

# Humility: The Freedom that Comes when Pride Goes

Part 6: God's Mechanism of Promotion

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JUNE 2ND, 2019

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## Full Text (for reading on your own)

*Humility is most tested in the place of success.*

I have an acquaintance / friend who is a very powerful young minister. What a sweet man of God! He recently posted on Facebook something to this effect: “our prayer life indicates our humility.”

Remember a key element of what humility is ... is just dependency on God.

Prayer, therefore, is really a good litmus test. How earnest are you feeling about your need to pray is literally equal to how dependent you are walking upon the Lord.

Now, that might seem counter-intuitive because a lot of times, when we're doing really well, we don't feel earnest to pray at all ...

Humility is most tested in the place of success.

## *Condemnation and Entitlement: 2 Sides of Pride*

I remember where I was: it was 11am or so and I was walking into my woodworking shop (where my desk is) and as I was walking into the woodshop I heard the Spirit of the Lord speak to me very clearly sort of out of left field.

He asked me “Is entitlement the same spirit as condemnation?”

He asked me. I knew Holy Spirit was trying to tell me something so I thought to myself “apparently it is!” He started to then show me the following. It's very simple, but very helpful!

Condemnation is pride plus failure. Condemnation is pride in the context of failure. (Pride + Failure = Condemnation)

Romans 8:1 says “*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who<sup>[a]</sup> do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*” When we focus on our flesh, our ability, our performance, what that produces is condemnation. There is NO condemnation if you are in Christ

Jesus, but when your focus is on your performance, when your focus is on yourself, it will produce condemnation because you will see your failure.

The key to walking condemnation free is to be born-again, know what Jesus did on the Cross, and then have your mind so renewed that you do not focus on your flesh but instead walk by the Spirit! If you walk by the Spirit, you will NOT gratify the desires of the flesh.

So, pride + failure will lead to condemnation.

Remember what the Spirit asked me, though. He said “is entitlement the same spirit as condemnation?” I said “apparently!”

Entitlement is pride + victory.

A verse for that would be 1 Corinthians 4:7 in which Paul says “*And what do you have that you did not receive?*” Can you tell me about that? Can you tell me about the things that you have that you did not receive? Can you make a list for me? Tell me about all those victories that you’ve got that were by your performance. Tell me about all those abilities that you have that you gave yourself. Please remind me why it is that you are boasting.

I told Brad one time that the Lord was working with me on humility. Brad gave me this sheet of yellow legal-type paper with probably 30 lines on it. It was really a great exercise in which he said “I’m just going to hang out here, you take however much time you need ... 30 minutes, whatever you need ... I want you to write down all the things that you’ve done for the gift that you have.” He said “really think about it; I don’t want you to miss anything.” About 10 minutes later, I said “I think I’m done” and the page was blank.

“... *what do you have that you did not receive?*”

And then Brad gave me a frame for the piece of paper. So to the side of my desk is a blank sheet of paper, framed. It’s the list of things that I’ve done for the gift that I have.

*Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?*”

People will step into a place of victory and in stepping into the place of victory, the same spirit of pride that caused them to live in condemnation will now cause them to live in entitlement which is actually a more dangerous place - because your heart will be drawn away from the Lord.

Condemnation will actually sometimes draw you closer to the Lord. I’m not saying you should live in it, but I am saying entitlement will draw you all the way away from Him.

A man is tested by the praises afforded to him.

Proverbs 30:8b-9a says *“Give me neither poverty nor riches - feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, and say, “Who is the Lord?”* Agur (who wrote Proverbs 30) was saying “don’t let me be too successful, I might reject You.”

That does not need to be the case for any of us in Christ. But, some of the new wine that the Lord wants to pour out will burst you ... if we don’t have the character to walk in humility.

Character doesn’t have to do with influence, character has to do with what you’ve received from the heart of the Father - that produces character. Look at the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. That’s character right there! If someone had all the fruit of the Spirit it would be character to the extreme - way beyond what the 10 Commandments require. Love, joy, peace, patience ... character to the extreme. It’s a greater covenant that comes through walking in the Spirit.

Entitlement is the same spirit as condemnation. Both are pride. Both an identity apart from God. Both going beyond what God has said about you. Both not being dependent upon God.

Condemnation is not dependent upon the atonement that was accomplished at the Cross. It hears of the work of the Cross but says “BUT my performance. BUT my performance. I know about that, BUT my performance.” You’ve stepped out of dependency. You’ve trusted in yourself not in the Lord. Condemnation.

Entitlement says (with a pleased-with-yourself tone) “My performance!”

For years I would notice this process where it seemed like I would be in a place of condemnation (vulnerability alert) in my walk with God which would actually cause me to come to Him to deal with the condemnation which would cause me to receive tremendous grace which would put me in a place of victory and I would end up back in a place of condemnation. Do you know why?

I didn’t know how to steward victory and not step into entitlement.

You’ll be tested by the praises afforded to you.

### *Equipped for the Positive Side of the Number Line*

The body of Christ mostly struggles on the negative side of the number line - trying to get back to a place of “neutrality” with God that says “my sins really have been covered and my lawless deeds really are remembered no more.” And that is a valiant place to be - to enter the rest of God - to go from being condemned to a place of “neutrality” in the sense that “I don’t have a debt with God; Jesus took the whole debt!”

God in this season is saying “I want my people to be trained in the positive side of the number line.” You have to be trained in the positive side of the number line.

Do you remember all the renewing of your mind you've done in order to be transformed according to the finished work of the Cross that you can confidently affirm that "I'm the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus?" Wasn't there a renewing of your mind required to come to that place of transformation?

I'm saying that's actually "zero" on the number line. Now, on one hand it's a million billion on the number line because you are at peace with God ... what better can you get!?

But for the purpose for what I'm talking about today, I'm saying "that's zero on the number line and there's a whole positive side of the number line where the blessing of the Lord is making you rich. And He's wondering if you can walk in that space without forgetting ... Him.

It's a different level of humility.

I almost want to call this a new series: "Humility 201." Everything we've done so far I would call "Humility 101." That's not to disparage it. If we just accomplished that, it would be incredible! We're talking about grace overall and grace is given to the humble. So we are talking about humility and everything we've done so far is basically this: "humility is dependency upon God." That's everything that we've done so far! "He just wants you to invite Him in."

The reason people struggle to be dependent upon God is because they think "He's not a very present help in the time of trouble; He's the guy that bites my head off if I am in trouble." When we don't know the love of God we can't actually walk in a place of humility and a place of dependency because we think the nature of God's relationship with us is "get yourself together ... then come to Me."

But we've learned the heart of the Father is just pure agape love for us and His terms of connection are this "come to Me."

We've not come to Mt. Sinai which says "get your performance together." We've come to Mt. Zion where there's a better covenant in which the blood of Jesus Christ has made you righteous. You are in a Covenant of Peace so you can come boldly before the presence of the Lord!

### *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Spirit*

Romans 14:17 is a framework. You can travel so far on this simple framework!

*"for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but **righteousness** and **peace** and **joy** in the Holy Spirit."*

The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking. What's that mean? Go on a hunger strike? No; that would be a misinterpretation of His Word!

Paul was referring to the Judaizers. He was saying “you don’t need to make yourself right with God by eating this or not eating that or drinking this or not drinking that ... it doesn’t matter ... circumcision avails nothing ... it’s from the heart that proceeds clean thoughts or evil thoughts ... it’s from the heart, it’s a matter of the heart, not a matter of the outside of the cup.”

So Paul was saying “the kingdom of God is not going to be had by you through eating and drinking in observance of laws.” The kingdom of God is in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Now, I love the consistency of God’s Word. He said seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33). So what’s the first thing in this list? Righteousness! Isn’t God brilliant!

If you’ve ever tried to write a paper before, you can’t keep phrasing the same throughout the whole paper. You accidentally change your English conventions all the time and it ends up being a mess. God - moving through MULTIPLE human authors who wrote under His inspiration over MULTIPLE generations somehow manages for all of the words to be lined up and to work!

I think it was Derek Prince (a very well read man) who in reading the Bible concluded “no man wrote this book!” One of the things I’m sure he saw is that the internal consistency of the Word is literally supernatural.

So we see that the kingdom of God is not in eating or drinking but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Righteousness. Seek first Who’s righteousness? Seek first HIS righteousness! There is so much of the church (it breaks my heart) that’s seeking first SELF righteousness! You do not find the kingdom by seeking first self righteousness! You find condemnation ... or entitlement! This is just like the Pharisees. “Oh we kept all the laws. I don’t know if you met US yet! I’m glad I’m not like that guy - that tax collector. You know, the sinners?” Entitlement.

You seek first HIS righteousness. He became sin who knew no sin that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Now watch what happens when you get a revelation of His righteousness ... the kingdom of God is not in eating or drinking but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, having been justified (or made righteous) by faith, you have PEACE with God! (Romans 5:1) So the righteousness revelation leads into the revelation of the covenant of peace in which you stand.

That’s awesome! The covenant of peace is KNOWING that He’s a loving Father. That’s knowing there’s nothin you can do that can cause Him to be sideways with you. The mountains may be removed (Isa. 54) “but I will not be angry with you” says the Lord! You are in a covenant of peace with God!

What comes next? Righteousness, peace, and JOY in the Holy Spirit! What's joy? In the presence of the Lord is fullness of joy! (Ps. 16) When you know that God cannot be angry with you. When you know that you are righteous by the blood of Jesus by faith. When you know that's caused you to be in a covenant of peace with God - that He can't get sideways with you - do you know what you'll do? You'll come boldly before His presence ... and in His presence is what? FULLNESS OF JOY!

The word of God interprets the word of God! Isn't it incredible how all those things come together in that simple phrase "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." It REALLY is the sequence!

One of the greatest marks of Christian maturity, therefore, is joy!

### *Testimony: Hungering for God's Word! (Laura)*

We were in discussion (at house church) about "He just wants to be with you." Our life kind of got thrown upside down at the end of February with Anna's diagnosis. I had been feeling even before that the Lord was drawing me closer to Him. In my almost 15 years with the Lord reading the Word was never a consistent thing that I did. I was just getting fed in other ways - listening or watching sermons, going to women's group, whatever. I don't know if I was intimidated or what, but reading the Bible was never (a consistent) part of my walk ... until I realized I needed HIM!

He's the Word! I couldn't do it on my own. I needed to find a different strength. In the midst of all that and having Renee's sermon - the urgency and desire to be in His Word every day is the strongest it has ever been. There has been such a peace, such a revelation, and grace that has fallen upon our family in the circumstances and I praise God for drawing me back to Him in the most pure way! God is so good and His Word is true!

(From Peter) Lois has told me she often prays for "hunger for God." Do you know that even hunger is a gift? Faith is a gift. Ephesians 2 says that faith is "not of ourselves that no one may boast!" Even faith to receive righteousness is a gift! What part did I play? None except being loved!

Laura then prayed for everyone: "Father, thank You for how good You are, Lord and that you continue to draw us closer to You in personal ways! I pray you touch every heart. I pray an increase of hunger for YOU - for your Word, for your revelation, for your presence. I pray Your presence fall heavy upon us Lord and that you give us revelation of hunger for You to continue to strengthen us and renew our minds to all that You have for us Lord - that we can step into what you have for us in this season Father."

### *The Testimony of One*

Which sort of testimony am I living for? The testimony of ONE! It's the type of testimony Jesus died for. Again, we live in a statistical era where everyone wants a dataset. It's OK, but God wants a heart.

That's how He moves. That's also how He transforms society. What an upside down gospel! "I am going to transform hearts one-by-one and 12 people will turn the world upside down with a transformed heart." Or think of this: one life that was always completely transformed could in 33 years (but really just in 3 years) could change the world forever!

### *Word about Abortion and Prayer for our President (24:00 - 32:40)*

Please listen to the recording for the following:

- A word on abortion
- An eternal perspective about speaking up concerning abortion
- How to be acknowledged before the angels
- Praying for our President, Donald J. Trump
- "Tell My people not to be shaken"
- A word about the preparation of Haman's gallows

### *We Can CHOOSE Humility*

Let's look at Luke 18:9-14 *"Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men —extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; **for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**"*

When we're talking about humility, we are talking about positioning ourselves.

This verse reveals a secret. It says "he who humbles himself ..." If God needs to humble you, YOU didn't do your job. If circumstances need to humble me, I didn't do MY job - because we can actually humble OURSELVES!

Humility is a position of the heart that we can position our heart in. This is powerful. Humility is not a nebulous thing. I can actually position myself. I can CHOOSE to humble myself.

The Lord says this "when you humble yourself - when you position yourself - you just positioned yourself for promotion." Humility is God's mechanism of promotion.

## *Humility Positions us for Promotion, Right Relationships, and Revelation!*

Humility looks like dependence. That's the heart of it and that's what we've really been ministering to almost from a pastoral slant because we can have these layers in our heart that keep us from operating in dependence because we have a fear of how God might receive us or not receive us - or what His terms of connection are, or what He expects from us relationally - and He's saying "I just want you to invite Me in." This is not Sinai! So we've been ministering to this dependency.

Having ministered to this heart of dependency, now I am switching to what I would all "humility 201" because humility positions you for certain things. The 3 things I would like to talk about over the coming weeks are these 3 things:

1. Humility positions you for promotion. (see above)

2. Humility positions you for right relationships.

Do you want to know where strip comes from in relationships? P-R-I-D-E. When you have humility, relationships flow! Paul says "so far as it depends upon YOU, be at peace with all men." Do you know what YOU can do that depends upon YOU that will cause you to be at peace with all men? Humble yourself.

Your family could have twice as good relationships 3-5 months from now by everyone choosing humility as often as possible. No one's perfect, please! But humility gives people room to not be perfect.

Humility is dependency. It is a position we can put ourselves in. You can choose to humble yourself. It's an issue of the heart, not an issue of circumstance. When we choose to humble ourselves, 3 things (that I'm going to highlight) will happen. (1) Promotion because humility is God's mechanism or promotion. Another thing will happen (2) your relationships will just clean up!

In the world, people often have jacked-up relationships. I am not just talking about love interests, I am talking about their relationship with their boss, their relationship with their co-workers, their relationship with their clients, their relationships with employess, their relationships with their aunt, their uncle, their mom, their dad, their kids, their wife, their spouse. Many people really struggle with relationships. And, sad to say, many people in the body of Christ struggle with this sort of thing.

Humility won't maybe cure all of it, but, boy, it will cure most of it!

In order for there to be division and strife in a church, there has to be pride. Humility will even protect relationships in a church. Humility will protect those things.

You may say “yeah, but someone else could get out of humility ... I can't control what someone else could do!” Exactly. That's why Paul said “so far as it depends upon YOU be at peace with all men.”

3. Humility is the KEY of knowledge The last thing I want to highlight about what humility will do is this ... Humility is THE key of knowledge. Humility will cause revelation to RUSH into your life!

So, those will be 3 fruits of humility that we will try to address. Remember at the start of this message I said there is condemnation, which is an evidence of pride, but there is also entitlement ...

Watch what we are talking about now. We are talking about promotion, having tons of revelation rushing into your life because of a positioning of humility, and having really right relationships in your life. When you have really right relationships in your life, it causes you to get promoted in whatever sphere you are in. Dani Johnson says that people that can solve big problems - which are often people problems - end up getting promoted in their industry.

My point is this: these pieces of humility will position you for promotion in every area of your life. Humility is God's mechanism of promotion, BUT it will take greater humility (or humility 201) to stay in a place of humility all the more in a place of victory - to stay in a place of dependency all the more, even when ...

Renee mentioned in her recent sermon that she had a friend that she was writing up dependency scriptures for to help them with a struggle they were having in their life. Then she found out the person had gotten breakthrough in that area and she thought “oh, I don't need to write those scriptures up now.” Renee felt all of Heaven saying “wait a second!” All the more in the place of victory they need the dependency scriptures!

### *Humility / Dependency: The Essence of Childlikeness*

Let's look again at Luke 18:9-14 *“Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; **for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**”*

Do you know what the very next verses are?

*“Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Him and said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.” (Lk. 18:15-17)*

The kingdom of God belongs to children.

Let’s use our powers of context: what is it that Jesus was highlighting about children? That they needed their diaper changed? Not exactly. That they like to play more than they like to do work? Not exactly. What was He highlighting?

Humility.

Do you see it? Jesus just told a parable about humility and then He says “the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” When the children entered stage right Jesus thought “here’s my example to explain EXACTLY what I was just saying!”

The mark of being child-like is to be dependent - to be humble.

When you see Jesus say “the kingdom belongs to children - to ones such as these” you think “how can I be child-like?” How can I be child-like (not childish, but child-like)? Be dependent. That’s the essence of a child. They are SO dependent on the adults that are taking care of them in their life. They are dependent on the adults to teach them everything that they know. They are dependent on the adults to keep them safe. They are dependent on the adults to provide for them.

You say “but that doesn’t apply for me with God.” Every one of those things can work with God. He will PROTECT you. He will LEAD you. He will PROVIDE for you. He will TEACH you everything that you need to know.

Dependency is the mark of child-likeness and being child-like is what causes you to inherit the kingdom!

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Everything that you’re supposed to be seeking first - the kingdom - is coming through your dependency. Being like a child causes you to inherit the very thing you are supposed to be seeking first. Wow!

And how do you come into that place of dependency, that place of trust, that place of humility? It’s through knowing His love ... which starts like this: “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Then you come into His presence with confidence like these little children walking up to Him.

People around Him that are more religious may say “no, no, no, get yourself straight before you go to Him” yet Jesus is there saying “I see a child - do not forbid those. I want them to come to Me ... I just want you to invite Me in.”

## Increasing Hope for Humility

I've been hearing humility as people are talking in house church. I'm hearing testimonies. I'm hearing how people's verbiage has changed. I'm hearing humility and pride becoming part of our common language as a body and seeing how it starts to apply to so much.

I'm so excited for us in that. Humility is the beauty of Heaven. (Ps. 149 says the Lord beautifies the humble). Our hearts are made in God's image and we see little kids and they are so cute because of the dependency. We see that sweetness that comes from not thinking they're providing for themselves, but just being provided for. That's what's beautiful before God - the humility of His servants.

I want to encourage us to increase our expectation / hope for humility. Humility is not just about getting to “neutrality” and not being in pride. It goes beyond neutrality to say “can I walk in great spheres of influence, great success, and great victory - maintaining a heart stance of humility?” It requires a different level of focus - a different level of attention.

Proverbs 23:1-3 says *“When you sit down to eat with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you; and put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food.”* Solomon (the richest man in the world) is saying “if you are one who is still trying to get your identity in something else: the what you have's, the who you know's, and all of these sorts of things ... if you are prideful. If you haven't just got your identity solidly set in God ... be especially careful when you are given access to power and influence and wealth.” He was saying “you better put a knife to your throat and remind yourself that what you are about to come into will be a bondage (deceptive food) if you step into it out of pride.”

Notice he wasn't saying “put a knife to your throat as you eat with your family on a daily basis.” He was saying “when you step into influence, when you step into access, now you have to govern your heart with a much more keen attention.”

In the greater place of victory is the greater opportunity for pride to manifest in a more damaging context - which is entitlement. Condemnation sometimes will lead you to God (sometimes). Entitlement will always lead you away from Him.

I want to encourage us that there's more with humility. Don't just kind of get dependency.

I've been praying about pruning and asking God to take my pruning process from 3 weeks to 3 days to 3 hours to 3 minutes. The amount of pride I have in fruit (successes or victories) will determine the length and the hurt of the pruning. But if that's been circumcised already in my heart then when the branch is cut off I didn't have identity in it and the pruning is very easy.

What I am saying is "I'm becoming passionate in my own life for what could it look like to walk in increasing humility such that pruning is not a trial." There are deeper levels of humility. Humility positions you for promotion and God wants us to learn how to walk very well upon the high places.

How do you walk very well upon the high places? Very low. Very low. Very low. Very low. Very low.

Some people are in the dirt and they say "I don't have a choice between low and standing up." But when you are on the mountain top you can stand up, but God's saying "if you'll choose to be very low that's where you'll get to go."

We choose to be low.