

# FAIRVIEW MEMORIAL WINTER BIBLE STUDY

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Humility, more than a word.

by

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Scripture Reading - Philippians 2:1-9

The above title was chosen because in many things we only pay lip service, but never actually **apply the teachings of God's word to our lives.**<

ISAIAH 29:13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men. In Matt. 15:8 Jesus quoted this passage from Isaiah in speaking to the scribes and Pharisees of his day. Jesus repeatedly called them hypocrites in the gospels.

## Observations Concerning Humility

1. Almost all Baptists agree that being humble is an excellent quality of a person's life. They like the word. People are just opposed to the expectation that they actually be humble.
2. Much of man's understanding of humility has been taught by the precepts of men, rather than the precepts of God. Everyone seems to have their own concept of what it means to be humble.
3. I don't recall having ever heard a sermon preached on the subject of humility. I don't recall ever preaching a sermon on humility. It is often alluded to in sermons, almost as an aside. As preachers perhaps we are not humble enough to preach on humility. It is not my purpose to lecture you on your humility, but rather to stir your pure minds concerning something that is essential to serving and pleasing God.
4. People hold many ideas concerning humility, what it is and how it is revealed in one's life. Many of these ideas are not scriptural.
5. I want to first talk about what humility is not.
  - A. Humility is not a personality trait which some have and some don't.
  - B. Humility is not indicated by the position of the body, eyes cast down, shoulders slumped etc.
  - C. Some believe that a person's choice of the home they live in or the car they drive indicates humility. Driving a 15 year old Chevrolet does not make one humble. Being poor of worldly possessions does not make one humble, nor does being wealthy prevent one from being humble.

Seven plagues later God sent Moses to Pharaoh again with another message recorded in Exodus 10:3 Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? Scripture reveals Pharaoh was finally destroyed before the face of God. Pharaoh was a type of all sinners. In order to be saved from sin and be reconciled to God a person must become truly humble before God. Those that refuse will be destroyed in hell for eternity.

#### Gods purpose for his children.

After 40 years wandering in the wilderness and just before they entered into the land of Canaan these words were spoken to Israel.

Deuteronomy 8:2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what is in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

#### Humility not optional.

II Chronicles 7:14 If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

The first condition was humble themselves. There is no prayer without a humble heart.

Micah 6:8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

James 4:6-10 (6) God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. (7) Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (8) Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts; ye double minded. (9) Be afflicted, and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. (10) Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Jesus himself taught this same lesson in a parable.

Luke 18:9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: (10) Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican, (11) The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. (12) I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I possess. (13) And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalted himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Jesus gave us a picture of true humility in this parable.

### Definitions of humble, humility.

The Hebrew and Greek words translated humble and humility all mean: low or submit.

The word carries the idea of freedom from pride; meekness.

Humility is a condition of the mind and spirit of man.

Prov. 16:19 Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, then to divide the spoil with the proud.

Acts 20:19 Paul spoke of "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind".

My own words: Humility concerns ones disposition toward God that is displayed before man.

Webster's dictionary defines disposition as: the predominate or prevailing tendency of ones spirits.

### It is not easy.

Mack Davis, a country singer and songwriter of the 1960's wrote a song entitled, It's Hard to be Humble. Its most famous line said, "O Lord its hard to be humble when you are perfect in every way. That may sound humorous but contains a lot of truth that we would do well to recognize.

Gal. 6:3 For if a man thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

Have Children of God and members of Missionary Baptist Churches deceived themselves that they are truly humble people? Actions speak louder than words.

In order to understand true humility we need to understand the opposite of humility, the scriptural word that stands opposite of humility is pride. Webster's dictionary defines pride as: A high or inordinate opinion of ones own importance or superiority: Conceit. Scripture says nothing good about pride. It was the sin of Satan who was cast out from God. Overbearing pride or pride multiplied is arrogance.

### Gods Precept of humility.

Scripture gives account of those who were humble and those who were prideful and the outcome of each. Humility is better demonstrated than defined. It is taught through out scripture, even where the word is not found.

As recorded in Exodus 5:1-2 God sent Moses to Pharaoh with the words, "Let my people go." Pharaoh's answer was, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go."

Phil. 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Now that is a novel idea among Baptist, but that is true humility.

Abraham demonstrated this verse of scripture long before it was written. After entering the land of Canaan with his wife Sarah and Lot his nephew they traveled down into Egypt. Later when they came out they had great herds and flocks.

Gen. 13:2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and gold.

In due time a strife arose between the herdsmen of Abram and the herdsmen of Lot.

Gen. 13:8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be brethern.

So Abram said to Lot, you choose the land on the left and I will go right; or you choose the land on the right, and I will go left.

Gen. 13:10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere. (11) And Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east.

Abram said to Lot, you choose. Abram could have pulled rank, he was the elder. This is a picture of true humility. Abram knew what I have learned; sometimes we win by losing.

I Peter 5:5 Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Grace , the unmerited favor of God is only given to the humble.

The want of humility has plagued the church since the earliest day of its existence. The ugly head of pride rose up among that little circle of twelve that Jesus had called to follow him.

Matt. 18:1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? (2) And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them. (3) And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (4) Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Prov. 15:33 before honor is humility.

What about our humility?

The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Colosse to warn them about some false teachers among them introducing the worship of angels and other false doctrines.

Colossians 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, (19) And not holding the Head.

True humility is a commanded humility. Paul called their humility a voluntary humility because they could choose to appear humble or choose not to be humble. It was a facade, a fake humility. Scripture teaches a true humility and also a false humility such as that of the Pharisee when they fasted.

Matt. 6:16 Moreover when ye fast be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

Should we. can we judge?

Some claim that we have no right to judge others concerning their humility, that God will judge.

We cannot judge others hearts, but we can judge their actions.

I Corin. 5:3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit have judged already, as though I were present concerning him that has done this deed.

I take the position of a Supreme Court Justice when a case concerning pornography was before the Court in 1964. The issue was that they could not define what constituted pornography. What some called pornography, others called art. Justice Potter Stewart very famously said, "I know it when I see it." I know true humility when I see it, and I know a false humility when I see it.

Our churches have suffered greatly because of a lack of humble hearts with people, instead acting out of pride and arrogance. This has probably caused more harm to our churches than any other issue. The divisions that occur in our churches are almost never about doctrine. They are usually about personalities and carnal things. When the church service ends and the business meeting begins, some take on a whole new character.

We live in a a culture of a need to win. Our children are taught from very young ages in youth sports and other activities this culture of winning. Is it any wonder that this thinking has come into our churches.

### Conclusion

It is hard for man to be humble because of the flesh. But we have before us the greatest example of humility the world has ever seen, Jesus Christ, Gods only begotten Son. Jesus willingly left his place with the Father and descended down to man.

Hebrews 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

Phil. 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who being in the form of God, thought that it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.