

What Is Humility?

*“The **fear of the Lord** is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is **humility**.”*
(Proverbs 15:33)

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

Fact: Nothing positions you before God (to be healthy and whole) like humility and the fear of the Lord.

Fact: Nothing lassos the human heart like a proper view of yourself before God.

Fact: Nothing will protect you (through all of life’s temptations, disappointments, betrayals, offences, criticisms, and challenges) like humility and the wholesome fear of God.

I. Humility’s Essence

- *“I will dwell with him that is of a **humble** and contrite spirit.”* (Isaiah 57:15)
- *“The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a **humble** heart.”* (Psalm 34:18)
- *“Be clothed with **humility**, for God resists the proud but gives grace to the **humble**.”*
(I Peter 5:5)
- *“Whoever exalts himself will be abased and whoever **humbles** himself will be exalted.”*
(Matthew 23:12)
- *“When pride cometh, then cometh shame, but with the **lowly** is wisdom.”* (Proverbs 11:2)
- *“**Humble** yourself in the sight of the Lord and He shall lift you up.”* (James 4:10)

What is humility? It is...

- 1...An inward condition of the heart that gives us a proper view of God, others and ourselves.
- 2... Recognizing my inability to accomplish anything for God apart from His grace.
- 3... Allowing the Holy Spirit to replace all arrogance, conceit, fear, worry, self-preoccupation, self-promotion, and self vindication.

(I Love John 3:27)

“A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.”

II. Humility's Enemy is Pride

(Detecting and Conquering the Enemy of Humility)

<u>Pride is Detected by</u>	<u>Pride is Reflected By</u>	<u>Pride is Corrected By</u>
1. A desire to impress people	Justifying and covering our own faults	Confession and repentance of our own sins
2. A desire to receive praise from people	Taking credit for what God and others have done	Deflecting all praise to God and others
3. A desire to prove our own importance	Finding faults in others (which makes us look better)	Looking for actions to praise in others
4. A desire to get revenge on those who hurt us	Feeling pain when our enemies are praised	Forgiveness (which frees us from the control of what others have done to us)

III. Humility's "Expression" is Practical and Wholesome

#1. Humility is demonstrated by Servant hood!

"James and John said to Jesus, 'Grant unto us that we may sit on your right hand and left hand in glory.'" (Mark 10:37)

"When Jesus heard this, he was much displeased with James and John." (V. 41)

"For whoever will be great among you, will be the servant of all." (v. 44)

Fact: James and John thought that leadership was about two things...

1. Having control over other people (and)
2. Being the center of attention!

Fact: Jesus taught that leadership is about being a servant (doulos/diakonos) which is someone who...

- Advances others at the expense of themselves.
- Cares less who gets the credit.
- Doesn't need to be "thanked" for their service.
- Takes up their cross without complaint.

A Servant Leader Understands John 13:1-14!

Question: Why did Jesus model “servant hood” by washing his disciple’s feet?

Answer: Because immediately after the Lord’s Supper, a dispute arose among the disciples over who was “**Top Dog**” (Luke 22)

- So Jesus exhibits the pattern of ministry for healthy leaders.
- He teaches us how to live, love and serve from a wholesome spirit and attitude.

(Remember)

- **Jesus Served Despite His Pain!**

- He was facing impending death and the wrath of God to be poured out on Him.
- He was feeling the “weight of the world” at the supper (yet He served).

(Life Application)

- * Most people absorbed in their own troubles want people to take care of them.
- * Most people say, “When I get over the blues, then I’ll start to minister.”
- * Yet Jesus loved and served without self-pity.

- **Jesus Served Despite His Reward!**

- He ministered despite the unworthiness of the disciples (without discrimination).
- He knew that one would betray, one would deny and all would forsake Him.

(Life Application)

- * A real (healthy) leader can serve those who are not kind or grateful in return.
- * A healthy servant is no man’s creditor and every man’s debtor.
- * A true biblical servant is not shaken or soured by insults, cold shoulders or thankless people.

- **Jesus Served Despite His Title!**

- He was King of the Universe and about to be promoted at the Right Hand of the Father.
- He served and “washed feet” despite His position

(Life Application)

- Many who get promotions find it difficult to run errands, meet basic needs and stay humble in the process.
- Many say “But I work my fingers to the bone in this church and what thanks do I get?”
- Your service was for thanks? Even sinners serve people who they like and find attractive.
- Remember: servant hood begins where gratitude and applause ends!

- And never forget: Jesus taught us that nothing is too small to do to serve another and a servant isn't too proud to do the little things!!!

#2. Humility is Expressed in Teachableness!

"He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction, but he that refuses reproof erreth."
(Proverbs 10:17)

"He that refuses instruction despises his own soul." (Proverbs 15:32)

"He that hearkens unto counsel is wise." (Proverbs 12:15)

"Fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Proverbs 1:7)

"Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuses instruction." (Proverbs 13:18)

Teachableness is...

- Admitting that I do not have all the answers.
- A willingness to welcome other suggestions, recommendations and feedback.
- Allowing God and others to speak into my life.
- Crucifying my ego so that I can be open to dialogue and correction (without getting an attitude).
- A passion to study, grow, learn and expand beyond previous boundaries.

Question: Why is teachableness so important?

Answer: Because an insecure leader will shut down everybody else's' voice (and none of us is as smart as all of us!

#3. Humility is Proven Through Submission!

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." (Hebrews 13:17, NIV)

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." (Ephesians 5:21)

"Submit yourselves, be subject one to another and be clothed with humility." (I Peter 5:5)

Question: What is submission?

Answer: It is the willingness to come under authority in my life (like them or not!)

Question: Why is submission so important (whether you like the person or not?)

Answer: Because if you resent the messenger – you'll miss any wisdom that may be in their message! And, good advice is like medicine – no good unless you take it!

Remember: David never acted subvertly or lifted his hand against Saul!

What a discovery here!

- That God will allow you to disagree with a leader to test your submission to authority (to see whether you become disagreeable or not).

Question: Why is this so important?

Answer: Because you cannot have authority unless you are under authority!

(Lord help us to never forget that...)

- Nothing will draw God's blessing upon our lives like humility (and)
- Nothing will leave us content and free from agitation (attacking or defending) like taking the low road.

Humility will...

1. Increase peace in your heart. (Psalm 37:11)
2. Increase your joy. (Isaiah 29:19)
3. Increase God's presence in your life. (Psalm 34:18)
4. Increase your ability to hear from God. (Psalm 25:9)
5. Increase God's favor upon you. (Proverbs 18:12)

So Lord, help us to humble ourselves before you...

- Demonstrated by Servant hood
 - Expressed in Teachableness
 - Proven through Submission

“And the fear of the Lord”

1. *“Let all the earth **fear** the Lord; let everyone stand in awe of Him.”* (Psalm 33:8)
2. *“God is greatly to be **feared** in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.”* (Psalm 89:7)
3. *“Pass the time of your sojourning here in **fear**.”* (I Peter 1:17)
4. *“The **fear** of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”* (Proverbs 1:7)
5. *“The **fear** of the Lord, that is wisdom.”* (Job 28:28)
6. *“Now therefore, **fear** the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and in truth.”* (Joshua 24:14)
7. *“O **fear** the Lord ye His saints, for there is no want to them that **fear** Him.”* (Psalm 34:9)
8. *“The **fear** of the Lord is a fountain of life, to turn one away from the snares of death.”* (Proverbs 14:27)
9. *“Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the **fear** of God.”* (II Corinthians 7:1)
10. *“Let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and godly **fear**.”* (Hebrews 12:28)

11. *"The eye of the Lord is upon those who **fear** Him."* (Psalm 33:18)
12. *"Serve the Lord with **fear** and rejoice with trembling."* (Psalm 2:11)
13. *"Blessed is everyone that **fears** the Lord, for you will enjoy the fruit of your labors and happy you will be."* (Psalm 128:1,2)

Question: What is "**The Fear of the Lord**"?

Answer: It is described in four ways:

#1. Leviticus 10:1-3

- Nadab and Abihu offered profane fire before the presence of the Lord.
- The word "profane" means: "Showing disrespect or contempt for sacred things".
- It means to become familiar with (and treat what God calls holy as if it were common.)
- Nadab and Abihu were careless and approached God as if He were common.
- God reveals to us here that irreverence cannot survive and make progress in the presence of a Holy God.
- It was service on the outside, (but disobedience on the inside).

#2. I Samuel 6:19, 20

- The Ark of God was the Presence Chamber of God in the Old Testament.
- The Philistines couldn't handle God's holiness and sent the Ark away to Bethshemesh.
- The Ark was received with shouts of joy at a frivolous church gathering.
- When the people opened the Ark to look in 50,070 men were instantly smitten dead.
- Why? Because no one can really approach God in frivolity, familiarity and looseness.

#3. Isaiah 6:1-3

- Isaiah gets a glimpse of the atmosphere in heaven.
- He sees the Lord and the angel's response to the Lord.
- What's the one description that reduces Isaiah to the fear of the Lord?
(V. 3) *"Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts."*

#4. Acts 5:1-16

- Ananias and Sapphira sold land and pretended to give the proceeds to the Lord.
- They were exposed for lying to God and smitten with death.
- The result was, *"And great fear came upon all the church...and many signs and wonders were wrought among the people."* (V. 11,12)

(So what is "**The Fear of the Lord**"?)

1. It is the response of my will to the holiness of God
2. It is an attitude within me that produces a trembling heart.
3. It is a transparency that is void of all pretenses and pretending.
4. It is a steadfast disposition that takes God extremely serious in every area of my life.

Question: What happens when there is no fear of God?

Answer: #1. Sinners feel good in the congregation not convicted of sin.

#2. Christians feel good in the congregation and will approach God on their own terms (without addressing things inside of them that God wants to address.)

(Nadab and Abihu did this in Leviticus 10:1-3)

- Moses said to Aaron, *“Those who come near to God must regard God as Holy, so that before all the people God will be glorified.”*

See the Safety of the Fear of the Lord:

- Everyone who is saved (and that will go to heaven) is on a narrow road.
- The narrow road is flanked by two ditches.

The #1 ditch on the left is called **legalism**. The #2 ditch on the right is called **license**.

Fact: The only way to stay out of the legalism ditch (which is basing God’s favor towards you on your performance) is to know **the grace of God!**

Fact: The only way to stay out of the license ditch (which excuses our sin because we claim we are under grace) is to know **the fear of God.**

- The only possible way to be a balanced and healthy Christian is to know:

#1 The **Grace** of God and #2, The **Fear** of God

Conclusion

Question: What are the consequences of aligning ourselves with Proverbs 22:4?

“By humility and the fear of the Lord are....”

#1. “**Riches**” (which is Divine provisions from the power of **willful obedience**)

#2. “**Honor**” (which is favor from God and man from the power of a **good name**)

#3. “**Life**” which is peace and joy within from the power of a **clear conscience**)

(Lord, help us live this)

“By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor and life.”

Nuf Sed!
Bill Kirk