

Christian Character Building Messages

Humility as a Way of Life

Ken Birks, Pastor/Teacher

I. Introductory Remarks.

Walking in humility before God and others is a very important aspect to the character He wants to build in our lives. In doing so, we will not only experience riches, honor and the fullness of life Jesus intended for us to have but will insure us that we have fruit that remains as well.

Proverbs 22:4 *By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life.*

In this message we will be looking at the aspect of walking in humility before others and in our service to God. Walking in humility towards and our service to God is one of the essential characteristics the Christian must have operating in order to be successful in the kingdom. The opposite of this would be walking in pride and arrogance in everything we do, which brings us into a destructive path.

Proverbs 16:18 *Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.*

If we haven't come to that place in our lives where we have either humbled ourselves before God or have been humbled by Him, pride will manifest itself in a myriad of ways in our areas of service in the body of Christ and in our relationships with one another.

- **Humility must be a way of life for us as Christians just as it was for Jesus.**

Andrew Murray once said, "Humility before God is nothing if not proved in humility before men."

1 John 4:20 *If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?*

II. Jesus Is Our Example of Humility.

In the book of Philippians, Paul exhorts us as believers to follow Jesus' example of humility. We are to be likeminded in Him or have the same attitude that he had.

Philippians 2:1-5 *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ²fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. ³Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,*

In this passage of Scripture, Paul deals with our humility in service and our humility in the manner in which we are to relate to one another in the body of Christ.

Matthew 11:29 *"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

Luke 22:27 *"For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.*

Matthew 20:27-28 *"And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave; ²⁸just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

1. The Example of Jesus Washing the Disciple's Feet.

John 13:5 *After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.*

John 13:12-16 *So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³"You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. ¹⁴"If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶"Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.*

2. Other Examples of Jesus' Humility.

John 5:41 *"I do not receive honor from men.*

John 6:38 *"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*

John 7:16 *Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me.*

John 8:28 *Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.*

John 8:50 *"And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges.*

John 14:10 *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.*

These words show us the deepest roots of Christ's life and work. They teach us what the essential nature and life is of the redemption which Jesus accomplished and now communicates – it is this – He was nothing that God might be all.

Andrew Murray is quoted as saying, *"Humility is nothing but the disappearance of self in the vision that God is all."*

Humility in our service to God and others allows God to be all. Humility surrenders itself to the divine working of God.

- **It will be through humility that the earth will be filled with the fullness of God, who fills all in all.**

Ephesians 1:22-23 *And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³**which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.***

III. Humility in our Servanthood.

Just as Jesus came to serve and give His life a ransom for many, this is how God desires we walk in humility. We must loose ourselves in the humility and Servanthood of Christ.

Matthew 16:25 *"For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*

Have you lost your life in humility, or are you still trying hang on to your pride and ego?

Matthew 20:25-28 *But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. ²⁶"Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. ²⁷"**And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave; ²⁸"just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."***

1. A Contrast of Attitudes in Ministry between Pride & Humility.

Romans 16:18 *For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.*

Philippians 2:3-4 *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

Galatians 5:13 *For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

Humility in Serving	Pride in Serving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Willing to serve wherever the need is and to meet the needs of those around you. ● Sees the importance of small duties we are asked to perform. ● A desire to make others successful. ● A desire to show love and mercy of God to those who need it. ● A desire to unite family members under Christ's Lordship. ● A desire to help the spiritually sick, poor and oppressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Full of selfish ambition and hidden agendas. ● A desire for power. ● A desire for promotion. ● Expresses a sense of self-importance. ● Needs to have a title to be fully motivated. ● Expresses authority in a domineering manner. ● Shows off his abilities and talents ● Is wise in his own eyes – mocks and undermines authority.

Because Christ humbled Himself before God, God was ever before Him. He found it possible to humble Himself before men too; and to be the servant of all. This is true self-denial to which we are called; the acknowledgement that self has nothing good in it except as an empty vessel which God must fill.

IV. Humility in Our Relationships.

One of the things Jesus desires for us is to come into a genuine humility in our relationships we have with other members of His body.

Ephesians 4:1-3 *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ²with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

- **What is lowliness of mind?**

Lowliness of mind is when we see ourselves to be nothing, to let God be all. When this happens, the desire to compare yourself with others is gone.

The humble man looks upon even, the weakest and un-worthiest, child of God; honor and prefers him in honor as a king.

Romans 12:16 *Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.*

1. A Contrast of Attitudes in our Relationships with Others.

- **Rapid fire Scriptures:**

Colossians 3:12-13 *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

Colossians 3:8 *But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.*

Ephesians 4:31-32 *Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.*

Galatians 5:20 *idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,*

Proverbs 13:10 *By pride comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised is wisdom.*

Romans 12:10 *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;*

<p style="text-align: center;">Humility in Relationships</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pride in Relationships</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindness, tender mercies & humbleness of mind. • Meekness, bearing with one another & forgiving one another. • Peacefulness and gentleness. • Serving one another. • Preferring one another and associating with the humble. • Submitting to one another. <p>These attitudes are essential for producing unity in the body of Christ.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strife and contention • Bitterness, un-forgiveness and resentment. • Arrogance, anger, wrath and malice. • Malice, jealousy, dissensions and discord. • Seeks its own, parades itself and has an independent spirit. • Associates with those who will advance their cause. <p>These attitudes all produce division and destruction in the body of Christ.</p>

Proverbs 16:18 *Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*

V. Concluding Remarks.

Let's keep in mind that our ultimate goal is to build the body of Christ up through our humility so that we can all be encouraged nurtured and strengthened in Christ.