

## Lesson 50 - The Character of Humility

1. What do the humble receive? **1 Peter 5:5, James 4:6**

**EGW:** Cultivate the precious grace of humility. This will make you valuable in the sight of Heaven, for "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Those who esteem themselves more highly than they should, make themselves a center of thought. They neglect their duty to their fellow-beings, for they do not cultivate that tender, caretaking spirit which should characterize the servant of Christ. All their care is spent upon the interests of self; but God would have us show thoughtful courtesy to others. We are not to set up our individual opinions as infallible. We are to respect the opinions of others. God would have us counsel together. We should be tractable, teachable, kind to each other, not striving which shall be esteemed as the greatest and have the highest honors. {ST, March 9, 1888 par. 5}

2. What will being humble towards God result in? **1 Peter 5:6, James 4:10, Psalms 91:14, Psalms 69:29**

**EGW:** Christ was manifested as the Saviour of men. The people were not to trust in their own works, in their own righteousness, or in themselves in any way, but in the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. In him the Advocate with the Father was revealed. Through him the invitation was given, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." This invitation comes sounding down along the lines to us today. Let not pride, or self-esteem, or self-righteousness keep any one from confessing his sins, that he may claim the promise: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Keep nothing back from God, and neglect not the confession of your faults to the brethren when they have a connection with them. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." Many a sin is left unconfessed, to be confronted in the day of final accounts; better far to see your sins now, to confess them, and put them away, while the atoning sacrifice pleads in your behalf. Do not dislike to learn the will of God on this subject. The health of your soul, the unity of your brethren, may depend upon the course you pursue in these things. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, "casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." {RH, November 28, 1893 par. 6}

3. What did the "publican" do that showed humility? **Luke 18:13-14**

**EGW:** The publican had gone to the temple with other worshipers, but he soon drew apart from

them as unworthy to unite in their devotions. Standing afar off, he "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast," in bitter anguish and self-abhorrence. He felt that he had transgressed against God, that he was sinful and polluted. He could not expect even pity from those around him, for they looked upon him with contempt. He knew that he had no merit to commend him to God, and in utter self-despair he cried, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." He did not compare himself with others. Overwhelmed with a sense of guilt, he stood as if alone in God's presence. His only desire was for pardon and peace, his only plea was the mercy of God. And he was blessed. "I tell you," Christ said, "this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." {COL 151.3}

4. What position ought we to take if we are a humble person? **Luke 14:8-11**

**EGW:** "It came to pass," the record says, "as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day, that they watched him. . . . And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place, and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." {RH, October 2, 1900 par. 10}

In his parables Christ held up the mirror of his Father's mind. Every insult shown by man to his fellow man only made him more conscious of their need of his divine sympathy. He realized the harm Satan was trying to do through the power of position and wealth. In his human nature he felt the need of the ministrations of heavenly angels. He felt the need of his Father's help, as no other human being has ever felt it. He was himself winning, as a powerful warrior, a victory in behalf of the world that he had created; and under the most trying circumstances his faith did not fail. He placed himself in his Father's hands, and every insult he endured enabled him better to understand man's great need. As our substitute and surety, he felt every pang of anguish that we can ever feel. He himself suffered, being tempted. {RH, October 2, 1900 par. 11}

5. What do humble people not worry about having associated to them? **Matthew 23:7-12 [Hint: it is not the specifics in the verses but a general term applied]**

**EGW:** We are not to place dependence upon man, nor expect homage from our fellow-men. Jesus says, "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." We should remember

that the best and most intelligent of men have only limited ability, and we should pray for discernment to understand what is each man's true place. We are not to be blind; we may see the prejudices which are cherished by those with whom we associate, we may see the errors that hinder their religious growth, we may discern their instability of opinion, their partiality of action; but because we see thus, we should not feel that we are superior to them, measuring ourselves among ourselves, and leaning to our own understanding. As we see the deficiencies of others, it should lead us to be less self-confident, to be jealous of our own spirit and action. {RH, July 22, 1890 par. 8}

6. What are humble people to be like in learning? **Matthew 18:3-4**

**EGW:** It was not enough for the disciples of Jesus to be instructed as to the nature of His kingdom. What they needed was a change of heart that would bring them into harmony with its principles. Calling a little child to Him, Jesus set him in the midst of them; then tenderly folding the little one in His arms He said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." The simplicity, the self-forgetfulness, and the confiding love of a little child are the attributes that Heaven values. These are the characteristics of real greatness. {DA 437.1}

7. To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly is a what regarding God? **Micah 6:8**

**EGW:** The Lord's measure of correct character is given in the words of the prophet Micah: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" There are men who may be represented as doing justly and loving mercy, but who have not the true principle within them, the faith that will lead them to walk humbly with the Lord. They may seem to have every specification needed but that of sanctified faith, but lacking this, they lack all. The life is not sanctified, and without this sanctification of motive and purpose, it is impossible to please God. God has given men and women affections and intellect that they may appreciate the character of God as it was revealed in the earthly life of Christ, and through faith in Christ reveal the same attributes. Christ is to be manifest in the life of every true believer. Each is to prove in his life his right to the claim he makes for citizenship in the kingdom of Christ and of God. {RH, September 30, 1909 par. 5}

8. What do those in humility and fear receive, if not in this life but the next? **Proverbs 22:4**

**EGW:** If we are Christians at all, we must be Christians always, looking constantly to Jesus, practicing His lessons, doing His work. Then we are safe. Those who live the word of Christ, as well as hear it, will in due time reap that which they have sown. God's Word, carefully and prayerfully studied, will

keep all well-balanced. The Ruler of the nations has protested against man working out his own will, trampling on righteous principles and ignoring the wisdom of God. He declares, "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent" [Proverbs 28:20]. The books of heaven mark him as one guilty of fraud. "Nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" [1 Timothy 6:17]. "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life" [Proverbs 22:4]. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" [Hebrews 13:5]. {15MR 69.3}

9. What comes after humility as a result of being humble? **Proverbs 15:33, Proverbs 18:12**

**EGW:** Before honor is humility. To fill a high place before men, Heaven chooses the worker who, like John the Baptist, takes a lowly place before God. The most childlike disciple is the most efficient in labor for God. The heavenly intelligences can co-operate with him who is seeking, not to exalt self, but to save souls. He who feels most deeply his need of divine aid will plead for it; and the Holy Spirit will give unto him glimpses of Jesus that will strengthen and uplift the soul. From communion with Christ he will go forth to work for those who are perishing in their sins. He is anointed for his mission; and he succeeds where many of the learned and intellectually wise would fail. {DA 436.3}

10. What act is a show of humility if done properly? **Psalms 35:13**

**EGW:** We are living in the most solemn period of this world's history. The destiny of earth's teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future well-being, and also the salvation of other souls, depends upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of truth. Every follower of Christ should earnestly inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon his Word, especially upon the scenes of the Judgment. We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us; we are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey. {GC88 601.1}

11. What does the Lord do with the desires of the humble? **Psalms 10:17**

**EGW:** In this matter, genius, logic, and eloquence will not avail. Those who have a humble, trusting, contrite heart, God accepts, and hears their prayer; and when God helps, all obstacles will be overcome. How many men of great natural abilities and high scholarships have failed when placed in

positions of responsibility, while those of feeble intellect, with less favorable surroundings, have been wonderfully successful. The secret was: The former trusted to themselves, while the latter united with Him who is wonderful in counsel and mighty in working to accomplish what He will. {4T 539.1}

12. What will God do for the humble person? **Job 22:29**

**EGW:** Impressions and feelings are no sure evidence that a person is being led by the Lord. Satan will, if he is unsuspected, give feelings and impressions. These are not correct and safe guides. All should acquaint themselves thoroughly with the evidences of our faith, and the great study should be how they can adorn their profession, and bear fruit to the glory of God.--Review and Herald, No. 31, 1886. {PH048 30.1}

Job 22:21, 22, 29: Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee. Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart. . . . When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person. {PH048 30.2}

At times a deep sense of our unworthiness will send a thrill of terror through the soul; but this is no evidence that God has changed toward us, or we toward God. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust him as fully in the darkness as in the light.--Review and Herald, No. 18, 1881. {PH048 30.3}

13. What do the humble turn away from? **2 Chronicles 7:14**

**EGW:** For stricken Israel there was but one remedy,--a turning away from the sins that had brought upon them the chastening hand of the Almighty, and a turning to the Lord with full purpose of heart. To them had been given the assurance, "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." It was to bring to pass this blessed result that God continued to withhold from them the dew and the rain until a decided reformation should take place. {RH, August 21, 1913 par. 14}

14. And when the humble does that, what does God do regarding the times they did not turn from it but will now because they humbled themselves? **2 Chronicles 7:14**

**EGW:** And in the prophetic prayer offered at the dedication of the temple whose services Hezekiah and his associates were now restoring, Solomon had prayed: "When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel." 1 Kings 8:33, 34. The seal of divine approval had been placed upon this prayer; for at its close fire had come down from heaven to consume the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord had filled the temple. See 2 Chronicles 7:1. And by night the Lord had appeared to Solomon, to tell him that his prayer had been heard, and that mercy would be shown those who should worship there. The gracious assurance was given: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." Verses 14, 15. {RH, April 22, 1915 par. 11}

15. What do those that refuse to be humble not walk in? **Jeremiah 44:10**

**EGW:** There are some who love the society of the world, who think it is a great deal better than the society of those who are not considered so elevated and who do not know, as they judge, half so much. Teachers, know enough to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, to wear the yoke of Christ. Then you will become fools for Christ's sake. It is not the so-called wisdom of worldlings that God accounts anything. He says their wisdom is foolishness; but to them the wisdom of God is foolishness. Do you desire to have the wisdom of God? Humble yourselves before God, walk in the way of his commandments, be determined that you will make the most of every educational privilege, gather every ray of divine light, practice the light, bring it into your life and character, and thus show that you have learned of Jesus. {Advocate, January 1, 1902 par. 7}

16. Who is the greatest example of someone being humble? **Philippians 2:5, 8**

**EGW:** In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. But He stepped still lower in the path of humiliation. "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:8. As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of the common priest, so Christ took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." Isaiah 53:5. {DA 25.1}

17. Who is one of the greatest examples showing what the opposite of humility will bring? **Exodus 10:3**

**EGW:** At midnight "there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead." All the first-born in the land, "from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle" had been smitten by the destroyer. Throughout the vast realm of Egypt the pride of every household had been laid low. The shrieks and wails of the mourners filled the air. King and courtiers, with blanched faces and trembling limbs, stood aghast at the overmastering horror. Pharaoh remembered how he had once exclaimed, "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go." Now, his heaven-daring pride humbled in the dust, he "called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said. . . . And be gone; and bless me also." The royal counselors also and the people entreated the Israelites to depart "out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men." {PP 279.4}

18. Who stands as an example of knowing history but refusing to become humble? **Daniel 5:22**

**EGW:** The prophet first reminded Belshazzar of matters with which he was familiar, but which had not taught him the lesson of humility that might have saved him. He spoke of Nebuchadnezzar's sin and fall, and of the Lord's dealings with him--the dominion and glory bestowed upon him, the divine judgment for his pride, and his subsequent acknowledgment of the power and mercy of the God of Israel; and then in bold and emphatic words he rebuked Belshazzar for his great wickedness. He held the king's sin up before him, showing him the lessons he might have learned but did not. Belshazzar had not read aright the experience of his grandfather, nor heeded the warning of events so significant to himself. The opportunity of knowing and obeying the true God had been given him, but had not been taken to heart, and he was about to reap the consequence of his rebellion. {PK 529.2}

"Thou, . . . O Belshazzar," the prophet declared, "hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: then was the part of the hand set from Him; and this writing was written." {PK 529.3}

19. What are we considered if we put on a list of things including humility? **Colossians 3:12**

**EGW:** No provision has been made for Christians to draw apart from one another. By our unity and love we are to reveal the character of Christ. "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor." "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. . . . Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." {RH, April 27, 1897 par. 7}

The word of God clearly points out our duty. We are to cultivate kindness and forbearance and love. We are not to misrepresent our brethren because our ideas are not thought to be of the highest value. By our conduct we show what our influence and the principles we hold are worth. If self is our center, self will appear in all we do. If Christ is our center, we shall bear his likeness, and our words will glorify him. {RH, April 27, 1897 par. 8}

20. What did Paul do with all humility? **Acts 20:19**

**EGW:** My mind has been directed to the words of the apostle Paul. He says, in the twentieth of Acts, beginning with verse 17: "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." {1888 69.3}

I have thought again and again, brethren and sisters, if we were Bible believers as well as Bible readers, and would carry out just what God has given us, we would be far better than we are at the present time. But we do not realize that it is the loving voice of God speaking to us from His Word. We are to think everything of it and take it home to our hearts. Then Paul goes on to say, in verse 24, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (verses 26, 27). What a testimony is that-- "free from the blood of all men." {1888 69.4}