

CHARACTER – STUDY #2 – Humility

Humility

What is humility?

Humility is one of those words that's hard to define... like love, or beauty. It's actually easier to see it than it is to define it. And while humility isn't necessarily an action word, it is clearly revealed in our actions. Perhaps C.S. Lewis summed it up best when he observed, "humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less."

We're prone to place ourselves ahead of others because we care more about ourselves than we do others. Why – because over time we develop an unhealthy sense of our own self-worth:

- I should get the next opportunity because I've been waiting longer.
- Whose need could possibly be a more important than mine?
- I should be first simply because I deserve it!

Humility is a state of mind. It's an awareness of where we really fit in the big picture of life. It's a realization that I am not the center of life... the world does not revolve around **me, my, mine**. It is coming to terms with who we are in the light of who God is, and then "living out" that reality in our day-do-day lives.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In which of the following areas have you found difficult to display humility?

___ Playing sports or games

___ Relationship with a family member

___ When someone butts in line ahead of you

___ Your favorite hobby or pastime

___ Driving in heavy traffic

___ When being given an honor/award

___ Interactions with "know-it-all" people

___ Other _____

- Why was it difficult to practice humility in those instances listed above that you checked?

- How much was your lack of humility in those instances driven by others' actions and how much was determined by your sense of self-worth?

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Read Luke 18: 9-14

⁹To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

¹³“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast^s and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

¹⁴“I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Holy Bible - New International Version

1. To what kind of person does Luke 18:9 tell us Jesus was speaking the parable?
2. Who was more honest with God about where he fit in the big picture of life (the Pharisee or the tax collector)? Why was that individual able to see himself more accurately and clearly in God’s estimation than the other individual?
3. What basis or benchmark did the Pharisee use for comparing himself to the tax collector?

4. What basis or benchmark did the Pharisee use for comparing himself to others?

5. What does Christ mean when He says, “those exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted?”

6. Do you have any capabilities and talents you can honestly say were developed by you from scratch without help or assistance from anyone? (Think hard before you answer... and read First Corinthians 4:7 to assist with developing your answer.)

7. Who is a good role model of humility in today’s culture? What do you find attractive about the character trait of humility that you see modeled by him or her?

APPLICATION

- Consider an aspect of life where you’re prone to compare yourself favorably to others or consider yourself superior in any way? How does that detract from your ability to relate to and connect with others in a positive way?

- Pray that God will help you to see yourself as He sees you, and that you will develop a greater awareness and a greater appreciation for all that you have received from Him.