

I Peter
Lesson #11: Humility
I Peter 5:5-7

Introduction

Definition: a modest or low view of one's own importance, freedom from pride or arrogance

What HUMILITY is NOT:

It is not groveling or bowing down to people. It does not mean that we must be silent or passive with others.

Although certain expressions tend to make us think that we are humble ("Oh, really, it was nothing." Or "Oh, anyone could have done it."), this may be FAKE humility. Our eyes are on the audience and how we look before them, instead of on our Savior.

As believers, statements like "I am nothing. I am just a worm" do not reflect a healthy view of humility either. (Just glance at Eph. 1 to see how we are loved, redeemed, blessed, adopted etc. In Him, we are indeed "something.")

What HUMILITY is:

It is a mindset, a focus that centers on the Lord rather than us. "It is an honest assessment of ourselves in light of God's holiness and our sinfulness." (C.J. Mahaney)

"Every time we look at the cross, Christ seems to be saying to us, 'I am here because of you, it is your sin I am bearing, your curse I am suffering, your debt I am paying, your death I am dying.' It is there at the foot of the cross that we shrink to our true size." (John Stott)

It's not a matter of thinking less of yourself, it is a matter of thinking of yourself less.

Humility is the opposite of PRIDE.

Biblical example: Satan (see Isa.14)

Biblical example: James and John (see Matt. 20:20-28 and Mark 10:35-45)

Pride exults in being made much of (Matthew 23:6)

Pride is self-satisfaction (Hosea 13:4-6)

Pride is self-sufficiency and self-reliance (Deut. 8:11-17)

Pride considers itself above instruction (Jer. 13:9-10)

Pride is insubordinate (Ps. 119:21)
Pride takes credit for what God alone does (Daniel 4:30-32)
Pride aspires to the place of God (Acts 12:21-23)
Pride opposes the very existence of God (Ps. 10:4)
Pride refuses to trust in God (Prov. 28:25)
Pride is anxious about the future (Isa. 51:12-13) (John Piper)

Jonathan Edwards points out 7 “sneaky symptoms of pride:”
Faultfinding. A harsh spirit. Superficiality. Defensiveness. Desperation for attention.
Neglecting others.

“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly that you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.” (Romans 12:3)

Biblical example of Christ in Phil. 2: 5-11. HE HUMBLLED HIMSELF....

Characteristics of A Humble Person

Biblical example: John the Baptist (John 3:30)

By studying the Beatitudes (Matthew 5), we can see humility in action.

A person who is growing in humility:

1. Thinks better of others than himself (Phil 2:3)
2. Has a low assessment of his spiritual disciplines
3. Complains about his heart, not his circumstances.
4. Praises God in times of trouble
5. Magnifies Christ
6. Accepts reproof of sin
7. Is content to be eclipsed by others.
8. Accepts the condition God sees best for him.
9. Will stoop to the lowest person and lowest tasks.
10. Thinks little of himself. (Tim Challis)

So What?

The Practices of a Humble Person

Begin your day by acknowledging your need for God. “Purpose by grace that your first thought of the day will be an expression of your dependence on God, your need for God, and your confidence in God.”

Begin your day expressing gratitude to God. “Thankfulness is a soil in which pride does not easily grow.”

During the day, practice spiritual disciplines. Prayer, the study of God’s Word and worship need to be a priority. Those activities make a statement, “I need you. I am dependent on you. I will not engage my day without you.”

As the day ends, review the events of the day and be careful to ascribe all the glory to God for those things you have experienced. Thank God for his “gracious, humbling, refreshing gifts.”
(C.J. Mahaney)