

The Four Horsemen of Success or Failure!

2nd Chronicles 7: 14-15

Humility	Vs	Pride
Prayer	Vs	I've Got This
Pursuit of God's Face	Vs	Pursuit of man's approval
Repentance	Vs	Continuing in my own way

Humility is the foundational attitude of the three actions of servanthood which leads to God's fountain of Blessing. Spout of Blessings!

I. Definition of Humility

Humility – Several Hebrew words are translated humble. One is **Anah**, which means “to stoop, be downcast”, bow down; *to be afflicted; to weaken oneself*”. David expressed humility of soul by wearing sackcloth and by fasting; *“My clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting?”* Psalms 35: 13

Another Hebrew word for humble is **kana**, which means “to bend the knee, to be brought into subjection, subdue.” God used this word in 2nd Chronicles 7: 14. If my people who are called by my name will “kana” surrender, bend subject... then they will and then I will!

II. Rewards of Humility

The greatest reward of humility is that of becoming like the Lord Jesus Christ. He identifies His character as being “*meek and lowly in heart.*” The word *lowly* means “not rising far from the ground,” and expresses being brought low with grief, lowly in spirit, of low degree.

Matthew 11: 28-29 *“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls.”*

Philippians 2: 7 *“Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownest him with glory and honor and didst set him over the works of thy hands.”*

Other rewards of humility are what every person longs for---true riches, high honor, and abundant life. *“By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honor, and life.”* Proverbs 22: 4

III. The Swift and Severe Punishment for Pride

Pride is believing that we have achieved what God and others have done for us and through us. Pride is reserving for myself the right to make final decisions. Pride is building all of life around me and my wants.

God's swift punishment on Pride is illustrated in many lives:

- **King Nebuchadnezzar** In Daniel 4: 30-37, when Nebuchadnezzar boasted, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" God immediately punished him. While the word was in the king's mouth God struck him with a mental breakdown and took away his kingdom until he worshiped the King of heaven.
- **King Herod Agrippa** was immediately punished publicly when an admirer made some comments about King Herod's "God" status and Herod did not stand against the statement but seemed to relish in it – and He was devoured on the spot. *"And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a God, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not of the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."* (Acts 12: 22-23)
- **Herod Agrippa** had the head of James the Apostle cut off and God did not kill him. He had the Apostle Peter put into Jail and God did not Kill him but when someone shouted out a statement of pride and he did not back away from it, God smote him on the spot.
- Remember the act of **King David** when he decided to count his soldiers and God punished him greatly for it. Out of all the things David did, counting his soldiers seemed to be one of the things that really put David and God at great odds. (2nd Samuel 24)
- And what about **Adam and Eve** in Eden as the serpent said, *"God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods."* (Genesis 3:5)
- **Lucifer** the blessed Angel in Heaven was also caught up in the pride trap. *"I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God...I will be like the most High"* (Isaiah 14: 13-14)

Pride is putting ourselves on an equal level with God-given authority.

Humility is abasing ourselves and submitting to the righteous rule of God and His authorities.

Humility is building a life around God and others rather than around myself. *"yea, all of you subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."* (1st Peter 5: 5)

Statements:

Hudson Taylor said, “All God’s giants have been weak men who did great things for God, because they reckoned on God being with them.”

If we refuse to humble ourselves, there are many others who are eager to help us do it.

Thinking too little of yourself is false humility and is just as wrong as thinking too much of yourself.

IV. Humility is our choice

God appeals to all of us to take the initiative to humble ourselves. If we fail to do this, He will humble us through circumstance, opposition, infirmities, or weaknesses.

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4: 10)

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” (1st Peter 5: 6)

We must **FIRST** and foremost **humble ourselves** in the eyes of the Lord, not necessarily in the eyes of others... He can see the true condition of our hearts, whether we are flattering ourselves with compliments or we are sincerely abasing ourselves and exalting Him.

Humility begins in our Spirit but pride begins in our heart!

Isaiah 57: 15 *“For this saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones”*

Proverbs 16: 19 *“Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.”*

Proverbs 29: 23 *“A man’s pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.”*

Pride is Taking credit for what God Gave us!

If we fail to recognize that everything we have and do is because of the mercy and grace of God, we will tend to think that we are responsible for our achievements. Thus, we will lift up our hearts in pride.

- When King Uzziah became strong. *“his heart was lifted up to his destruction”* (2nd Chronicles 26: 16) *“But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction...”* he went into the temple to burn incense on the altar and when corrected he became angry and God put leprosy on him, on his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord.

- When Nebuchadnezzar's heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was removed by God personally from his kingly throne. (Daniel 5: 20)
- When the prince of Tyrus became prosperous, God observed, *"Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God... Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers..."* (Ezekiel 28: 2, 10)

V. God's Checklist for Humility

The clearest guidance we could receive on how to humble ourselves is to follow Biblical instruction and to learn from God's word how to humble ourselves.

Colossians 3: 12 *"Put on therefore as the elect of God holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind.*

James 4: 6-10 tells us that we are to humble ourselves and God will lift us and give us grace.

It is clear that humility is the invitation to the grace of God!

1. Submit yourselves to God with total unconditional surrender to His will.
2. Resist the devil, allowing no secret sin or hindering weight.
3. Draw nigh to God by seeking His face through the Scriptures.
4. Cleanse your hands by confessing all sin and making restitution.
5. Purify your hearts, making sure there is no secrets desire to continue sinning.
6. Be afflicted, mourn, and weep. Grieve over the awfulness of sin.
7. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness.
8. Do all this in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

God hears those who come to Him in Humility!

Pray / Seek His face / Turn from sin...

Then He will hear from heaven and heal your land!

Even Wicked Ahab *"It came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth... then God responded "Seest thou how Ahab humbeth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days" (1st Kings 21: 27-29)*

Humility is the natural response of being in the presence of God! The fear of the Lord is the awareness that we are continually in the presence of the Lord. Thus humility and the fear of the lord are interdependent. Proverbs 22: 4 *“by humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honour and life.”*

Humility is expressed by a servant’s spirit that is excited about making others successful.

The best test of whether or not we view ourselves as servants is how we respond when treated like one.

Philippians 2: 7 *“Christ made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”*

Humility is a product of being His people and claiming His name.

Humility is the Foundation for Prayer!

Humility is the Foundation for Pursuit!

Humility is the Foundation for Purity!

See Matthew 5 (The Sermon on the Mount) where Jesus identifies those who are blessed:

- ***Poor Spirit***
- ***Mourn***
- ***Meek***
- ***Seeker of Righteousness***
- ***Merciful***
- ***Pure heart***
- ***Peacemaker***
- ***Persecuted***

Specific ways to Humble ourselves:

1. Welcome critics – bless those who curse you.
2. Volunteer for menial tasks.
3. Ask others about blind spots.
4. Express gratefulness.
5. Listen to others instead of talking about yourself.
6. Kneel in prayer.
7. Let authorities make final decisions.
8. Ask forgiveness for wrongs you have done.
9. Praise and honor others.
10. Take time for prayer and fasting.
11. Give sacrificially.
12. Give testimony to God's grace.
13. Deflect Praise.
14. Be a servant

Personal Evaluation:

- When people disagree with you, do you argue to defend your position or do you look at yourself?
- Do you end to cut off who ignore you?
- Are you hurt when those whom you dislike are honored?
- Do you find it difficult to admit you are wrong?
- Do you inwardly react when people criticize you?
- Do you give your opinions before being asked for them?
- Do you enjoy sharing about your accomplishments?
- Do you talk more than listen?
- Are you more concerned about your reputation or God's?
- Do you give the impression that you have no problems?
- Do you seek ways to humble yourself?
- Do you do things for praise and compliments?
- Do you accept praise rather than deflecting it?
- Are you quick to correct others when they make mistakes?
- Do you react when you do not receive credit you are due?
- Do you feel important?
- Do you compare yourself to others rather than God