

HUMILITY VS PRIDE

John 13: 1-17



PART 1

When you read through the gospels and study the life of Jesus, something that stands out is His remarkable humility. And since we are called to live a life that resembles that of Jesus, humility should be a fruit that our lives produce. Although humility can be expressed in many ways, sometimes people hide under these expressions of humility, yet their hearts are filled with pride. Humility is not necessarily a facial expression, a tone in your voice, the way you walk, being poor, or rejecting compliments that people give you. Even though humility can be seen in how you carry yourself, it starts from the heart.

If you don't live in humility, rest assured that you have pride in your heart because it is the opposite of humility. The danger in having pride is that you become blind to the fact that you have pride and it is the root of many other sins. It starts with a high sense of entitlement and placing so much value on yourself above others, thus becoming conceited. If you are not careful financial independence can lead to pride because you can meet your needs without the help of others. You then begin to put your hope in money because you find security and significance

in the fact that you can take care of yourself.

It would help to keep yourself in check because pride is deadly. It turned an archangel who lived in the presence of God into the devil. Lucifer became so impressed with his beauty, intelligence, power, and position that he began to desire the honour and glory that belonged to God alone [see Ezekiel 28:14-15, 17 AMP and Isaiah 14:12-14 NLT]. Pride in a man's heart will always change them. For a born-again believer, the Holy Spirit produces in you humility as a fruit, but even in that, pride can still exist in the flesh if you feed it.

When pride grows in you, you become arrogant and begin to act as if you are always right. You start waiting for others to apologise because you are never at fault. Advice and council become something you don't relate to because you feel you are right in your ways. Pride creates independence from the need for accountability. And it also becomes difficult to admit when you are wrong and ask for help, which can be detrimental to many of your relationships.

There are three types of pride which are superiority [you see yourself above others], arrogance [self-importance] and dignity [placing much value on your image]. The children of Israel were given the law to bring them to the end of themselves, but they said yes, trusting in themselves to uphold the commands [see Exodus 19: 7-8]. Self-righteousness is a form of pride where your heart says, “I don’t need God.”

Live a life free from pride because it does not end well. It leads to your destruction. The Bible says, “First pride, then the crash— the bigger the ego, the harder the fall. It’s better to live humbly among the poor than to live it up among the rich and famous” [Proverbs 16:18-19 MSG]. It also says, “Everyone who is proud and arrogant in heart is disgusting and exceedingly offensive to the Lord; Be assured he will not go unpunished” [Proverbs 16:5 AMP]. Pride causes God to resist you and makes it hard to access grace. The Bible says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble” [James 4:6 NLT].

PART 2

Now that you know what pride can do, let’s look at humility since it is what we are called to live by. Firstly, humility is the opposite of pride, and it is an inner awareness fueled by self-denial. Jesus lived a life of daily surrender to the Father. Jesus was fully God, but He subjected Himself to only doing and saying what the Father did and said. He willingly gave Himself to death to please the Father [see Matthew 26:53 and John 10:18]. Humility removes the feeling of entitlement, where you feel that you are deserving more than others.



You need to get over yourself and serve others; in John 13: 1-17, we see Jesus in His fullness washed the disciples’ feet. Serving others does not make you weak but is a sign of strength, especially when you are in a position of superiority. Humility positions you to receive grace from God [see James 4:6]; it is attractive.

On one occasion, the disciples were discussing amongst themselves about who was the greatest, and Jesus responded by saying that the greatest was the one who served [see Luke 22: 24-27 and Mark 10: 42-45]. True service is done from a place of humility, making you great in the Kingdom. The world says that to be great, you need to exert your authority on others so that they feel who you are, but the Bible says that greatness comes from serving. So, if you really want to be great, serve.

John the Baptist served in all humility, and Jesus commanded his life of humility and said that no one born of a woman was greater than John the Baptist. You can pick up his humility from the statements he made; speaking of Jesus, he said, “I baptise you with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” [Luke 3:16 NLT]. And he also said, “He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less” [John 3:30 NLT].

Living in humility pays off, and it has a lot of benefits. Humility brings about elevation and enables you to find purpose. The Bible says in James 4:10 [AMP], “Humble yourselves [with an attitude of repentance and insignificance] in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you [He will lift you up, He will give you purpose].” Humility allows God’s grace to flow freely in your life, thus giving you a name. The Bible says, Proverbs 22:4 [NLT], “True humility and fear of the Lord lead to riches, honor, and long life.” How then can you grow in humility? The best way to grow in humility is to be grateful, always being thankful and appreciative firstly to God, then to man.

If you acknowledge that you are saved by grace and not by your works, you will be pushed to depend on God and live thankful to Him because He saved you. Humility enables you to agree that everything we have is a gift from God. The Bible says, in 1 Corinthians 4:7 [AMP], “For who regards you as superior or what sets you apart as special? What do you have that you did not receive [from another]? And if in fact, you received it [from God or someone else], why do you boast as if you had not received it [but had gained it by yourself]?”

A true sign of maturity in the Kingdom of God is humility. Even when your dignity is challenged, you should respond in grace and not from a place of defending your image at any cost. There is no reason to hold on to your feeling of entitlement when you count on God's grace. Proverbs 12:15 [TPT] says, "A fool is in love with his own opinion, but wisdom means being teachable." Be teachable, and watch how God will lift you up in due season.

