

“HUMILITY”
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Book Note
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Nothing is more natural and beautiful and blessed than to bring nothing, that God may be all. I stand amazed at the thought of how little humility is sought after as the distinguishing feature of the discipleship of Jesus. How much proof there is that humility is not esteemed the cardinal virtue, the only root from which the graces can grow, the one indispensable condition of true fellowship with Jesus.

Meekness and lowness of heart are the chief marks by which they who follow the meek and lowly Lamb of God are to be known. The relation of the creature to God could only be one of unceasing, absolute, universal dependence. The life God bestows is imparted not once for all, but each moment continuously.

Pride or the loss of this humility is the root of every sin and evil. Pride and self-exaltation is the gate and the birth, and the curse, of hell. The lack of humility is the sufficient explanation of every defect and failure. Humility is not so much a grace or virtue along with others; it's the root of all.

The sense of entire nothingness, which comes when we see how truly God is all, and in which we make way for God to be all. Humility is simply acknowledging the truth of our position as creature and yielding to God His place. The humility and nothingness which leaves God free to be all. Meekness and lowliness of heart are to be the distinguishing features of the disciple as they were of the Master. There is nothing so natural to man, nothing so insidious and hidden from our sight, nothing so difficult and dangerous, as *pride*.

The life that has been revealed in Christ as the life that is now ours, and waits for our consent to gain possession and mastery of our whole being. Making humility the chief thing we admire in Him, the chief thing we ask of Him, the one thing for which we sacrifice all else.

Until a humility which will rest in nothing less than the end of death, of self; which gives up all the honor of men as Jesus did, to seek the honor that comes from God alone; which absolutely makes and counts itself nothing that God may be all, that the Lord alone may be exalted.

Pride ever seeks itself. The surrender of Himself (Jesus) to God, to allow Him to do in Him what He pleases, whatever men around might say or Him, or do to Him.

True humility takes its rise and finds its strength in the knowledge that it is God who works all in all; that our place is to yield to Him in perfect resignation and dependence, in full consent to be and do nothing of ourselves.

The root of all virtue and grace, of all faith and acceptable worship, is that we know that we have nothing but what we receive and bow in deepest humility to wait upon God for it. Jesus never for a moment thought of seeking His honor, or asserting His power to vindicate Himself.

There is opened up to you in Jesus, a heavenly humility of which you have hardly known, and through which a heavenly blessedness you possibly have never yet tasted can come to you. The primacy in the church is promoted to the humblest. Humility is the only ladder to honor in God's kingdom.

Everything is worthless that is not pervaded by deep, true humility, toward God and men. How little this is preached. How little is it practiced, how little the lack of it is felt or confessed. How few ever think of making it a distinct object of continual desire or prayer. My one need is humility. How much there may be of earnest and active religion while humility is sadly wanting.

When the testing time comes, or closer conversation gives fuller knowledge, it is only too painfully manifest that the grace of humility, as an abiding characteristic, is scarcely to be seen. His humility is not recognized as His chief glory; His first command, and our highest blessedness. We never grasp the fact that the absence of this grace is the secret cause why the power of God cannot do its mighty work.

Humility towards men will be the only sufficient proof that our humility before God is real. The only humility that is really ours is not that which we try to show before God in prayer, but that which we carry with, and carry out, in our ordinary conduct. Humility before God is nothing if not proved in humility before men.

The nothingness that makes room for God to prove His power. The church has so little taught it's sons and daughters that the humility of Christ is the first of the virtues, the best of all the graces and powers of the Spirit. The one infallible test of our holiness will be the humility before God and men which marks us.

Because men who are counted saints have proved in touchiness and haste and impatience, in self-defense and self-assertiveness, in sharp judgement and unkind words, that they did not each reckon others better than themselves, and that their holiness has but little in it of the meekness of the saints. Humility is nothing but the disappearance of self in the vision that God is all.

The holiest will be the humblest. Be careful of the spirit in which opinions are given. There is given the power of a perfect love that forgets itself and finds its blessedness in blessing others. There is no pride so dangerous, because none so subtle and insidious as the pride of holiness.

But there grows up, all unconsciously, a hidden habit of soul which feels complacency in its attainments, and cannot help seeing how far it is in advance of others.

While the only sure mark of the presence of God, the disappearance of self, was all the time wanting. Humility is the displacement of self by the enthronement of God, where God is all and self is nothing. The more abundant the experience of grace, the more intense the consciousness of being a sinner.

Being occupied with self, even amid the deepest self-aborrence, can never free us from self. Not to be occupied with your sin, but to be occupied with God, brings deliverance from self.

We may indeed have strong intellectual conviction and assurance of the truth while pride is kept in the heart; but that it makes the living faith, which has power with God an impossibility. We need only to think for a moment what faith is. Is it not the confession of nothingness and helplessness, the surrender and the waiting to let God work? Humility is simply the disposition which prepares the soul for living on trust.

And every, even the most secret breathing of pride, in self-seeking, self-will, self-confidence, or self-exaltation, is just the strengthening of that self which cannot enter the kingdom, or possess the things of the kingdom, because it refuses to allow God to be what He is and must be there—the All in All.

As long as we take glory from one another, as long as ever we seek and overcome and jealously guard the glory of this life, the honor and reputation that comes from men, we do not seek, and cannot receive, the glory that comes from God.

It is the humility that brings a soul to be nothing before God, that also removes every hindrance to faith, and makes it only fear lest it should dishonor Him by not trusting Him wholly.

We had no idea to what an extent pride and self were still secretly working within us, and how alone God, by His incoming and His mighty power, could cast them out. We might as well attempt to see without eyes, or live without breath, as believe or draw nigh to God or dwell in His love, without an all-pervading humility and lowliness of heart.

Have we not been making a mistake in taking so much trouble to believe, while all the time there was the old self in its pride seeking to possess itself of God's blessing and riches? Let our one desire and our fervent prayer be, to be humbled with Him, and like Him; let us accept gladly whatever can humble us before God or men;—this alone is the path to the glory of God.

Nothing can cure you of the desire of receiving glory from men, or of the sensitiveness and pain and anger which come when it is not given, but giving yourself to seek only the glory that comes from God.

You will be freed from the glory of men and of self, and be content and glad to be nothing. The deeper you sink in humility before Him, the nearer He is to fulfill the every desire of your faith.

Humility must lead us to die to self. Humility means the giving up of self, and the taking of the place of perfect nothingness before God. It is in the death to self that humility is perfected; a humility which makes itself of no reputation, which empties out itself, and takes the form of a servant.

That true fulness of the Spirit of Jesus, which can daily maintain His death to self and sin in its full power, and make humility the all-pervading spirit of our life. Humble yourself and descend each day into that perfect, helpless dependence upon God. Paul had learned that the place of humility is the place of blessing, of power, of joy. Paul prayed more, if not in word, then in wish, to be kept from the very things that would have made him humble (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Then he prays, more gladly do I glory in weakness, I take pleasure in whatever humbles me. Nothing but the presence of God can reveal and expel self. We must choose humility as our highest blessing. The highest lesson a believer has to learn is humility. Oh that every Christian who seeks to advance in holiness may remember this well.

Let us look at our lives in the light of this experience, and see whether we gladly glory in weakness, whether we take pleasure, as Paul did, in injuries, in necessities, in distress. How our own pleasure or honor are nothing, and how humiliation is in very truth which we take pleasure in. That whatever is said of us or done to us is lost and swallowed up in the thought that Jesus is all.

The weaker Paul feels, the lower he sinks, the greater his humiliation appear, the more the power and the presence of Christ are his portion, until he says, I am nothing. The word of his Lord brings ever deeper joy: "My grace is sufficient for you." Let us choose to be weak, to be low, to be nothing. Let humility be to us joy and gladness.

How am I to conquer this pride? Do what God says in your work: Humble yourself. Trust Him to do what He says is His work. He will exalt you. Take every opportunity of humbling yourself before God and man.

Accept with gratitude everything that God allows from within or without, from friend or enemy, in nature or in grace, to remind you of your need of humbling. Reckon humility to be indeed the mother-virtue, your very first duty before God, the one perpetual safeguard of the soul, and set your heart upon its as the source of all blessing.

What depth of pride, there is of unwillingness to count oneself and to be counted nothing, to submit absolutely to God. What utter impotence there is in all our efforts, and in all our prayers for God's help, to destroy the hideous monster of pride. Acts produce habits, habits breed disposition, dispositions form the will, and the rightly-formed will is character.

The highest glory of the creature is in being only a vessel, to receive and enjoy and show forth the glory of God. It can do this only as it is willing to be nothing in itself, that God may be all. When God can again have His rightful place in us, He will lift us up. As the all-pervading life of God possesses you, there will be nothing so natural, and nothing so sweet, as to be nothing, with not a thought or wish for self, because all is occupied with Him who fills all.

We never knew that humility, absolute, abiding, Christlike humility and self-effacement, pervading and marking our whole life with God and man, was the most essential element of the life of the holiness we sought for. May God teach us to believe that to be humble, to be nothing in His presence, is the highest attainment, and the fullest blessing, of the Christian life.