

Humility (Accessing All Grace) – Part 5

5-Day Devotional: Humility's Path to Grace

Day 1: The Choice of Humility

Reading: James 4:1-10

Devotional: Humility is not a personality trait you're born with—it's a daily decision. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. This means every morning you wake up with a choice: will you say "I will" like Satan, or "not my will" like Jesus? The battlefield is in your mind, where thoughts present themselves as either pride or humility. When you choose humility, you unlock access to more grace—divine ability to overcome what you cannot conquer in your own strength. Today, examine your heart. Are you trying to figure everything out on your own, or are you acknowledging God in all your ways? Your character, not just your gifting, determines how far God can take you. Choose humility, and watch grace flow.

Reflection Question: What area of your life are you trying to control instead of surrendering to God?

Day 2: The Fall of Pride

Reading: Isaiah 14:12-17; Proverbs 16:18

Devotional: Satan's original sin was pride—five "I will" statements that led to his downfall. Pride overestimates self and underestimates God. It operates independently, saying "I don't need anyone else." But this independent spirit cuts off the flow of grace. When you walk in pride, God actually works against what you're trying to accomplish—not to harm you, but to redirect you. This is divine resistance, the intervention of His loving frustration. God will not empower what He didn't author. Many believers experience constant frustration because they're pushing their own agenda rather than seeking God's plan. Remember: there is a God, and you're not Him. Yielding to His will may bring temporary tears, but it always leads to resurrection power.

Reflection Question: Where are you experiencing frustration that might be God's resistance to your pride?

Day 3: Jesus, Our Model of Humility

Reading: Matthew 26:36-44; Philippians 2:5-11

Devotional: In Gethsemane, Jesus demonstrated ultimate humility. He fell on His face—literally getting close to the ground—and prayed, "Not my will, but yours." The Son of God never took credit for His miracles or teachings. He only did what He saw the Father doing. This is our invitation too. Imagine the peace we'd experience if we only spoke God's words and only did what He directed. Jesus could be exalted to the highest place because He humbled Himself to the lowest place. With every crucifixion comes a resurrection. When God asks you to surrender your will, there may be tears and distress, but resurrection power follows obedience. Your character keeps you where your gift takes you. Go lower in His presence, and He will lift you higher than you could ever take yourself.

Reflection Question: What is God asking you to surrender that feels like a crucifixion?

Day 4: Grace for Every Battle

Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Hebrews 4:14-16

Devotional: Grace is the favorable impartation of divine ability—the unearned, undeserved empowerment of God's nature through faith. You were saved by grace, but you can receive MORE grace. How? Through humility. There is no problem you face that God cannot work through with sufficient grace. Many believers live frustrated because they haven't accessed resurrection power—they're trying to operate in their own strength rather than His. This principle works in your finances, marriage, parenting, work, and every relationship. When you humble yourself and say "not my will," you open the access door to limitless grace. Nothing is impossible with God. If He requires it, He provides the grace for it. Stop fighting in your own strength. Humble yourself, receive more grace, and walk in greater freedom.

Reflection Question: In what area do you need to stop striving and start receiving God's grace?

Day 5: Living Level in a Crooked World

Reading: Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 5:5-7

Devotional: Humility is living level—not thinking too highly or too lowly of yourself. It's being poor in self while being rich in God. A humble person has a healthy understanding of who God is, who they are in relationship with God, and who they are in relationship with others. Like a construction level with the bubble in the middle, you can be level even when the building (the world) is crooked. This means recognizing your lack in soul and flesh while simultaneously recognizing your great wealth in Christ Jesus. You can stand level while everything around you tilts. Read God's Word until it starts talking back to you. Fellowship with Him with an open heart, and watch your life radically change. You'll find grace and strength you didn't know was possible.

Reflection Question: How can you maintain spiritual balance this week despite the chaos around you?

Weekly Challenge: Each morning this week, pray "Not my will, but Your will, Lord" before making any significant decisions. Journal what happens when you choose humility over independence.

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Scripture Reference Guide

Explicitly Mentioned Scripture References:

1. James 4:6 - "But he gives more grace. Therefore he says, God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
2. James 4 (entire chapter) - Referenced as dealing with humility and pride throughout
3. James 4:13-17 - Mentioned in connection with planning and including God
4. Luke 12 - Referenced concerning tithes and offerings and the parable of the man who built barns
5. Isaiah 14:12-16 - Lucifer's fall and his five "I will" statements

6. Matthew 26:36-44 - Jesus in Gethsemane, praying "not my will, but yours"
7. John 3:16-17 - "For God so loved the world..." (quoted at the altar call)
8. Ephesians 1:3 - Referenced at closing ("You are a blessed bunch")

Alluded to or Paraphrased Scriptures:

9. Ephesians 2:8 - "Saved by grace through faith"
10. 2 Corinthians 10:5 - "Taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ"
11. 2 Corinthians 5:21 - "I'm the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus"
12. Matthew 19:26 / Luke 1:37 - "With God all things are possible"
13. Isaiah 1:18 - "Come let us reason together"
14. Proverbs 3:5-6 - "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths"
15. 1 Peter 5:6 - "Humble yourselves...that He may exalt you in due time"
16. James 1:19 - "Be quick to hear, slow to speak"
17. Philippians 3:13-14 - "Forgetting those things which are behind...I press toward the mark"
18. John 5:19, 30 - Jesus only doing what He sees the Father doing
19. Matthew 25:21 - "Well done, good and faithful servant"

Supporting Verses for Main Themes (Not Explicitly Mentioned):

20. Proverbs 16:18 - "Pride goes before destruction" (theme of pride's destruction)
21. 1 John 2:16 - Pride of life (theme of worldly pride)
22. Philippians 2:5-8 - Christ's humility and exaltation
23. Romans 12:3 - Not thinking more highly of yourself than you ought
24. 1 Corinthians 15:10 - "By the grace of God I am what I am"

Small Group and Personal Study Guide: Pride's Destruction and Humility's Grace

Based on James 4:6 - "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble"

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin by humbling your hearts and opening your minds to receive His truth during this discussion/devotion time.

Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

Share / think about a time when you had to admit you were wrong or needed help. How did humbling yourself in that situation change the outcome?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **Humility is a choice, not a personality trait** - We can choose to operate in humility or pride
2. **God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble** - Pride cuts off the flow of God's grace in our lives
3. **The battle begins in our minds** - We must take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ
4. **Satan said, "I will" - Jesus said "Not my will"** - This is the fundamental difference between pride and humility
5. **Grace is resurrection power** - When we humble ourselves, God provides resurrection power for every situation

Discussion Questions

Understanding Humility (15 minutes)

1. The pastor defined humility as "having a healthy understanding of who God is, who you are in relationship with God, and who you are in relationship with others." How does this definition differ from how the world views humility?
2. What does it mean that "humility is being poor in self and at the same time being rich in God"? Can you think of a biblical example of this?
3. Why do you think humility is so difficult in our current culture?

Recognizing Pride (15 minutes)

4. The sermon mentioned that pride says "I will" while humility says "Not my will." What are some practical, everyday examples of how this plays out in our lives?
5. Read Isaiah 14:12-16 together. What were the five "I will" statements Lucifer made? How do you see these same attitudes manifesting in the world today?
6. The pastor said, "God will not empower pride." Have you ever experienced God's divine resistance when you were operating in pride? What did that feel like?

Accessing Grace (15 minutes)

7. The sermon taught that "with enough grace, you can do everything and walk in everything that God has provided for you." What areas of your life do you need more grace for right now?
8. The pastor shared: "Sometimes in order for God to be for us, He must be against us because we are in opposition to Him." How have you experienced God's loving correction when you were going your own way?
9. What does it mean that "your character will keep you where your gift will take you"? Why does God care more about our character than our gifting?

The Mind Battle (10 minutes)

10. The sermon emphasized that thoughts will come that we didn't want. How do you practically "take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5)?
11. Have you ever felt condemned for having a bad thought? How does understanding that we live in a fallen world and that enemy spirits feed us thoughts change your perspective?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge: Choose one of the following to practice

Option 1: The "Not My Will" Prayer

- Each morning this week, pray Jesus' prayer from Matthew 26:39: "Not my will, but Your will be done"
- Journal about situations where you had to surrender your will to God's will
- Share your experience with the group next week

Option 2: Thought Inventory

- Keep track of prideful thoughts that come to you this week
- Practice immediately replacing them with humble thoughts
- Notice any difference in your peace level and relationships

Option 3: Humility in Action

- Identify one area where you've been operating in an "I will" attitude
- Specifically ask God what He wants you to do in that situation
- Take one step of obedience based on what He shows you

Group Application Exercise (15 minutes)

The Humility Assessment:

On a scale of 1-10, rate yourself in these areas (be honest - this is between you and God):

- **Independence vs. Dependence on God** (1 = totally independent, 10 = fully dependent on God)
- **Taking Credit vs. Giving Glory** (1 = I take all the credit, 10 = I give God all the glory)
- **My Plans vs. God's Plans** (1 = always my way, 10 = always seeking God's way)
- **Self-Promotion vs. God's Exaltation** (1 = self-focused, 10 = God-focused)

Share with your group (if comfortable) which area you struggle with most and ask for prayer.

Memory Verse for the Week

James 4:6 - "But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'"

Closing Prayer Points (10 minutes)

Pray for one another regarding:

- Areas where pride has been identified
- Situations requiring God's grace and resurrection power
- The ability to hear God's voice clearly this week
- Strength to choose "Not my will, but Your will"

Before Next Week

1. Review your practical application choice and be prepared to share
2. Read James 4 in its entirety
3. Write down one testimony of how God showed up when you humbled yourself
4. Memorize James 4:6

Leader's Notes

- Create a safe environment where people can be honest about their struggles with pride
- Remind the group that recognizing pride is the first step to humility
- Emphasize that humility is a journey, not a destination
- Celebrate small victories in choosing God's will over our own
- Be prepared to share your own struggles with pride to model vulnerability