

Be clothed with Humility

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[0 : 00] God bless you tonight. We're going to go to 1 Peter chapter 5.

! So if you want to turn there, we'll get to that in a moment. 1 Peter chapter 5. And firstly a question for you. What will you choose? Pride or humility?

Pride or humility? We're going to look at both of those things tonight and learn something of the value of humility. Now there's a value in humility. It's a character trait that's commended throughout the Bible. It's something that we would do well to seek after and find.

The character trait of humility. Now maybe this sermon is not for you. You might have already arrived. There might be some people here tonight and you've got humility down pat.

You know what humility is all about. Perhaps you could even write a book about it. I'm told tongue in cheek that there was an author of the best selling book, Humility and How I Attained It. You know, of course, if you were to write such a book, you won't have humility any longer.

[1 : 20] But friends tonight, seriously, we could all use some more humility. Amen? We could all use some more humility. And if we attain it, then we're not to brag about it, but say all glory to God for helping me to be humble, to make me humble. So what does the Bible tell us about this important subject? We're going to look at 1 Peter 5 verses 5 through 6. Peter writes, likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility. For God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. First let me say that we have a dress code in this church. There is a dress code.

And there is something that I would ask you all to aspire to wear. A piece of clothing that should always be a part of your outfit. It is always needed. Something that the best dressed Christian should never be without. What is it? It is humility. Humility. It says here, be clothed with humility. Because we're not talking about those physical clothes that we wear. But this is something, it's a spiritual quality that God commends for the best dressed Christian to wear. Let it always be something that you wear. All the time. 24 by 7. We read that it says, be clothed with humility. It's as if it's like something we wear. Something that clothes us, that identifies us. This essential item of your outfit. This essential item that should be in your wardrobe, that you should wear it daily. Be clothed with humility. Brothers and sisters, brothers and sisters, it's something very important. Secondly, we see in our text,

God resists the proud. God resists the proud. What can we find out about pride? In Proverbs 6, pride is listed as one of seven deadly sins. Seven things that God hates. Pride, it's at the top. It's at the top of the list. Pride. A proud look. Why does God hate pride so much? Pride is a pitfall. It's a pitfall. It's like as someone who would ambush someone or hide a pit under some leaves and branches that someone will fall into and be trapped.

Proverbs 16, 18 it says, Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. Elsewhere it says, you that think you stand, take heed lest you fall. We all got to be careful about pride. Pride is a way of living life that does not recognise God. It does not lift up God but lifts up ourselves instead of Him.

[4 : 38] And this is a great danger that we can make. As people who are yet to know Him, sometimes we can put all of our faith and confidence in ourselves and think we're a self-made man or a self-made woman.

As if it's all about me and what I want and my life without thinking and sparing a thought that actually everything that we have is thanks to God.

Pride is something. Pride goes before destruction. A haughty spirit. In other words, getting all puffed up and smart. Being a smart aleck. Kind of puffed up and haughty and selfish and conceited. A haughty spirit comes before a fall. We're going to fall flat on our face if we have that kind of attitude.

So the Bible warns us to guard. Guard yourself against this destructive and dangerous thing. Now think about it now tonight. Think about this. What can we get proud about?

We can get proud about a lot of things. You can probably rattle off a big long list. You know, one thing we can get proud of, we can get proud about our position. Our position in life or our position in the family, our position in the culture.

[5 : 54] Whatever it be, we can get proud about where we're at in life and maybe so proud that we look down on other people for whatever reason it might be. But what did the Lord Jesus do? In John chapter 13, we read that just in the context of the closeness of Calvary, as the cross was just hours away, the Lord Jesus gathered with his disciples in the upper room. And they gathered together in a simple fashion as the Lord Jesus shared one last meal with them, the last supper.

And it says in John 13 verse 4, he rises from supper and he laid aside his garments and he took a towel and girded himself. He took a towel and he wore the towel. Now the towel was something that was the place and role of the most humble servant of the place.

It was the lowest of the low kind of job to do. And the Lord Jesus took that place. He humbled himself and he became a servant. You know, sometimes in churches and in life in general, we can get all caught up with our pride, get prideful.

And yet so few of us are willing to take the towel, to fight over as it were, fight for the towel. I was blessed this morning actually, when someone said to me, they would like to help put the church signs out and bring them back.

Now that's a menial job. You know, that should be beneath the senior pastor. That should be something that you just give to someone who, you know, it's not an important job.

[7 : 41] But friends, it really is an important job. Because I thank God that many people have come to this fellowship because of those signs. They wouldn't have found us otherwise. You know, it's an important job.

And I'm glad when people volunteer to do the simple things that need to be done. And it's like taking the towel. Sometimes we don't fight over the towel. We just say, oh, let someone else do it.

Someone else. Who's there?

You know, and it's flat with oil. And there's many that can testify. There's many undesirable duties that need to be done that it falls on those who've got a servant heart.

A humble heart. And something that is something we should look to do. But very few will rush to do such things as that. And, you know, there's an English evangelist who learnt that it was more important to please God than to please men.

And knowing that he was doing what was honouring to the Lord kept him through times of great discouragement and testing. When he was falsely accused by his enemies.

[8 : 48] At one point in his ministry, Whitfield received a vicious letter accusing him of wrongdoing. And his reply was brief and courteous. He said, I thank you heartily for your letter.

As for what you and my other enemies are saying against me, I know worse things about myself than you will ever say about me. With love in Christ, George Whitfield. So true, isn't it?

Yeah. If you want to throw dirt at me, I can give you lots of hot cross about myself and all of my faults and failings. I could give you a book of such things. But George Whitfield, he didn't try to defend himself.

He was more concerned about pleasing his Lord. And so should we, brothers and sisters. You might face attacks and feel people are against you. Yet, pleasing God is what is our aim and endeavour.

Not necessarily the praise of men or the acknowledgement of men. But God can use even such things to help us personally.

[9 : 51] So we can get proud of our position. Don't get proud of our position. We can get proud of what we can do for God. What we can do for God. You know, there's some talented people here.

And there's people doing much things for God. But, including me. Let's not put any credit on ourselves. In anything that is undue. Because really and truly, all the honour and praise and acknowledgement is due to God.

It's all glory to God. You know, Hudson Taylor. A man who laboured in harsh places. And took the gospel to people that had never heard about the good news about the Lord Jesus.

And he went into China to work for God. And God used this man in such an amazing way. And someone asked him how he was chosen for that work in China.

And he said that God chose a little man so that men might see what a great God we had. You know, whenever we do anything for God, people tonight, even the best that you can do for God, is because we've got a great God, isn't it?

[11:05] That he would deign to use us in some measure for his glory. Another preacher may have told of a preacher that was marvellously used of God. Of course, this is just an illustration.

He said he dreamed one night that he was beginning to take pride in himself and his gifts. An angel told him that his success was due primarily to a poor widow who sat regularly at the foot of his pulpit and never ceased to pray for him.

Now, that can be sometimes it's those prayer warriors that help preachers such as me and others who preach in this place so that God can be glorified through the messages that are given.

Pride says to itself, my will be done. Humility says to God, thy will be done. We can get proud of what we do for God. Avoid that too.

Friends, we can get proud about our doctrine. Our doctrine, our belief, our foundations that we stand upon, our faith, our doctrine, our teaching.

[12:08] But rather, let us always show grace towards others who we can gently seek to help. You know, Julian and I were watching some old video footage of ourselves as younger people.

I used to have black hair once. And I could think back, I probably would disagree with that Andrew Craig quite a lot with some of the things that he taught and practiced and believed.

Well, we can get proud about our doctrine so we put others down. And that can be a dangerous thing when we fall out with Christians who differ from us and in a put down kind of way.

You know, now there are even some Christians who differ from me. Believe it or not. You know, you don't all have to believe like me. Wait till heaven.

God will ultimately correct you himself when you get there. You know, this is fairly tongue-in-teak people tonight. But you know, I can make that mistake. Preachers can make that mistake.

[13:08] Pastors can make that mistake. That really and truly, seriously, we're all on the pathway, aren't we? We're all on that pathway. And I know that I'm still learning and relearning and unlearning and learning again and growing in my faith and knowledge.

And that's true for every Christian. We're all learning and growing in our faith. And we all need to maintain that teachable spirit so we might learn and grow as a Christian. And be challenged.

And be receptive to challenge. Be receptive to learning. And avoid that prideful heart that thinks I've arrived. And, you know, and stop learning.

We must always be learning and growing as a Christian. And keep that receptivity to the things of God. And not put other Christians down. Now, we can get proud about our churches.

We can get proud about this church. We can get proud about the circle of fellowship that we maintain as this church. And we can develop a put-down attitude towards others. But rather, rather let us see that other Christians are our fellow believers.

[14:13] Our brothers and sisters in Christ. We're going to spend eternity with them. And while there may be areas for improvement, they are our family. Our Christian family. And so now I'm grateful to God for the fellowship of godly Christians who love sound doctrine.

And love holding fast the faithful word. I love the Independent Baptist Movement. Now, there's a value in being independent of man-made denominational constructs.

And certainly the deeply compromised ecumenical movement. But when we say we're independent, it does not mean we're independent of God. You know, I've said this before.

We really are dependent Baptist Church. Because we must always be, every one of us must always be dependent on God. Because as someone has defined it, independence is the belief that we are sufficient apart from God.

And is a deadly result of pride. So again, something to avoid, isn't it? Of course we're glad about the churches that are like-minded, who hold the line. Who prayerfully endeavour to stand fast for the faith.

[15:21] But we must guard against pride. Even in that. Even in that fellowship that we love. And we want to love the brethren. Including others in the family of God who may be off track in some ways.

And be patient with others. As God is patient with us. He hasn't finished with us yet. Another thing we can get proud of. We can get proud of our abilities.

But truly James 1.17 it says, Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. And cometh down from the Father of lights.

With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God's not variable and shifting shape and changing his ways. He's steadfast. And he's the giver of every good and perfect gift.

It comes from above. When you think of your life. And what the good things that you have to be grateful for. Don't forget to be thankful. And acknowledge God as the source of those good things.

[16:18] Give him thanks. If we get prideful, we can get unthankful. We can get proud about our service of God. But rather let's count it a privilege. Even those opportunities we get to do something for God.

You know, we might get proud about what we put in the offering bag. Or we might get proud about our praying in public.

And we can make that mistake of getting puffed up and prideful. Even for something that, in a way, it's a good thing to pray. In a way, it's a good thing to give. But we can make the mistake what the Pharisee did in Luke 18, 12.

He says, I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I possess. Now, he was doing that with a sense of bragging. And in comparison with this other one, this repentant publican man, who was beating his chest and was saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

And so, all the good that he was doing was negated and was really in vain. And so, let's not get prideful about such things that we do.

[17:29] Even the good things and the worthwhile things, which are commendable things to do, we can get prideful. And when we get prideful, it means that we let grace, we fail to realise our need of grace.

So, instead of pride, let's aspire for humility. So, in our text we saw, what's the best dress Christian gonna wear? Humility. Humility. Humility.

Be humble. We've heard how it says that, God resisteth the proud.

We've heard about pride. Let's go on now to the second part, that God gives grace to the humble.

Let's learn about humility now. And where do you look for the perfect role model of the humility that we should look for?

It's in one person, especially. Who is that? Jesus. That's right. The Lord Jesus is our model, our Saviour and Lord, our Master who became a servant.

[18:31] And think of it, just think, how he came to planet Earth. He didn't come in some great flashing, astounding way in terms of the physical form that he took.

He invaded planet Earth in the form of a baby. A fragile human child. A fragile human baby. And this one is the one who says to you, Come unto me.

Come to me, he says. I want to receive you to myself, he says. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.

And you shall find rest unto your souls. You know, the Lord Jesus was saying, how some, they're heavy laden, they're burdened down, they're restless, they can't find peace.

And he says to everyone, he says, Come to me and I will give you rest. Rest for your souls. He says, I am meek and lowly or humble in heart.

[19:31] How did the Lord Jesus come into Jerusalem? He rode in on a donkey. On a simple donkey. He didn't come with some great fanfare or in some fancy chariots.

But he came in a simple fashion. In a humble way. And the Lord Jesus looked out on people. What did he look on people with? With compassion. With love.

He reached out. And he touched the most sinful and gave pardon. That is humility. The Bible says, The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom.

And before honour is humility. It's saying there that humility brings honour. Humility honours God.

So instead of being prideful, being lifted up with pride, rather be lifted up by God.

As you are humbled, He will lift you up. And we must bow under His hand. Humility honours God.

Humility glorifies God. It brings glory to God. It brings glory to God when we humble ourselves before Him.

[20:35] Friends tonight, listen now. When we have sin and we bow before our maker, He reaches out and heals us and brings forgiveness.

He reaches out and cleanses our sin. And He receives us by His love. Because of His dying on the cross for our sins, we can receive His pardon.

It's a gift. Grace. It's a gift that God gives to us. As we let go of our self-centeredness and receive His grace. The Bible urges us to pray.

As we heard tonight, the humble will pray. Why do we pray? Because we're depending on God, aren't we? We're a God-dependent church, aren't we? We're a God-dependent people. He has showed thee, O man, what is good, and what did the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.

Walk humbly with God. Learn to pray. When you're feeling frustrated, pray. Pray and keep on praying. God requires that we walk humbly with God.

[21 : 41] It's a walk. It's a day-by-day, one foot after the other. A walk after God in humility. God requires of us humility. So humility honours God.

It glorifies God. Humility is the mind of Christ. The Lord Jesus, the one who wore a towel and washed the disciples' feet in that robe, in that role of a servant, as he came and did a dirty task that no one else really would have desired for.

Humility is having that same mind, that same thinking, that we love God in our worship and we truly serve Him and serve man. The humble heart will depend upon God.

And it's where our strength is found. As I referred to before about Hudson Taylor, when asked about the impact of his mission, he says, you know, someone's kind of praising him up and, you know, he could have got a big hair out of it.

You know, he was doing marvellous, dramatic, tremendous things as many people were being reached that were never reached by the gospel truth before. And Hudson just put it down to this.

[22 : 45] He said, it seemed to me that God looked over the whole world to find a man who was weak enough to do his work. And when he at last found me, he said, he is weak enough.

He'll do. And all God's giants through history have been weak men, weak women, who did great things for God because they counted on God being with them.

Friends tonight, God is great. And He wants us to come and receive His grace. We've heard about the pride that will hinder.

And God resists the proud. Do you want to be resisted by God? Do you want God to resist you? Or do you want God to receive you?

It's about that prideful heart being broken up and opened up to God and receiving His grace.

[23 : 48] We've seen being clothed with what? Humility. You know, when you get dressed tomorrow and you look in the mirror, ask yourself, am I wearing humility today?

Am I going to wear, am I going to be humble? Or am I going to be prideful, full of pride, and just conceited and selfish and puffed up and such things?

Or am I going to actually be humble and have that meekness that will make me truly great? In verse 6, it tells us where do we find this humility? Where do we find this humility that God commands and commands us to have?

It says in verse 6, You will humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. What is most needful is that we come before God and bow under His mighty hand.

It's as if we realize that we're just a speck of dust in this cosmos, in this universe that's so expansive. Even on planet Earth, we're just a microscopic piece of material.

[24 : 59] And yet God counts each one very precious and worthy in His sight of His blood to be poured out of that salvation gift.

That means that everything He receives those who will come in humility to Him. As we bow under His mighty hand, as you realize God's mighty hand, as God, you know, could very easily just push His thumb down upon you and destroy you, as He could take that hand and cast you into eternal hell, that yet that hand extends still in mercy.

His hand still extends to those who will trust Him. His hand, that mighty hand of God, it says, Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God. In James 4, it says, God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. I've been talking tonight about pride, about humility, about the mighty hand of God.

Let me wrap this up now with just a brief challenge to you. I started off with the question, Are you prideful or humble?

