

HUMILITY

The word humility means a lack of false pride. Another definition is a modest opinion or estimate of one's own importance or rank.

It is so true; a humble individual who serves the Lord is better off than a distinguished, intelligent person who is neglecting his soul. When people know themselves well, they examine their lives carefully. They do not want the high praise of men, but the satisfaction of living their lives pleasing to the Lord.

We read in I Corinthians 1:31,"... as it is written, 'He who glories, let him glory in the Lord. '"

We all have seen people who have become knowledgeable and then soon also become proud. Even if a person is knowledgeable about different things, he should also realize there is much he does not know. People need to understand, the more they know the harsher judgment they will receive.

When we think of ourselves as unworthy, at all times thinking good of others, this is the greatest wisdom. The great apostle Paul said in I Timothy 1:15," This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. "

No one is worthy of the enormous sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for us on our behalf, in that He lay down his life for mankind that they might live.

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each a measure of faith.

Romans 12:3(NKJV)

Humility is a state of mind and an outstanding Christian grace. With humility, we can keep our souls in serenity and with it patience is forged in us during trials. We read in Philippians 2: 6-8 about the humility of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is our supreme example of humility.

In Job 22:29 we find," When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person ."

An excellent example given to us in the Bible is the parable of the publican. Luke 18:13 , " And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner.'"

The Pharisee only wanted to impress other people. We should be as humble as the tax collector and not proud as the Pharisee was. Yes, the Pharisee was probably wealthier and better dressed than the tax collector. The tax collector was humble.

I Samuel 16:7, "For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." We should ultimately want to please God.

When we approach God in prayer, we want to do so with the proper attitude. That correct attitude would be humility. If we have God dwelling in our hearts and working through us in our lives, we will strive to be humble at all times. It will cause us to be dependent upon God and not ourselves or anything manmade. We will realize His great sacrifice and truly understand all He has done for us. We will be humbled with this knowledge. Obedience to the Lord's commands will humble us.

Do you remember the story of Naaman? 2 Kings 5:1-19

In 2 Kings 5:13 we read," And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said,' My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, Wash, and be clean? '"

Humility is good training in obedience: Naaman a great hero, was used to getting respect, and he was outraged when Elisha treated him like an ordinary person. A proud man, he expected royal treatment. To wash in a great river would be one thing, but the Jordan was small and dirty. To wash in the Jordan, Naaman thought, was beneath a man of his position. But Naaman had to humble himself and obey Elisha's commands in order to be healed.

Humility clarifies our dependence on God: Obedience to God begins with humility. We must believe that HIS way is better than our own. We may not always understand his ways of working, but by humbly obeying, we will receive his blessings. We must remember that (1) God's ways are best; (2) God wants our obedience more than anything else; and (3) God can use anything to accomplish his purposes.

Humility challenges our pride: Naaman left in a rage because the cure for his disease seemed too simple. He was a hero, and he expected a heroic cure. Full of pride and self-

will,, he could not accept the simple cure of faith. Sometimes people react to God’s offer of forgiveness in the same way. Just to believe in Jesus Christ somehow doesn’t seem significant enough to bring eternal life. To obey God’s commands doesn’t seem heroic. What Naaman had to do to have his leprosy washed away is similar to what we must do to have our sin washed away...humbly accept God’s mercy. Don’t let your reaction to the way of faith keep you from the cure you need the most.

Naaman, who was commander of the army in Syria, had the dreaded disease leprosy. A servant girl told him of Elisha, who was a prophet of God. Elisha was in Samaria. When Elisha told Naaman to dip seven times in the muddy Jordan River, Naaman wanted to dip himself into a cleaner river. Elisha told him it had to be the Jordan River. When Naaman dipped six times he still had leprosy. But, the seventh time, Naaman was cleansed of his leprosy.

Our pride is challenged when we humbly accept the love of God. The example of Naaman shows us how we're to humbly obey God's commandments just as He tells us, not as we feel it should be done. Our gratitude for God will only be increased by humility, and when we truly see God's magnificence we are humbled in His sight. Humility will give us a deeper realization of our unworthiness. As Jesus Christ, our supreme example served others with humility, so should we strive to follow Him.

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In I Samuel 18:15-18 we see how David was humble as he was being praised. Are we able to stay humble while being praised by others?

A three-way mirror has few things that are as humbling as it is.

Why is HUMILITY an important part of our spiritual life? Joshua 7:1-26

“Joshua and the leaders of Israel tore their clothing in dismay, threw dust on their heads, and bowed down facing the Ark of the Lord until evening.” Joshua 7:6

Humility is the proper attitude before God: Joshua and the elders tore their clothing and sprinkled dust on their heads as signs of deep mourning before God. They were confused by their defeat at the small city of Ai after the spectacular Jericho victory, so they went before God in deep humility and sorrow to receive his instructions. When our life falls apart, we also should turn to God for direction and help. Like Joshua and the elders, we should humble our self so that we will be able to hear his words.

Humility keeps us from depending on our own strength: When Joshua first went against Ai (7:3), he did not consult God but relied on the strength of his army to defeat the small city. Only after Israel was defeated did they turn to God and ask what happened. Too often we rely on our own skills and strength, especially when the task before us seems easy. We go to God only when the obstacles seem too great however, only God knows what lies ahead. Consulting him, even when we are on a winning streak, may save us from grave mistakes or misjudgments. God may want us to learn lessons, remove pride or consult others before he will work through us.

Humility makes our prayers direct and honest: Imagine praying the way Joshua prayed to God. This is not a formal church prayer; it is the prayer of a man who is afraid and confused by what is happening around him. Joshua poured out his real thoughts to God. Hiding your needs from God is ignoring the only one who can really help. God welcomes your honest prayers and wants you to express your true feelings to him. Any believer can become more honest in prayer by remembering that God is all knowing and all-powerful and that his love is everlasting.

Psalm 8:1-9 “When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars you have set in place....what are mortals that you should think of us, mere humans that you should care for us? (Psalm 8:3-4)

Humility is a deep awareness of unworthiness, not WORTHLESSNESS: When we look at the vast expanse of creation, we wonder how god could be concerned for people who constantly disappoint Him. Yet God created us only a little lower than himself or the angels! The next time you question your worth as a person, remember that God

considers you highly valuable. We have great worth because we bear the stamp of the Creator. (Gen. 1:26-27) Because God has already declared how valuable we are to him, we can be set free from feelings of worthlessness.

Humility increased our appreciation for God: To respect God’s majesty, we must compare our self to His greatness. When we look at creation, we often feel small by comparison. To feel small is a healthy way to get back to reality, but God does not want us to dwell on our smallness. Humility means proper respect for God not self-depreciation.

Luke 14:1-14

“The proud will be humbled, but the humble will be honored.” Luke 14:11

Humility is essential for service to others: Jesus advised people not to rush for the best places at a feast. People today are just as eager to raise their social status, whether by being with the right people, dressing for success, or driving the right car. Who do you try to impress? Rather than aiming for prestige, look for a place where you can SERVE. If God wants you to serve on a wider scale, HE will invite you to take a higher place!

Jesus Christ is our model for HUMILITY: How can we humble our self? Some people try to give the appearance of humility in order to manipulate others. Others think that humility means putting themselves down. Truly humble people compare themselves only with Christ, realize their sinfulness, and understand their limitations. On the other hand, they also recognize their gifts and strengths and are willing to use them as Christ directs. Humility is not self-degradation; it is realistic assessment and commitment to serve.