

LISTENING TO GOD (Teachers' Pages)

HUMILITY

OBJECTIVES:

1. The participants will be reminded or learn some scriptures that emphasize the importance of humility to God.
2. The participants will have the opportunity to listen to God to discern His will for them in regard to humility.
3. The participants will experience a process of looking at a godly attribute, that can be applicable in many other areas of their lives.

Two weeks ago, Nathan emphasized our actions and stressed how important what we DO is. This week, our focus will be more on how we THINK—our thinking indicates who we ARE and consequently, influences our actions. Proverbs 27:19 says, “As in water, face answers to face, so the mind of man reflects the man.” RSV

Philippians 2:5-8 “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient until death, even death on a cross.”

Humility is one of the qualities desired by God in both the Old and New Testaments. This lesson is focused on developing this humble state of mind, which results in humble actions.

C. S. Lewis in his book, Mere Christianity, calls pride, The Great Sin, and humility its opposite virtue. He describes a humble person as one who “will not be thinking about humility; he will not be thinking about himself at all.”

Selected Texts: (Have class members read these passages aloud, emphasizing the importance that God places on humility.)

Romans 12:3 “For by the grace given to me I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.” (the focus is on humility, NOT humiliation; God’s grace allows us to look honestly as ourselves, knowing that He is a God who forgives and His Spirit nudges us to be more like Jesus in our thoughts and actions. The goal is not guilt but positive growth.)

Matthew 18:4 Jesus says, “Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Luke 18:14 “...for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Compare Hezekiah’s attitude in II Chronicles 32:2-8 with his attitude in II Chronicles 32:24-25, Hezekiah was healed, but his heart was proud and God showed his wrath until (read vs 26), Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, so God’s wrath relented.

Read II Chronicles 33:1-6, 9-10. Manasseh, one of the most wicked of Israelite kings, read v12-13, eventually humbled himself greatly before God, prayed to God, and v. 19 says that God received his entreaty. Humility carries great weight with God.

Invitation:

Our awesome heavenly Father, we ask you now to be with us in this time together before you. May you give us an alert mind to bring to our memory the evidences of your being with us in the past day. Help us to search ourselves and to know our hearts honestly. We ask these things through your Son, and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Review of the Day:

Go through the major events of the last 24 hours of your life (or the past few days) Look at your thoughts and actions, especially with the idea of humility. Then fill in the sentences after the prompts.

In the conversation with, actions toward, or thoughts about _____, I was prideful in that I _____

Do I question or rebel against God's authority? Do I think I think you know what God SHOULD be doing? Do I think His love or His commands do not apply to me? In what ways do I or could I show an humble attitude toward God _____

Think about specific situations in which I saw the humility of others this past day or week. I realize that my (spouse, child, friend, boss, co-worker) showed humility when he/she _____

PRAY silently right now and ask God to reveal to you something about yourself in regard to humility.

Ask God to bring to mind any prideful attitudes, actions, or moments where you fell short of showing the mind of Christ or the fruit of the Spirit in your life. As God brings different areas to mind, **reflect** on what you did to contribute to the situations and what might enable you to respond differently in the future. Write what God has revealed to you here.

Give Thanks:

Thank God for any time you saw Him at work in you or in others around you. Bring to Him any questions, doubts, or struggles that continue to trouble you. Give thanks for God's presence even in places that feel dark or confusing.

Confess:

Pray these verses from Psalm 139:23-24
"Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting."

Turn to someone near you and share a situation (not names) when you were prideful either in thoughts, words, or actions. Then share how you feel about that now and what you would want to do, say or think differently in the future.

Ask Forgiveness

Ask God for forgiveness if needed. Accept God's love and forgiveness. **ASK** if there is anything you need to do to make things right relative to the situation you have confessed. If the Holy Spirit brings to mind any apology you need to make or any action you need to take, act on that prompting.

Listen to God- Sit for 3-5 minutes in quietness so that you can discern God's will for you in this area of humility. What words or phrases from this lesson or these scriptures does He bring to your mind? _____
Spend time this week reflecting on these words or phrases.

Give Thanks:

Thank God for any time you saw Him at work in you or in others around you. Bring to Him any questions, doubts, or struggles that continue to trouble you. Give thanks for God's presence even in places that feel dark or confusing.

Thank God for loving you so much that he disciplines you and calls you to become more like Him everyday.

Mother Teresa's encouragement toward humility to those who were sisters in her society, Oct. 31, 1966, was this:

"It is our emptiness and lowliness that God needs and not our plenitude. These are a few of the ways we can practice humility.

Speak as little as possible of oneself

Mind one's own business.

Avoid curiosity.

Do not want to manage other people's affairs.

Accept contradiction and correction cheerfully.

Pass over the mistakes of others.

Accept blame when innocent.

Yield to the will of others.

Accept insults and injuries.

Accept being slighted, forgotten, and disliked.

Be kind and gentle even under provocation.

Do not seek to be specially loved and admired.

Never stand on one's dignity.

Yield in Discussion even though one is right.

Choose always the hardest."

From The Love of Christ, Mother Teresa, Harper & Row.

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Do I rebel against God's authority? Do I think I know better than God what He SHOULD be doing? Do I think his commands or even his love does not apply to me?

How do I, personally, show an humble attitude toward God?

Think about specific situations in which you saw the humility of others this past day. I realize that my (spouse, child, friend, boss, co-worker) showed humility when he/she _____

PRAY silently right now and ask God to reveal to you something about yourself in regard to humility.

Ask God to bring to mind any prideful attitudes, actions, or moments where you fell short of showing mind of Christ or the fruit of the Spirit in your life. As God brings different areas to mind, **reflect** on what you did to contribute to the situations and what might enable you act respond differently in the future.

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Ask God for forgiveness for anything that God has revealed to you that is prideful. Accept God's love and forgiveness. Ask if there is anything you need to do to make things right relative to the situation you have confessed. If the Holy Spirit brings to mind any apology you need to make or any action you need to take, act on that prompting.

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