

Becoming a Great Leader

Lesson 4-2: Humility

Discussion Guide – Confidentiality Reminder

One Word Check-in

Update – Personal, Business, Leadership

“... Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’”
1 Peter 5:5b (ESV)

Make humility the root of your leadership. A tree can only grow from its root, and your leadership will grow out of your humility or pride. How you see others, including your family, your co-workers, your customers, and people in your community is defined by your humility. If you look down on people, it eventually comes to the surface, especially in times of stress. Humility is the starting point for being a person others desire to follow. According to Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great*, leaders at the highest level of leadership “display a powerful mixture of personal humility and indomitable will. They're incredibly ambitious, but their ambition is first and foremost for the cause, for the organization and its purpose, not themselves.”

Complete humility can never be fully achieved, it can only be continually sought after. Increasing your humility and decreasing your ego is a daily process. This is difficult, and it requires meeting other people's needs instead of stroking your own ego. People will not see it at first but over time, they will see you are changing for the better. By the way, the moment you think you have achieved humility, you are prideful.

Humble people use “I” less and “we” more. Any time you hear people use the words “I, my and mine” consistently in a conversation, you know that they are self-centered. They might say terms like “my staff” or “I did this ...” or “I am a self-made man or woman.” Likewise, if a person wants to talk about themselves in a conversation more than listening and understanding the other person, they have a pride problem.

The opposite of humility is pride. Pride springs forth the idea that what is accomplished is all about you and not everyone else that contributed to a positive result. Pride is relatively easy to see in others, but difficult to see in yourself. Pride builds our ego, and it can become toxic as it leads to arrogance. No one wants to be around nor follow an arrogant person. Pride tells us we are always right and keeps us from asking for help. When prideful, we seek to be the center of attention and do not listen. Pride keeps you from developing deep connections with others.

Pride is the default of the human personality because we have a basic desire to be praised. Our actions tend to promote ourselves rather than to deflect praise to those that deserve it most.

Shared Experiences:

- Describe a person that you see as humble? What is it about them that you want to emulate?
- Can someone share about their struggle with pride? How is it manifested?
- What is the real you like? What type of mask do you wear?
- Can someone be vulnerable enough to share how you believe people view you on a scale of complete humility to complete pridefulness?
- As you have processed this lesson, what is the one thing that you need to change?

Bottom line: Whether we clothe ourselves with humility or pride, that is the filter that people use to view everything that we do and say. If your desire is to lead people well, find ways to decrease your pride and increase your humility. It begins with seeking help from the Lord. Jesus is the only perfect example of a leader that did not become proud; you cannot do this without Him.

One Word Check-out

Dig Deeper

Want to learn more?

- *Book:* [Humility](#) by Andrew Murray. This was written in 1890 and is a very humbling perspective. You cannot read this without looking deeply within yourself.
- *Video:* [Nelson Mandela Explains the Importance of Humility](#) | The Oprah Winfrey Show | Oprah Winfrey Network. This is an awesome video!
- *Video:* [The X Factor of Truly Great Leadership](#) by Jim Collins at Nordic Business Forum 2014
- *Video:* [Leadership Explained in 5 minutes](#) by Simon Sinek
- *Article:* [11 Signs You Are Proudful: How to Get Rid of Pride in Your Heart](#) by Cyril Abello published at inspiringtips.com
- *Article:* [What Unhealthy Pride Looks Like-Subtle Signs of Pride in your Co-workers, Spouse, Family, Church Staff and Everybody Else Around You, The Secretly Proudful Person](#) by Ronald McDonald published at saddlebackleather.com
- *Video:* [A Lesson In Humility](#) - Bishop TD Jakes at SOAR Africa 2019

Quotes:

“I have seen competent leaders who stood in front of a platoon and all they saw was a platoon. But great leaders stand in front of a platoon and see it as 44 individuals, each of whom has aspirations, each of whom wants to live, each of whom wants to do good.” General Norman Schwarzkopf

“You can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want!” Zig Ziglar

“Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less,” C.S. Lewis wrote in Mere Christianity

“A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.” C.S. Lewis

“I speak to everyone in the same way, whether he is the garbage man or the president of the university.”
Albert Einstein

Additional Scripture related to humility:

“Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.” Proverbs 11:2 (NLT)

“True humility and fear of the Lord lead to riches, honor, and long life.” Proverbs 22:4 (NLT)

“He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way.” Psalm 25:9 (NLT)

“So Jesus explained, ‘I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. In fact, the Father will show him how to do even greater works than healing this man. Then you will truly be astonished.’” John 5:19-20 (NLT)