

humility - the forgotten virtue

From the book by Wayne Mack and Joshua Mack

Steps to becoming humble:

Pray that God would produce and sustain humility in you daily! Ultimately, only God can make a person humble. Though we are responsible to pursue godliness in our lives, we can change only by God's power in us. We must spend time in prayer every day, confessing our pride to God and earnestly pleading for greater humility.

1. Spend time thinking about God's greatness and holiness in comparison to your natural, moral, and mortal insignificance.

Example: Isaiah 6:5 "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

Example: Habakkuk 1:13 "Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, and You can not look on wickedness with favor."

Example: Psalm 34:3 "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name forever." Think about God's faithfulness, His patience, His love, His forgiveness compared to your own.

2. Think about how much God loves the humble and hates the proud. Pride is an abomination to God! That is the strongest way to say "hate" in the English language. Think about what that means for God to call pride an "abomination".

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

3. Meditate on the way that Christ humbled Himself when He came to earth.

Philippians 2:5-8 "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Jesus was obedient and submissive to His parents, even though He knew infinitely more than they did, and He was perfect, and they were sinners!

Jesus laid aside His divine attributes to be obedient to the Father. He relied on the power of God the Father, not on His own strength.

John 5:30 “I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent me.”

Jesus humbled Himself to the point of death. He endured persecution, abuse, beatings, being spit on, being mocked, and a painful, horrible death at the hands of people He had made. He did not once open His mouth in sin or to defend or save Himself.

4. Think seriously on the examples of humility left by the most eminent believers who have walked on this earth.

Joseph is an example of humility. He gave credit to God for the ability to interpret dreams and to place him in a station in life where he could save his family and all of Israel.

David was a humble man who turned praise to God. Psalm 115:1 says “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory because of Your lovingkindness, because of Your truth.”

Paul called himself the “foremost of sinners” and the “least of the apostles”.

5. Consider the example of humility demonstrated by the angels.

Isaiah 6 tells of the the “Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory”.

The angels cover their faces and feet to show their unworthiness to be in the presence of God. They are constantly in flight so they can immediately do God’s will when He bids them.

The Lord’s prayer tells us to pray “Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” The angels do God’s will perfectly. They never do anything for their own glory or their own will. Let that be an example to us.

6. Reflect on the humility of believers who are now in heaven.

Revelations 4:9-11 “And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crown before the throne saying,

Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”

We should give glory to God just as they are.

7. Think about the imperfections and weakness of our faith, our character, our behavior, our motives, and our duties, and our service to God.

Think about how often and how grievously we sin against God. Think about how often you sin and are not even aware of it. Think about how many sins you have failed to confess to God.

Proverbs 16:2 “All the way of a man are clean in his own sight, but the Lord weighs the motive.”

We need the cleansing power of Christ’s blood and righteousness every single day!

Focusing on your sin will help you take the “log” out of your own eye before considering the “speck” in another’s eye.

Focusing on your sin will help you stop making excuses or blaming others for your sin.

8. Think about the fact that we deserve to experience God’s judgment and wrath because of our sin. Think about the fact that “You deserve to go to hell”.

Scripture tells us that prior to being saved, we “were by nature children of wrath”. If we truly believe that, we could not be proud.

9. Spend time thinking about the day of judgment.

Romans 14:10 “For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.”

Philippians 2:10-11 “at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

No one will be able to defend himself on judgment day. When we stand in the presence of God we will be accountable to God for everything we have done. God knows us and our sin completely. Those who don't humble themselves and repent will experience the wrath and judgment of God.

10. Reflect on the pride of Satan.

Isaiah 14:13-14 “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.”

2 Peter 2:4 “God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment.”

How much do you say “I will...” and presume on God's will, sovereignty, wisdom, and goodness? Reflect on the devastation it cause Satan.

11. Remember that everything you have or have accomplished comes from God's hand.

1 Corinthians 4:7 “For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?”

The source of every gift is the Father. Remind yourself of this by praising and thanking Him for everything you do and accomplish.

12. Spend time thinking about the sad consequences of pride in other people's lives.

Example: Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:30 he says, “Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?” While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven...”The kingdom has departed from you.”

Example: Haman in the story of Esther.

Other people from history who have allowed their pride to grow to such a huge level that they destroyed their lives by thinking they were beyond consequences and ruin.

13. Spend time with humble people.

Proverbs 13:20 “He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.”