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel!” declare, “I am not worthy that You should come under my roof?”

In Matthew 15:21-28 did not the mother to whom Jesus spoke, “O woman, great is your faith!” accepted the name of dog, and say, “Yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs?”

Humility Removes Every Hindrance to Faith

Let us accept gladly whatever can humble us before God or men; this alone is the path to the glory of God.

“How can you believe, which receive glory from one another?” (John 5:44). Nothing can cure you of the desire of receiving glory from men, or of the sensitiveness and pain and anger which come when it is not given, but giving yourself to seek only the glory that comes from God. You will find that the deeper you sink in humility before Him, the nearer He is to fulfill every desire of your faith.

Faith is the most humbling thing—the acceptance of our place as dependents, who can claim or do nothing but what grace bestows.

— Andrew Murray

Chapter 11

Humility and Death to Self

He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death (Philippians 2:8).

Jesus humbled Himself unto death and thereby opened the path in which we must walk. Humility must lead us to die to self and find the path that leads to life in God.

For whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it (Luke 9:24).

Humility means the giving up of self and taking the place of perfect nothingness before God. If it had not been for Jesus' boundless humility, counting Himself as nothing except as a servant to do and suffer the Will of God, He never would have died.



How I Can Die to Self

Accept every humiliation, look upon all those who try or vex you as a means of grace to humble you. Use every opportunity of humbling yourself before others as a help to abide humbly before God.

The souls that enter into His humiliation will find in Him the power to walk with all lowliness and meekness, forbearing one another in love.

— Andrew Murray

Death to self has no surer death mark than a humility which makes itself of no reputation, which empties out itself, and takes the form of a servant. The Lamb of God means two things—meekness and death. Let us seek to receive Him in both forms.

In the coming end days how will you overcome the world? Again, the answer lies in humility! “And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Revelations 12:11). The word of your testimony is that you are a hopeless sinner saved only by His grace. We overcome by His blood, a pure gift, and by loving not our lives unto the death.

Our salvation is only by grace, never by works, or confession sessions, or

battling in the flesh with our sins. If God can't do it, nobody can.

Let a willing, loving, restful, happy humility be the mark that you have indeed claimed your birthright in Christ.

By one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified (Hebrews 10:14).

Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10). In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength (Isaiah 30:15).

Chapter 12

Humility and Happiness

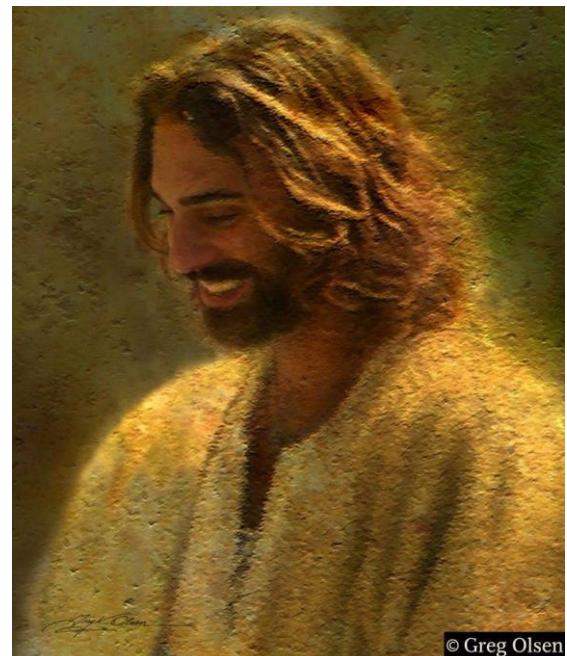
The joy of the Lord is the strength of His people, and a joyful and thankful heart is the sign of one who has the humble spirit of the Lord. This is the thing that people look at believers to see: Are we happy, do we have joy? Otherwise, they don't want what we have. Why should they? No use trying to convince them that they should accept Jesus because if Jesus doesn't give us joy and thankfulness, why would they want Him? People are looking for happiness in their lives.

We need to search with great diligence for the joy of the Lord. We need the joy not only for our sample to others, but we need it because it's our strength. And resting in Him, casting our burdens on Him, giving Him first place in our lives and in our time is going to bring that joy.

I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete (John 15:11).

Jesus gave us the Gospel so we could have complete joy. The joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10). In Psalms 100, we are told to enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and Paul advised us in 1Thessalonians 5:16 to "rejoice always!"

Deep abiding joy comes through the portal of humility and humbly accepting what God sends into our lives and praising Him both in the good times and in the difficult times.



Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weakness: for when I am weak then I am strong (2Corinthians 12:9,10).



Every Christian Passes Through Two Stages in Pursuit of Humility

In the first stage he fears and flees and seeks deliverance from all that can

humble him—his weaknesses. He has not yet learned to seek humility at any cost. He has accepted the command to be humble, and seeks to obey it, though only to find how utterly he fails. He prays for humility, at times very earnestly; but in his secret heart he prays more to be kept from the very things that will make him humble. He is not yet so in love with humility that he would sell all to procure it. It has not yet become his joy and pleasure. He cannot yet say, “Most gladly do I glory in weakness, I take pleasure in whatever humbles me” (2Corinthians 12:10),

What will it be that brings us to the stage in which this will be the case? That which brought Paul there—a new revelation of Jesus. Nothing but the presence of God can reveal and expel self. In Paul, the danger of exalting himself was coming very near. It appears as if this were the highest lesson that he had to learn, full conformity to his Lord where he gloried in weakness that God might be all.

Because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me (2Corinthians 12:7).

There may be intense consecration, fervent zeal, and heavenly experience, and yet, if it is not prevented by very special dealings of the Lord, there may be an unconscious self-exaltation with it.

Look at our lives and see whether we gladly glory in weakness, whether we take pleasure in injuries, in necessities, in distresses. Let us ask whether we have learned to regard a reproof, just or unjust, a reproach from friend or enemy, an injury or difficulty into which others bring us, as above all an opportunity of proving Jesus is all to us. It is a great happiness to be so free from self that whatever is said of us or done to us is lost and swallowed up, in the thought that Jesus is all.

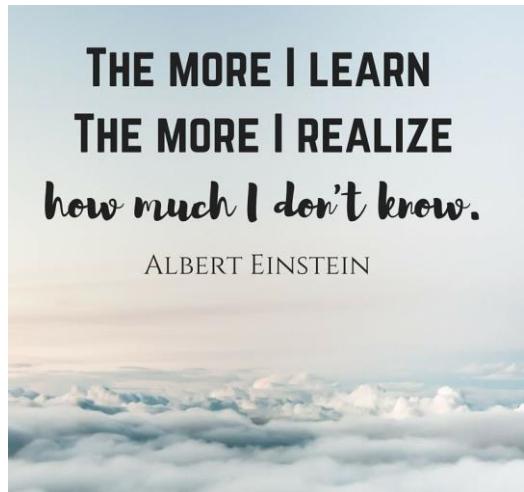
Trust Him who took charge of Paul to take charge of us. Paul needed special discipline, and with it special instruction, to learn what was more precious than even the unutterable things he had heard in heaven. He who cared for him will care for us. He watches over us with a jealous, loving care, lest we exalt ourselves.



Remember, God Chastens Those He Loves

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth (Hebrews 12:6).

In trial and weakness and trouble He seeks to bring us low, until we so learn that His grace is all, as to take pleasure in the very thing that brings us and keeps us low. “Most gladly will I glory in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2Corinthians 12:9). The humble man has learnt the secret of abiding gladness. The word of his Lord brings ever deeper joy.



The danger of pride is greater and nearer than we think, especially at the time of our highest experiences. The preacher of spiritual truth with an admiring congregation hanging on his lips, the gifted speaker on a platform expounding the secrets of the heavenly life, no man knows the hidden, the unconscious danger to which these are exposed.

Paul was in danger without knowing it; what Jesus did for him is written for our admonition, that we may know our danger and know our only safety. The grace for humility is greater and nearer, too, than we think. Our humility is His care and His work. His grace is sufficient for us, to meet the temptation of pride too. His strength will be perfected in our weakness. Let us choose to be weak, to be low, to be nothing.

Christ will humble us, and keep us humble; let us heartily consent, let us trustfully and joyfully accept all that humbles. We shall find that the deepest humility is the secret of the truest happiness, of a joy that nothing can destroy.

The highest form of prayer that I know of is a quiet heart that loves Him.
— Richard Wurmbrand

Chapter 13

Humility and Exaltation

He that humbles himself shall be exalted (Luke 14:11).

God gives grace to the humble. Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and He shall exalt you (James 4:10).

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time (1Peter 5:6).

What is the exaltation spoken of in the above verses? The very essence of that exaltation is when he helps you to be made into the likeness of the beloved Son. Exaltation is to be like Jesus and truly walk in His Spirit. That is the greatest exaltation, to be like Jesus—the greatest fulfillment in life.

Exaltation is Not the Prosperity Gospel That Many Pastors Preach

It may not be a new position, a better job, etc. The greatest exaltation that any can have is more of Jesus, more of His Spirit in our lives. That will give us the greatest peace that passes understanding, joy unspeakable and much more. These are the true treasures of the Spirit, and the true treasures of this life as well.

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent (John 17:3).

The rich and the powerful are often the most fearful people in the world. Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 5:12 that the laboring man (the poor and the humble) lies down and his sleep is sweet, but the rich (the proud) cannot sleep for the abundance of their riches.

The rich are always worrying about their riches, and the powerful are always worrying about their power. There is no rest in pride. The proud are always afraid. But there's perfect rest in humility, because humility has love and faith without fear. Pride causes fear of failure, and then the fear makes you weak, or impotent, so that you do fail. You don't have enough power. The very fact that you're afraid you'll fail ensures your failure, because only faith succeeds.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love (1John 4:18).

I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace (Acts 20:24).

I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content (Philippians 4:11).

Accept with gratitude everything that God allows from within or without, from friend or enemy, in nature or in grace, to remind you of your need of humbling, and to help you to it. Reckon humility to be indeed the mother-virtue, the one perpetual safeguard of the soul, and set your heart upon it as the source of all blessing.

The promise is divine and sure. He that humbles himself shall be exalted. Do the one thing God asks you to do—humble yourself—and God will see that he does the one thing He has promised. He will give more grace; He will exalt you in due time and place.

As the all-pervading life of God possesses you, you will rejoice to be nothing, with not a thought or wish for self, because all is occupied with Him.

Moses chose humility by “choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Hebrews 11:25,26).

You will be tested, but if you fail, get up and try again. Forgive yourself and those who have wronged you. He understands.

Professions of humility are the very cream, the very essence of pride; the really humble person wishes to be, and not to appear so. Humility is timorous, and starts at her shadow; and so delicate that if she hears her name pronounced it endangers her existence.

Saint Francis De Sales

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in loving devotion. He will not always accuse us, nor harbor His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins or repaid us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His loving devotion for those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him (Psalm 103:8-13).

Chapter 14

Recognizing Pride and How to Avoid It

Pride leads to a lack of spiritual power in your life. Most fears are born of pride: fear of not succeeding, fear of being embarrassed, fear of being ashamed, fear of being wrong. Such fear always comes of pride. Many of us are blind to how much pride is manifest in our lives. Recognizing pride is a necessary start in overcoming it, and learning humility.

PRIDE

Focuses on others failures.

Self righteous, overly critical, and fault finding.

Looks at their life through a telescope but others with a microscope.

Looks down on those who aren't as 'spiritual' or 'committed' as they are.

Thinks they know who is truly proud and truly humble.

Thinks everyone is privileged to have them involved.

HUMILITY

Realizes how far they fall short and have overwhelming sense of their need to grow.

Compassionate and forgiving.

Looks for the best in others.

Seeks to win people, not arguments.

Realizes only God knows a persons true motives.

Leaves the judgement of the heart in God's hands.

Thinks they don't deserve the opportunities that God gives them.

More Ways That Pride Manifests

- Being impatient with others—including those you don't naturally like or those you grow weary in loving.
- Being critical of others, thinking they aren't doing well enough, aren't working hard enough, aren't praying enough, etc.
- Feeling you know better, that you're more experienced, more mature, wiser.
- Looking at people's outward appearance; judging them because of their nationality, background, education, age, or sex.
- Not seeing people as individuals with different personalities and needs. Being inconsiderate of how an individual might need to be treated.
- Finding it difficult to say that you were wrong.
- Thinking you know more than you do.
- Bragging about past accomplishments or victories.
- Finding it difficult to be open and honest.
- Not being willing to admit that you have weaknesses.
- Avoiding asking for prayer for personal requests or situations that might be embarrassing.
- Accepting credit for what God or others have done for or through you.

God's Attitude Toward Pride

Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord (Proverbs 16:5).

Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate (Proverbs 8:13).

God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6).

The haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low (Isaiah 2:17).

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall (Proverbs 16:18).

Seeing how God looks at our pride is reason enough to take putting off pride seriously. It damages our relationship with Him and hurts our relationships with others. We cannot love our neighbor as ourselves, if we esteem ourselves above them.



Pride is a Part of Human Nature That Resides Within Us

Jesus said in Matthew 15:19 that all kinds of evil thoughts come out of the heart and they are what defiles a person. John the Baptist denounced pride of race in Matthew 3:9:

Do not begin to say to yourselves, we have Abraham as our father. For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.

Paul counselled Timothy about how to treat the wealthy in 1 Timothy 6:17:

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

However pride may manifest itself it is in essence self-centeredness. Every one exhibits pride in one way or another. It's a natural outcropping of the fallen state of human beings and manifests in everyone's life in varying ways and in different circumstances. Sadly, all of us manifest some aspects of pride, but often don't notice it.

I knew Jesus, and He was very precious to my soul: but I found something in me that would not keep sweet and patient and kind. I did what I could to keep it down, but it was there. I besought Jesus to do something for me, and when I gave Him my will, He came to my heart, and took out all that would not be sweet, all that would not be kind, all that would not be patient, and then He shut the door. — George Foxe

Chapter 15

Antidotes to Pride

Teresa of Calcutta had a practical and down-to-earth way of speaking and teaching what she knew. In her book *The Joy in Loving: A Guide to Daily Living* she advised us to cultivate humility in our lives.

- To speak as little as possible of one's self.
- To mind one's own business.
- Not to want to manage other people's affairs.
- To accept contradictions and correction cheerfully.
- To pass over the mistakes of others.
- To accept insults and injuries.
- To accept being slighted, forgotten and disliked.
- To be kind and gentle even under provocation.
- Never to stand on one's dignity.
- To choose always the hardest.

Humility is getting your focus off you. It's the quality of being humble, which means putting the needs of others before your own, and thinking of others before and more highly than yourself. It means not drawing attention to yourself. The bottom line? Get so busy thinking of others there's no time to think about yourself.

Following are attitudes and actions which can serve as antidotes to pride and aid growth in humility. These points are condensed from Brazelton and Leith's book, *Character Makeover*.

Praise and Worship

Praising God for who He is, His attributes, and all that He has done, giving Him thanks and honor and glory, are vital for true humility. In worshiping God we are giving Him due honor. It reminds us who is truly great. He is the Creator and Savior; we are the created and the saved. When we praise and worship God,

we are declaring that He is God and we are in submission to Him.

Self-Esteem

Because God values each of us, we should accept God's deep and unconditional love for us by valuing ourselves. Our gifts and talents, circumstances, and many other things about us may differ from others; but each of us is precious to the Father. God doesn't value us because of what we've accomplished, our financial status, how popular we may be, or for any other outward reason. He loves and values us because we are His children.

Honesty

Being honest with ourselves and others builds humility. Pride leads us to exaggerate, hide, pretend, misrepresent, and even lie for the purpose of covering up our shortcomings, failures, and sins. Humility, on the other hand, helps us to trust in God's grace and unconditional love and honestly acknowledge our shortcomings, failures, and sins to Him and others.

Holiness/Obedience

Holiness can be an unpopular word, as in modern times it tends to be looked at negatively, in the sense of someone who is self-righteous and "holier-than-thou." But that's not the meaning of it as expressed in Scripture. There are a number of Hebrew and Greek words, all coming from the same family of words, which are translated as "holy." They convey the ideas of something that is sanctified, sacred, free from wickedness, set aside for God, separated. One of the main usages in the New Testament is the sense of setting something apart for God, to be exclusively His.

As Christians, we are meant to be set aside as belonging to God. This is often manifested in our being obedient to Him and His Word. It takes humility to obey God, as it requires giving up our ways and sense of entitlement to Him. Sometimes it's difficult and requires sacrificing our own ways and desires. It takes humility to obey God and trust Him for the outcome.

Servanthood

Serving others requires humility. We may have notable gifts and talents, but that doesn't mean they all have to be in use all the time. Sometimes we find ourselves in circumstances where we need to set aside our gifts and skills and simply do what's needed in the situation, no matter how small or behind the scenes it may be. Perhaps there will be a time when you are needed to care for someone in need. Maybe there will be a period where you will need to sacrifice your wants and even needs for the sake of others, or for something the Lord

may be calling you to do.

Waiting

Waiting means putting ourselves at God's disposal so that He can put us in the role of His choosing. It's allowing Him to direct us, instead of pushing our own agenda or demanding our own way. It's being sensitive to the Lord's direction, seeking His guidance, and giving Him time to impart it. It's being patient, trusting Him for things to fall into place. Waiting calls for humility.

The reason you see no real mortification or self-denial, no eminent charity, no profound humility, no heavenly affection, no true contempt of the world, no Christian meekness, no sincere zeal, no eminent piety in the common lives of Christians, is this, because they do not so much as intend to be exact and exemplary in these virtues. — William Law

Chapter 16

Sincerely Putting the Needs of Others Before Your Own

A true story from Sadhu Sundar Singh, a Hindu convert to Christianity, who became a missionary in India.

“Once when traveling in Tibet, I was crossing a high mountain pass with my Tibetan guide. The weather had suddenly turned bitterly cold, and my companion and I feared that we might not make it to the next village—still several miles away—before succumbing to the frost.

“Suddenly, we stumbled upon a man who had slipped from the path and was lying in the snow. Looking more closely, I discovered that the man was still alive, though barely. 'Come,' I said to my companion, 'help me try to bring this unfortunate man to safety.' But my companion was upset and frightened for his life. He answered: 'If we try to carry that man, none of us will ever reach the village. We will all freeze. Our only hope is to go on as quickly as possible, and that is what I intend to do. You will come with me if you value your life.' Without another word and without looking back, he set off down the path.

“I could not bring myself to abandon the helpless traveler while life remained in him, so I lifted him on my back and threw my blanket around us both as best I could. Slowly and painstakingly, I picked my way along the steep, slippery path with my heavy load. Soon it began to snow, and I could make out the way forward only with great difficulty.

“How we made it, I do not know. But just as daylight was beginning to fade, the snow cleared and I could see houses a few hundred yards ahead. Near me, on the ground, I saw the frozen body of my guide. Nearly within shouting distance of the village, he had succumbed to the cold and died, while the unfortunate traveler and I made it to safety. The exertion of carrying him and the contact of our bodies had created enough heat to save us both. This is the way of service. No one can live without the help of others, and in helping others, we receive help ourselves.”

Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less.
— C.S. Lewis

Chapter 17

Points to Ponder

Humility is still, pride is agitated. Humility is collected thoughts, a calm heart and a steady will.

Our surest pride is deserting God; humility is resting upon Him.” —John Bunyan

“Let us flee to Jesus until we are clothed with humility” so that is the route, we come to Jesus and little by little he increases the understanding of our depravity and our confidence and dependence upon His glory and this is the growing in humility, changing the way we see everything in our lives. — Eric Gilmour

“Pride causes us to use our gifts as if they came from us” —Bernard de Clairvaux

“Pride is to imagine itself as the source of its life” —Augustine

Jesus never hardened his heart, but had compassion upon the multitude. He stayed tender, quiet and humble. He wept over them time and again. He wept over the hardness of their hearts. The only way we can be patient with others is to know what a hopeless case we are ourselves and we too need His Mercy!

“Some people in wishing to be great have ceased to be good” —Spurgeon

Humility is gravity in the spiritual life, it keeps us grounded. Humility is God’s guide along His pathway.

“Direct contact with God is experienced in rest”. It is child-like to rest upon God, to leave all efforts and high thoughts of oneself and to choose to rest completely upon Him. This resting against Him means that we have been taught to renounce the world and live upon God. Having the ability in us to choose to feed upon something else, humility is choosing to be satisfied with God. Contentment is when God is your content. When you have Him you need nothing else. — Eric Gilmour

Total Humility is synonymous with Total Love!

Chapter 18

Closing Thoughts

In summary, if we want to cultivate humility in our lives, the starting place is focus on God. As we grow closer to Him, spending more time concentrating on Him, learning about Him, talking with Him, and making room for Him in our hearts and lives, He grows in importance and begins to take up more of our “field of vision.” As this happens we will be reminded of His perfection and our lack of it. When we are in right relationship with Him we will be humbled by the fact that He loves and values us, as imperfect as we are. This right relationship leads us to a godly balance of healthy self-esteem with genuine humility.

And who are we to God? We are His wayward children—broken, sinful, and unable to attain full righteousness before God. Yet despite our brokenness, He loves us unconditionally. It’s humbling to know that we are loved regardless of our sins. We aren’t worthy, but He loves us anyway.

God’s love and acceptance is the basis of our self-worth. Because we are unconditionally loved by the Lord, we can be honest with Him and ourselves about our strengths and weaknesses. He doesn’t love us more because of our talents, nor does He love us less because of our weaknesses.



The process of humility can take a long time and usually means a series of breakings and lessons. Though we’ll struggle with self and pride to the day we die He can help us be overcomers as we daily approach His throne of grace to find all we need in our time of need.

God does things to humble us, and sometime later repeats them to see if we are still humble. Then again other things to keep us humble.

C.S. Lewis wrote (paraphrased): “The Lord says to love your neighbor ‘as yourself’ (Galatians 5:14), which would be a horrible command if the self were simply to be hated, as Jesus also said in Luke 14:26 that those which follow Him must do.

“The self can be regarded in two ways. On the one hand it is God’s creature, made in His image, an occasion of love and rejoicing; though hateful in condition, to be pitied and healed. On the other hand, it is that one self of all

others which is called *I* and *me*, and which on that ground puts forward an irrational claim to preference. This claim is to be not only hated, but simply killed.

“The Christian must wage endless war against the clamor of the *ego* ... and he may hope that when he has truly learned to love his neighbor as himself, he may then be able to love himself as his neighbor—with charity instead of partiality.”

Jesus was always glorifying His Father, and His actions in turn gave cause for others to glorify God. “I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work that You gave Me to do. I have manifested Your Name to the people” (John 17:4). Let us do the same!



A Closing Prayer from Andrew Murray

Earnestly pray this one prayer to God: “That of His great goodness He would make known to you, and take from your heart, every kind and form and degree of pride, whether it be from evil spirits, or your own corrupt nature; and that He would awaken in you the deepest depth and truth of that humility, which can make you capable of His light and Holy Spirit.”

Reject every thought, but that of waiting and praying in this matter from the bottom of your heart, with such truth and earnestness. ... If you can and will give yourself up in truth and sincerity to this spirit of prayer, I will venture to affirm that, if you had twice as many evil spirits in you as Mary Magdalene had, they will all be cast out of you, and you will be forced with her to weep tears of love at the feet of the holy Jesus. — Andrew Murray (excerpted from *The Spirit of Prayer*, Pt. II, p. 124).

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good: and what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God (Micah 6:8).

Notes

Compiled and edited by John Patrick from the following sources:

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