

Cultivating the Fruit of Humility

The Greatest Character Trait Needed in Sanctification

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Repairers of the Breach, Restorers of Paths to Dwell In SDA

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On the road of Sanctification, we ought to develop a human character after the Divine Character and similitude of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For it is only a character worthy to dwell with heavenly beings that are developed here on earth, that we carry with us to heaven.

A famous author once said, “True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character.” CCH 261

“Christ's life of self-denial and suffering is before me, and this hushes every murmuring thought, every dissatisfied feeling. The life of Christ's followers will be beset at every step with trials, vexations, and hindrances, which will work for their good in developing character and gaining an education in the school of Christ which is of the highest value. In this conflict, the Christian character is made strong.” E G White -

Manuscript releases vol 8 pg. 240

“But Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves

closely and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected.” E G White - **Christ Object Lessons pg. 331**

Thus, it is important for us to concentrate on and give the time needed in the cultivation of our human characters to resemble that of Christ Jesus. As Christ is our example we ought to follow in His footsteps. We are therefore given the fruit of the Holy Spirit in justification to be maintained in sanctification to aid us in our character development.

Paul tells us in Gal 5:21,22 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance against such there is no law.”

You see, a tree bears one type of fruit but each fruit on that self-same tree, may not have the same development.

Although same in nature some may be at different stages of development. That is why some may ripe faster than another and some fruit may differ in sweetness or taste or even in the outward contours of the skin of the fruit, itself.

So, the FRUIT of the Spirit is the Divine Nature that is given to us, to develop the divine character traits. And whatsoever stage of development we are at, we are called to get riper and impregnated with divine character traits, and humility is just one of them.

It is often observed among Christendom, that many Christians seemingly concentrate just on the **gifts of the Spirit**, rather than on the **fruit of the Spirit**. For much time is spent cultivating talents than character. Efforts and time are spent

in learning a skill while the purity of character, after the similitude of our Lord and Savior, is often neglected.

Many do not see the need to do this for they have not yet grasped the need to live holy even in this sinful world. Nor do they see their own sinfulness enough to want to resemble that of the Savior.

In writing this booklet, God has led me to see the importance and in greater detail of the character traits of Humility. It is certainly not that attribute alone that ought to be developed. No! No! on the contrary. We ought to develop even more. But it is this trait that causes the quick development of the other traits.

It is like a fuel to an engine that helps to drive the car. It provides the necessary energy for the engine to run so without it the car will stall and its purpose not realized.

Therefore, this trait is one of the greatest needs for us in this sinful world.

The Apostle John saw this and this quote has made it clearer. It says:

“The lessons of Christ, setting forth meekness and humility and love as essential to growth in grace and a fitness for His work, were of the highest value to John. He treasured every lesson and constantly sought to bring his life into harmony with the divine pattern. John had begun to discern the glory of Christ—not the worldly pomp and power for which he had been taught to hope, but “the glory as of the Only Begotten

of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14.” E G White – Acts of the Apostles pg. 544

Without this trait no man can enter the kingdom of God for it is the foundation of all good traits that we ought to develop. The Bible tells us, “Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the Kingdom of God.” And unless ye become as little children one cannot enter the Kingdom. (Matt 5:5; 18:2,3).

Hunger and thirsting for this attribute allows us to see the magnificent beauty of God’s love toward us. It is not that we are worthy of God’s love, no, no, for “while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” (Rom 5:8).

It is only in seeing our needs that we are made humble; for there is nothing in us that can inspire any attraction. But Christ’s Righteousness in our hearts make us worthy for God to dwell in us and to be with us.

For Isaiah 57:15 tells us, “For thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabited eternity and whose name is Holy. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also of a contrive and humble spirit...”

As you my dear reader, continue to read the pages of this short booklet, may this truth be absorbed. God has shown to me the efficacy this trait, and the need to make sure that this trait is abundant even more and more in my own human character.

May this also be your prayer.

Humility

The topic of humility is an important topic for all of us. **It is the beauty of holiness** seen in man when God dwelleth in the heart.

Therefore, due to its importance, it is needful that we pray for this grace every single time we offer prayer unto God.

“For humility is not a thing that will come of itself, but that it must be made the object of special desire, prayer, faith, and practice”. It is with this divine indwelling of humility that we succeed on our way to heaven, and without it, we will fail.

You see, forgiveness can only be given to the humble in heart, and without forgiveness for our sins, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. It is acknowledged that the Publican, bowing in recognition that he is a sinner and in his sinful state was closer to the kingdom of heaven than the Pharisee who did not see his need and thought that his gifts were sufficient to offer him a place in heaven. He praised and boasted himself with outward forms and think it was sufficient for God to recognize him. (Luk 18:10-14; Matt 5:4).

But thank God that is not the number of things you have or the gifts that we have that God looks at, but God looks at the simplicity of the heart. And if in the heart there is no divine stamp of humility, He cannot give us grace.

The Bible tells us that He loves the contrite heart, and it is only the meek that shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace.” Ps 37:11

You see our value only comes from God. The moment that we start to place value on ourselves, we become self-sufficient and lose our true purpose.

It is God who places importance or value on us. After all, he created us.

The Creator of a thing knows its purpose and thus it is the Creator and the Creator alone that can give the thing that is created, its value. Even more so, as intelligent creations, God even places further value on us, by coming to die for us so that we can have eternal life and immortality with Him. (1Tim 6:19; Rom 2:7; 11Tim 1:10).

Christ died for you and me so that we can live; ‘for while we were sinners, Christ died for us.’ (Rom 5:8). ‘He became poor so that we can be rich,’ (11Cor 8:9) and ‘He suffered for us so that we can be healed’ (Isa 53:5); He condescended so that we could be lifted up and He emptied Himself and became a servant even though He was the master and Creator of the universe. (Phil 2:6-8).

Must I go on to show the tremendous value and love that our heavenly Father has placed on us?

However, the moment that we start putting value upon ourselves or exalting oneself or even devaluing ourselves, that is not from God.

The devaluing of oneself is what others do frequently, thinking that it would show that they are humble, but this is contrary to what true Divine indwelling humility is about.

Either over or undervaluing one self, it is a stepping out of the grace of humility to that of selfishness or having a wrong esteem of oneself.

More on this as we go on this insightful journey.

It is therefore worthy by contrast to have us divert to that which is not recommended by God or what is not humility as we continue this study.

This study, by the grace of God, will attempt to put this Divine indwelling humility in its rightful place as well as anything else that contradicts it. We will put those misconceptions in the heap of confusion, right in the position that they ought to be or occupy.

Humility! This is a word that is often misunderstood and very often when we think it is humility it is selfishness or pride that is being seen or spoken about.

So firstly, let us discuss what humility, IS NOT.

Humility is NOT:

a. When one wants to be in the background because YOU do not want to be seen or known, especially when coming to God's work. (1Tim 3:1,6). This is not humility but a neglect of duty before God and a neglect of using the talents that God has given for the uplifting of the church of God.

b. It is NOT lacking spiritual ambition by doing little for God and thinking that others can do more than you can. This is not humility.

I quote: “God will accept only those who are determined to aim high. He places every human agent under obligation to do his best. Moral perfection is required of all. Never should we lower the standard of righteousness to accommodate inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong-doing. We need to understand that imperfection of character is a sin. The talents, however few, are to be put to use. The question that most concern us is not, how much have I received? but, what am I doing with that which I have? The development of all our powers is the first duty we owe to God and to our fellow men. No one who is not growing daily in capability and usefulness is fulfilling the purpose of life. In making a profession of faith in Christ we pledge ourselves to become all that it is possible for us to be as workers for the Master, and we should cultivate every faculty to the highest degree of perfection, so that we may do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable.” E G White – **Christ Object Lesson pg. 330.**

c. It is NOT a portrayal of helplessness. For according to (Ph 4:13), we can do all things through Christ which strengthens us. So, a portrayal of helplessness as a neglect for the work of the Lord or an excessive declaration of a need for help, is certainly not true humility.

I quote:

“A man will gain power and efficiency as he accepts the responsibilities that God places upon him. However, humble his position or limited his ability, that man will attain true greatness who seeks to perform his work with fidelity. The fact that a man feels his weakness is at least some evidence that he realizes the magnitude of the work appointed him; he will make God his counselor and his strength.” E G White – **From Eternity Past pg 175.**

d. True humility is not deflecting of an honor that is truly deserved. If one does something that is honorable before others, a person who has false humility will try to deflect it, while at the same time, he or she points at the work of others.

There is a subtlety here, for while no glory should be given to self, and all glory must be given to God, it is God who is working within us to “will and to do of His great pleasure”. But God does not overlook the vessel He chooses but acknowledges the person’s willingness to do His Will by blessing them. So, if gratitude is being shown to you, acknowledge it and in the same breath give glory and praise to God for Him to continue working within you for the blessing of others.

I quote:

“There must be less working in self, and more working in and by and through Jesus Christ. When the Lord Jesus, who can never misjudge, sees men and women opening and explaining the Scriptures, while they themselves are disregarding the principles which would lead them to

cultivate a most tender regard and respect for their fellow laborers, He cannot give them the victories He would be glad to bestow. When He sees that success would injure the human agent and lead him to glorify himself instead of giving God the glory, He withholds the blessing which ensures success. Then the large number of means expended does not accomplish what so many hoped and prayed that it might. Disappointment comes, and faith is lost. But there is seldom a close self-examination in regard to what spirit was manifested by the workers.” **Letters and Manuscripts Vol 11 1896 Ms 24 p 8**

e. True humility is not “Humble bragging” – which is talking about how humble you are or totally putting down of self while not acknowledging what God requires. This is often seen when someone is trying to overcompensate the show of pride that exist in the heart and instead brags of their own humility which does not come from Christ.

You see, the above points that have been discussed so far, is what humility is not. And this is sometimes called **inverted pride** or upside-down humility, if there is such a thing.

With its subtlety it may be hard to discern, for instead of the person thinking highly of themselves they put themselves down, **but the spotlight is still on SELF which identifies it as PRIDE or the lack of humility.**

Whether the person is boastful of themselves and looks down on others because of their assumed superiority or the person is self-devaluing or failing to see themselves in the light of God’s value, **both are still selfishness.** The latter is an

upside-down exaltation of oneself against God's ability to save and to cause them to do.

One self is the spotlight. And this cannot be a demonstration of true humility.

You see when self-exaltation is in the heart which is a wrong estimation of oneself, pride brings deception. Let us have a look at Obadiah 1:3,4.

Pride is the most destructive of all sins.

I quote:

“Ultimately, our connection to God is the only thing that determines true greatness. Of all sins, pride is the most dangerous, because it closes the heart against God and the infinite blessings He came to give. When we stray from God's plan, it is impossible to predict the depths to which we can sink.” Gary Kent - **The Secret of True Greatness pg. 13**

“He who desires to rise to true greatness must walk humbly before God, not with a forced humility, but with a genuine sense of his own inefficiency and of God's greatness. He is to strive earnestly to make the soul temple a place where God delights to dwell.” E G White – **A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education pg 46.**

The words of another Author once said: I used to think of humility as thinking less of oneself or devaluing of oneself. However, later I thought of it as thinking of oneself less, while putting others first. J. D Walt - Why Pride Is Not the Opposite of Humility—And What Is.

Indeed, how true are the above statements.

So, how does the Bible depicts or describes true humility?

According to Proverbs 22:4, the definition of humility is the “Fear of the Lord” that brings riches, honor, and life. The word “and” in the text is really supplied by the translators. So, it is really the fear of the Lord. Therefore, the foundation of true humility can only come when one fears the Lord.

The word humility comes from a Latin word called “humus” meaning earth. Therefore, it involves facing oneself to the earth or having submission in the heart towards God and to one another.

Anything outside of fearing the Lord is selfishness, exalting of self, pride, or self-importance, or putting self-first before others.

The fear of the Lord gives the right esteem of oneself so one can understand what it means to humble oneself. True divine indwelling humility it is one always being in submission to the Creator. This is how man was created. To give honor and glory to God. For man was created for the purpose of God, by Him, for Him, in Him, and through Him. (Rev 4:11; Col 1:16)

You see, the opposite of humility then is ALL about SELF, which the bible refers to as the carnal mind which is at enmity against God (Rom 8:6).

When SELF is exalted, it is pride.

But it is not pride if you do the following.

- a. Acknowledge the gifts that God has given to you without a boastful attitude.
- b. Having a godly desire or ambition to further the work of the Lord in pursuit of excellence.
- c. Defending or proclaiming the gospel to others so that they can see God and be changed.

Phil 2:3 says, “Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem each other better than themselves.”

Esteeming each other rightly is putting someone above oneself. Notice however, it does not involve putting oneself down. **It is putting something else other than yourself, UP.** (Rom 12:3).

Therefore, the humility of the man will be seen in service to others. (Mic 6:8; Eph 4:1-3; Col 3:12-13; 1Pet 5:5). Together with humility, love, and selflessness is the foundation of true greatness.

In James 4:10, the bible tells us “To humble ourselves before God and He shall exalt thee in due time”.

It means that the person must be repentant in heart, giving up of self and seeking reformation from God, and relying wholly upon God and God alone (11Chr 7:14; Ps 131:1).

I quote:

“I now charge you before God to make thorough work of repentance and reformation. You may now so humble yourself before God that you may be trusted to represent the

sacred character of His work. God forbids that one man shall have arbitrary jurisdiction over the minds of his brethren.” — **Letter 380, 1907 (November 11, 1907, to a Local Conference President).**

You see humility is not about self at all. Humility is all about others. It is having the right esteem of oneself and one’s merits, free of pretensions, vanity, or self-love.

It is certainly not putting yourself down; that is false or inverted pride.

Humility is about lifting others up.

It is a grace of modesty given to us by God and it is the foundation of ALL good traits that the church of God should encourage.

I quote:

“In connection with his instruction to those in positions of trust in the church, the apostle outlined some general principles that were to be followed by all who were associated in church fellowship. The younger members of the flock were urged to follow the example of their elders in the practice of Christlike humility: “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. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may

devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith” E G White – **Acts of the Apostles pg 527.**

“Ministers of Christ should be united, of one heart and one mind. They should counsel with one another. None should require their brethren to labour exactly after their plan, but each should preserve his individuality, and all labour for the good of others, esteeming their brethren better than themselves. It is Satan's work to excite envy and jealousy, to alienate affection, weaken confidence, and engender distrust and suspicion. All this hinders unity of faith in intercession with God for the weak and the desponding, for the grace of Christ, for the conversion of sinners, and thus shuts away the blessing which might be ours.” —**The Review and Herald, July 10, 1883.**

“The church of Christ is in constant peril. Satan is seeking to destroy the people of God, and one man's mind, one man's judgment, is not sufficient to be trusted. Christ would have His followers brought together in church capacity, observing order, having rules and discipline, and all subject one to another, esteeming others better than themselves. Union and confidence are essential to the prosperity of the church. If each member of the church feels at liberty to move independently of the others, taking his own peculiar course, how can the church be in any safety in the hour of danger and peril? The prosperity and very existence of a church depend upon the prompt, united action, and mutual confidence of its members. When, at a critical time, one sounds the alarm of danger, there is a need for prompt and

active work, without stopping to question and canvass the whole subject from end to end, thus letting the enemy gain every advantage by delay when united action might save many souls from perdition.” E G White – **Testimonies to the Church Vol 3 pg. 445**

“Our ministers are in danger of taking credit to themselves in the work which they do. They think God is favouring them, and they become independent and self-sufficient; then the Lord gives them up to the buffetings of Satan. In order to do God's work with acceptance, we must have the spirit of meekness, of lowliness of mind, each esteeming others better than himself. There is much at stake. The judgment and ability of all are needed now. Every man's work is of sufficient importance to demand that it be performed with care and fidelity. One man cannot do the work of all. Each has his respective place and his special work, and each should realize that the manner in which his work is done must stand the test of the judgment.” **TC Vol 4 pg. 608**

Therefore, from the above, one might ask, so how can one overcome selfishness or pride of heart?

The answer is simple. Two things are needed. Do what God says, that is **Your Work**, which is to humble yourself, in repentance of heart and reformation. And trust Him to do what He says is **His Work**, which is to exalt you in due time. Never should you try to do God’s work by exalting yourself. Let us look at the below texts in some detail. (Rom 12:3).

“And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” (Matt 23:12).

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:” (1Pet 5:6. James 4:10; Jer13:18; 11Chr 7:14; 11Ch 34:27).

But what does it mean to humble yourself?

It is to acknowledge God first and others second above oneself. It is all about service to God and others. That Divine Indwelling Humility can only cause God to always act on your behalf and exalt you in due time.

Therefore, let the mind of Christ be in you as was in Christ Jesus (Ph 2:2-9). And glory in the things of others (Gal 5:26) For God resisted the proud in heart but dwelleth with the humble (Isa 57:15; Ps 9:12; Ps 10:17; 1Pet 5:5; Jam 4:6).

Now I want to close this study on humility with quotations that deserve some thoughtful moments of consideration before God.

I quote:

“Those who teach unpopular truth today must have power from on high to combine with their doctrine, or their efforts will be of little account. The precious grace of humility is sadly wanting in the ministry and the church. Men who preach the truth think too highly of their own abilities. True humility will lead a man to exalt Christ and the truth, and to realize his utter dependence upon the God of truth. It is painful to learn lessons of humility, yet nothing is more beneficial in the end. The pain attendant upon learning lessons of humility is in

consequence of our being elated by a false estimate of ourselves so that we are unable to see our great need. Vanity and pride fill the hearts of men. God's grace alone can work a reformation. It is your work to humble yourself and not wait for God to humble you. God's hand at times bears heavily upon men to humble them and bring them into a proper position before Him; but how much better it is to keep the heart daily humbled before God. We can abase ourselves, or we can build ourselves up in pride and wait till God abases us” **Lift Him Up pg. 282.**

“Let us then put away all self-exaltation. As long as the cross of Calvary stands as a monument of the cost of our salvation, as a reminder of the amazing love and humiliation of the King of glory, let us walk in its shadow, and seek to reflect the character of our Redeemer. Go to him as a perfect Savior, for he has said, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” There is no reason why we should seek to exalt ourselves, for we are full of weakness. As you realize this, trust in him whose grace is sufficient for you, for “we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” Therefore “humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up;” for “whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” Let self and self-interest be lost in the great themes of redemption. “Show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” The Lord says, “Whoso offered praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his

conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.” **Sign of the Times Mar 9 1888 paragraph 16.**

May God add His blessings. Amen