

Humility

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[0:00] Proverbs 22, verse 4.

! We're going to look at the subject of humility, of being humble.

Being humble. God lives in the humble heart. And I want to urge you tonight to humble yourself. So humble yourself and pray. Humble yourself and serve.

Humble yourself and witness. We must humble ourselves. The Bible says much about humility as well as much about pride. In Matthew 18, verses 3 to 4, we see how we must humble ourselves and be converted.

Matthew 18, verse 3, it says, And Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

[1:16] Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

He was there with little children. And he represented the humility of repentance of heaven with the little children.

And Christian living starts with that humility. With that humility. Christian living, it can mean, I've heard the expression, where we used to live up north in the Northern Territory, the word shame job. Shame job. It's a shame job. It means it's something that makes us low and feel low and lowly. And Christianity is something that we should want to be lowly before our God.

We should want to humble ourselves before him. It means an extending of ourselves. It means a giving up of ourselves. God says that those who are humble, he will teach his way.

[2:17] In Psalm 25, verse 9, Those who are humble, those who are meek, he will teach his way. There's much to commend being humble. As we know in the world that we live, it's often an emphasis on self, on self-awareness, on self-will, on self-esteem and such like.

And yet the Bible doesn't want us to inflate ourselves and puff ourselves up, but rather to humble ourselves. And so he can teach us his way. So firstly, humble yourselves and pray.

Humble yourself and pray. We see that in 1 Peter 5, verse 6. 1 Peter 5, verse 6, it says, Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. As we pray, God puts his hand upon us. As we pray, we come under his covering.

We come under his refuge. We come under the cover of his feathers, under the cover of his wings. We can flee to him and find refuge. And prayer takes that place of humility.

[3:30] It takes that place under his covering hand. It comes as we pray, as we seek divine intervention. We humble ourselves and pray. When we pray, it says that we need him.

When we pray, it says that we want him to work through us, to work in us. It says that we depend upon him when we pray. What better place can we come than the place of prayer, than that place of humility to pray?

A preacher said, humility is something we should constantly pray for, yet never thank God that we have. You know, we can polish our humility badge every day, can't we?

We can think, oh, I'm so proud to be humble. And yet, we know that really, none of us have arrived. We're all really still on that journey. And we need to get under his mighty hand.

Come under the mighty hand of God. Rely upon his mercy. Rely upon his provision. Rest in his overshadowing care. Humble yourselves and pray.

[4:32] The famous inventor, Samuel Morse, was once asked if he'd ever encountered situations where he didn't know what to do. Samuel Morse invented the Morse code.

You know, the dot, dot, dash, dash, dash, dot, dot. Don't know what I've just said, but Samuel Morse invented it. He made that code, the Morse code. He was a famous man. People around the world, you, the name of Morse.

And Morse was asked if he'd ever found any situation that he didn't know what to do. And Morse responded like this. He said, more than once. And whenever I could not see my way clearly, I knelt down and prayed to God for light and understanding.

He was willing to recognize the humility of prayer. And Morse received many honors for his inventions of the telegraph, but he felt undeserving.

He said, I have made a valuable application of electricity, not because I was superior to other men, but solely because God, who meant it for mankind, must reveal it to someone, and he was pleased to reveal it to me.

[5:42] He gave all the glory to God. He gave God all the praise, all the glory. I know that likewise with Thomas Edison, I think one of the first messages that he sent through what is our wireless today was a message that glorified God.

And we need to have that dependency upon our God, to grow in that dependency upon him, to lean upon him, to rest in his strength, in his supply.

Humble yourself and pray. Friends, it's the best place to start. Friends, it's the best place to start is prayer. Because we need the Lord. We need the Lord and his almighty power to work through us and in us, despite us.

We're powerless without it to live effectively the Christian life. So humble yourselves and pray. Praying doesn't have to be some airy-fairy, colourful language, language or some out of the ordinary kind of language.

It's a communication with your heavenly Father. If you've got that relationship, you can pray. And there can be words just like, Help me, Lord. Help my unbelief.

[6:55] Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. Simple, short prayers. Sentence prayers. You can pray. And you don't have to wait until you feel a holy moment comes over you. Until you have to come to some meeting or have some anointed preacher make you pray.

You can pray every day, moment by moment. As we must, as we should. Pray always. Pray without ceasing. Pray and keep on praying. Humble yourselves and pray.

Secondly, humble yourselves and serve. Humble yourselves and serve. We see in James 4.10. It says, Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He shall lift you up.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He shall lift you up. The word commands serving. On being a servant.

To be servants. There's some servants spoken of in Luke 17 verse 10. One of our Lord's parables. And He records how, He says, Likewise, you, when you have done all those things which I commanded you, saying, We are unprofitable servants.

[8:06] We have done that which was our duty to do. He didn't want these men who had done some service to get a bit proud of their achievements. He commanded them for saying, We are unprofitable servants.

We have just done that which was our duty to do. And when we engage in any Christian service, when we undertake any ministry, we're just doing that which is our duty to do.

There's nothing to have our name in lights or have some praise of men. Not to have some credentials to hang on the wall or some title to claim, but just to hear and to obey the Master.

Just to hear His call. Just to hear and respond to do our duty. That is all that we can do. It's the least that we can do for Him who is our Master, who has done everything for us.

And ministry is just about being available and being used of Him. Being at His call. You know, sometimes we play a bit of a game at my house, but when I have some folk around the dinner table and we have a bit of a meeting or something, I've got this little bell.

[9:17] And just the time it's time for tea and coffee or some cakes and bickies, I just go ding-a-ling-a-ling. And then this dutiful servant runs in. My dear darling wife, she just rushes in.

She's almost wearing her pittifor or whatever they call it, petticoat and what do they call it? What are they called? Apron. Apron, yeah. She comes in just about wearing her apron.

You know, if she was a man, she'd be wearing a bow tie. You know, she's there as the maid servant. Wow. As the servant of the table. I just ding-a-lap bow. And she comes running at my every beck and call.

And that's the kind of picture, isn't it? Of being a servant. Don't you? Some of you men have got women like that in your house. Yeah. You can train them. No, brothers, sisters, sometimes we men have to be servants too.

You know, I had to prepare for this sermon by doing the dishes. You know, there's a time, a once-in-a-lifetime thing for me, is to do the dishes. But brothers, men, we need to be servants too.

[10:20] Amen. And all the women said, You know, we need to serve our wives. We need to be servants. Men and women. Be servants. Serve one another in love.

And when we come to serve our Lord, it's the least that we can do. When we can hear His call, when we hear that bell, when we hear His summons to send us to undertake some task of ministry, to do something for His glory, we want to be just like that.

We want to respond. Just like the butchers of old would have run up the stairs to the Master's call, to come and serve at His table. We want to be servants just like that.

And that's what serving our Lord God is like. It's a pleasure. It's a privilege. It's a joy. It's a joy. And it's something to be used of Him, to be used of God, to let God use you in whatever capacity.

And then if He does, don't get too high an opinion of yourself. That's when it all goes sour. Don't get too high an opinion of yourself. Don't let it go to your head. Don't have that attitude, oh, I've got some responsible position.

[11:27] Keep small. Keep small in the sight of God. Keep small. There was a former heavyweight boxing champion. You probably know who he is when I say it. He said, I am the greatest.

I am the greatest. We know where He is now. He's not so great now. But friends, the Apostle Paul said the opposite of that. The word Paul, it means little. The Apostle Paul, he was willing to be little for the kingdom of God.

And God used him mightily because of that. Because he was willing to be little, God used him much. The Apostle Paul, he said some things like this.

He didn't brag on about his credentials. He said, I am the least of the apostles. 1 Corinthians 15 verse 9. I'm the least of them. In Ephesians 3 verse 8, he says, I am the very least of all the saints. The very least of them. And in 1 Timothy 1 verse 15, if he had to lay claim to anything, he said, I am the chief of sinners. 1 Timothy 1 verse 15.

[12:28] I'm the foremost of the sinful. Was all Paul could lay claim to. Friends, we need to be humble and serve. To not get a swelled head for anything that our God chooses to use us for.

It's all to his glory. All to his praise. It's not a matter of seeking man's approval. Sometimes it will go against the popular trend. And people will object.

It's about pleasing the Lord. And if it displeased man, so be it. Because first and foremost, it must be to please him. That is the main thing. It's not to draw a crowd.

It's to please our Lord God. Amen. Andrew Murray, an old time preacher, said this. He said, The humble man feels no jealousy or envy. He can praise God when others are preferred and blessed before him.

He can bear to hear others praised while he is forgotten because he has received the Spirit of Jesus who pleased not himself, who sought not his own honour.

[13:29] Therefore, in putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, he has put on a heart of compassion, kindness, meekness, long-suffering, and humility.

He's put on Christ. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Hudson Taylor, famous missionary, was invited to speak at a church in Melbourne, Australia.

And the convener had this great long screen of all of his credentials, and he gave such a glowing appreciation of the man before he stepped forward to preach that day.

And to that large congregation, the convener introduced the missionary in eloquent and glowing terms. He said how he was an illustrious guest.

For all that Taylor had accomplished, he said, I welcome now our illustrious guest. Taylor came up, Hudson Taylor, missionary to China.

[14:29] He stood quietly for a moment, and then he opened his message by saying, Dear friends, I am the little servant of an illustrious master. He didn't want to claim that he was illustrious, but that his master was.

He was just a little servant of our Lord. And friends, that must be the heart of ministry, the heart of serving him, that is not for us to claim any virtue or credit.

Ministry will keep you humble. Ministry can sometimes be painful. It can seem an unrewarding task. Yet one day will be rewards day.

Be humble enough for God to use you. Be humble enough for God to, take that vessel of clay that you are, and fill it for his glory.

Don't throw in the towel. Take up the towel. Gird yourself as our Lord Jesus did, as he came and washed the disciples' feet. Sometimes we need to be brought down, a peg or two, in our own opinion of ourselves, to let the stuffing get knocked out of us, so we can come humbly, and be used of God.

[15:36] In 1878, William Booth's Salvation Army was just beginning to make its mark. And men and women from all over the globe came to enlist.

And there's one man who, at one time, had dreamt of being a bishop. You know, he wanted to have some position of prestige. And he crossed the Atlantic to go and join William Booth.

He crossed from America to England to enlist. Samuel Brangle was his name. He left a fine pastorate to join Booth's army. But at first, General Booth was reluctant to engage him.

And Booth said to Brangle, you're being your own boss too long. And in order to instill humility in Brangle, he sent him to work cleaning the boots of the other trainees.

Discouraged, Brangle said to himself, have I followed my own fancy across the Atlantic in order to blacken boots? And then, as in a vision, he saw the Lord Jesus bending over the feet of rough, unlettered fishermen.

[16:42] Lord, he whispered, you washed their feet. I will black their shoes. He saw in his mind the Lord Jesus kneeling and washing the disciples' feet.

His own Lord performing such an unimportant task. Years later, Brangle wrote about that time of shining boots. It was the best training I ever could have had.

I was practising humility. That experience put a key in my hand to unlock the hearts of lowly people all around the world for the next 40 years.

God used Brangle because he humbled himself to use him in that ministry to especially the lowly of the outreach work of the Salvation Army, reaching out to the gutter most.

And friends, we need to likewise empty ourselves as Christ our Lord did. Empty ourselves so that we can be used of God. So humble yourselves and pray. Seek his face.

[17:40] Turn to him. Depend upon him in prayer. Pray and pray through. Pray without ceasing. Humble yourselves and pray. Humble yourselves and serve. Be willing to take the lowly task.

Be willing to take the lowly place. Humble yourselves and serve. And thirdly, humble yourselves and witness. Humble yourselves and be a witness for God's glory. Let this mind be in you, it says. Have this mind of Christ. Have this attitude. Have this heart. God commands the humble in heart. The humble in mind. God wants us to put aside our pride and our self-will and to learn total dependence upon our God as our source of strength.

It's so easy to get prideful, even prideful of the things that we do for God. It's easy to do. It's easy for any of us to have pride as if it was anything of our own praise, as if it was anything of our own virtue.

But really it's not. We're just yielded vessels. That's all that we can be. To put aside our own self-will to have that total dependence upon him.

[18:49] Just think that the Lord Jesus came from heaven for you. For you. To find you. That should make us feel very humble. Very humble that our Lord stooped down from heaven's glory to come and wear human skin and die a human death so that we can have everlasting life.

He humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Friends, we cannot humble ourselves as our Lord did. But we can take that example and have that mind in us.

Humble yourselves and be a witness. In 1 Corinthians 1.26 it tells the record of the kinds of people that God grabs a hold of on planet earth. In 1 Corinthians 1.26 it says, For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty and base things of the world and things which are despised.

Hath God chosen yea, and things which are not to bring to naught things that are. The things that God chooses, the people that God chooses, not many wise men, not many noble, not many mighty are called.

[20:28] But he chooses the foolish things. Thank God he can choose foolish things. He can choose foolish ones, weak ones, base and despised ones, things which are not.

He can choose the least and fill them with his glory for his praise. He invites us to come. He invites us as the parable of the man inviting people to the supper.

An invitation to a party. An invitation to a supper. And the invite was extended. It was extended widely. And then to the most humble, God's message of salvation came.

In the picture of the parable, the message of salvation comes, the good news, the invite comes to the poor, to the oppressed, to the lowly. Paul tells us that the big shots don't show up for God's party.

Instead, it's the rejects that come. God chooses the foolish. He chooses the rejects. Thank God he chooses those that the world would toss aside and disregard and discount.

[21:40] God chooses the oppressed. He chooses the poor. He chooses those the world would discount. He chooses you. He chooses me. Thank God for that.

That should make us feel humble. That should make us feel glad that the invite comes even to us. And that the invite comes to those that can come into the kingdom of God.

And sit at his very table. people. As we read in the Old Testament of Mephibosheth, a man who was lame and was disregarded. We see in our world today people with disabilities, people who have some fault that people can notice.

They're discounted. They're disregarded. They're looked down upon. And yet, it was Mephibosheth that was invited to the king's table to feast around the table of King David.

And what a picture in Luke 14, verse 16, that certain man made a great supper and he invited many. And yet, what did people do in Luke 14 from 17 through many people made excuses, various excuses.

[22:50] One guy, he brought some land, he bought some property and he wanted to go and inspect it. It was as if it was some business transaction took priority. Another had brought some oxen, he had some trade to do, he had some business to attend to with these oxen.

Another had a wife and he used the wife as his excuse rather than bringing her with him. A certain man made a great supper and bathed many, but various excuses.

Friends, we can make excuses. We can make excuses why we don't serve him. We can make excuses why we shouldn't humble ourselves and be converted. We can make excuses why we can find some other occupation to engage ourselves with.

Verse 21, the invite was extended widely. Our Lord says in the picture of this master and the servant, he says, go out quickly, go out quickly into the streets and the lanes of the city and bring in hither the poor and the maimed and the holt and the blind.

And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou has commanded and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servant, go out into the highways and the hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled.

[24:14] The Lord Jesus shows here that wonderful invitation is extended, goes beyond the rich and the powerful, beyond those too busy to come, to the poor, to the neglected, to the uncared ones, and they're not too busy to turn up.

Not too busy to turn up. God cares for those the uncared for ones. We see the love of God in this parable demonstrated. While we were yet sinners, He came and He bled and He died and He

invites us, He invites us to come.

Notice who it is He called. Thank God He doesn't downgrade people or disqualify people because of their standing, because of whatever man might notice about them, we're all level at the foot of the cross.

We're all level. The ground is level at the foot of the cross. We're all equally deserving and undeserving. Talk about equal rights. Our only rights, every one of us, black, white and yellow, is hell.

Equal rights, that's all we deserve. And yet, we're all unequally deserving of God's great grace. Amen. All unequally deserving of His great grace that He extends to us.

[25:29] He calls them, He calls the poor, they couldn't afford it. They couldn't afford to come round the master's table with the table spread from end to end with all the delicacies that you could imagine.

They couldn't afford to come. They could never pay Him back. It's just like God, isn't it? It's just like the invitation to salvation. We can't ever pay back His grace that He extends to us.

We can't ever be deserving of it. Or earn it. Or pay for it. Or repay it. It's a gift. As He comes and He invites the poor. And we need to humble ourselves and be poor.

As it were. He just asks us to come and receive His salvation. Come, buy and eat without money, without price. Again, a great cost unto Him. A great cost unto our Lord.

He invites the poor. He invites the main, the main, the deformed, the injured, the twisted. He welcomes those that society feels uncomfortable with. Friends, we're maimed by our sin.

[26:31] We're deformed. We're twisted. God reaches out to those who are twisted by sin. Those whose sin has corrupted and perverted and no sin is so vile that God will turn away the repentant one.

Thank God for that tonight. You can come, if you're feeling maimed tonight. He says, whosoever will, let him come. The maim can come. The crippled, the halt, the crippled, they couldn't get around on their own.

They need help to get to the supper. Those outside Christ are crippled by sin, unable to get to Him. God has a place for the wounded and for the hurting, for the stumbling and the sinful.

They can still come. They aren't able to get there on their own but He comes and He takes them to Himself. He's the shepherd who seeks us, the strange sheep.

He's the one who goes searching for the lost coin, for the lost son, for the lost sheep and He finds us. You can come even though you can't get there yourself.

[27:38] Friends, we can't even get to Him by ourselves. It's got to be His drawing hand. It's got to be His almighty power that reaches out to the crippled who can't even get out of their corner.

He comes to you. He comes to you. And the blind, He calls the blind to this supper time. The people trapped in their own little world of darkness. They need someone to show them the light.

And there's millions of blind people all around us wandering around in spiritual darkness headed for that eternal darkness of hell. They need people to show them the way.

And God's Spirit lights up the darkness. He makes it possible for the blind sinner to have their eyes open to see their need of Him. And then beyond still He goes to the highway to the hedge dwellers. He goes to those who are right out of the town. Those who are in the highway in the country lanes living amongst the hedges.

[28:39] You know, I've known some people like that living in hedges. We call them homeless people today. Homeless people. People living in hedges. Unwanted, strained, wanderers.

Yet, Christ invites them to come. Through that picture of the Master inviting to the supper, God will turn no one away. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.

Humble yourselves and pray. Pray, brother. Pray, sister. Learn to pray. Learn to depend upon the mighty hand of God. Humble yourselves and pray. Humble yourselves and serve.

Find an opportunity to serve. Whether it's blackening someone's shoes, whether it's doing the menial things, whether it's doing the unrewarded things, whether it's doing the things that are considered unimportant, yet do it unto the glory of God.

Humble yourselves and serve. And humble yourselves and witness. Humble yourselves and witness. Be as those that were sent out to invite people to the supper, going out, not disregarding

anyone, but taking the invitation to everyone, to everyone.

[29:50] Taking that invitation far and wide. Whilst you might consider yourself not noble, not mighty, yet God chooses such for his glory.

glory of God. He sends us to the poor, the maimed, the blind, the holt, to the highways, to the hedges, to be witnesses for his glory. It takes humility to witness.

It takes humility for us to open our lips and profess our faith in Christ. Sometimes the most humbling thing for you to be a witness for your Savior, in your workplace, amongst people that know you, to be a witness, to be a visible witness for the glory of God.

Humble yourselves and witness. Be amongst those who will invite to the supper time, as it were. Invite people to the king's table. Invite them.

Humble yourselves and you'll be glad that you did because some people will come. Some people will come and what a joy to see people saved, to see people won. And yet, even if not, it's serving our Lord.

[31:02] Friends, thank God today that God is no respecter of persons. It doesn't matter our culture, our background, our learning. God doesn't respect persons.

He doesn't rate people and say some are more worthy or some are less worthy or some he won't consider. God is no respecter of persons and we can come as unworthy ones to that one who is the worthy land of God.

We can come unto him if we'll just humble ourselves enough, humble enough, be humble enough to come, though poor, though needy, though maimed, though crippled, though blind, come humbling yourself, realising your absolute need of the absolute saviour and take that message to others too while you can.

Let's not hold back to being witnesses for his glory. Just a closing verse, Isaiah 6, verse 5, it says, Isaiah was there, the Lord was there in this vision of the Lord on a throne high and lifted up his train filling the temple.

What an awe-inspiring sight. The seraphim, the angels flying, and one cried to another, holy, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, and the whole earth is full of his glory.

[32:35] And the post of the door moved, and the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, woe is me, for I am undone, because I'm a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

And what a picture of the awe-inspiring sight of God, of the awe of the awesomeness of our God, and of the woeful state of man, yet this man was willing for God to touch his mouth and use him to send him and he can send you too, in labours here, there, and about, afar.

He can use you for his glory, but firstly, we must humble ourselves, humble ourselves, be willing to humble yourself and pray, humble yourself and serve, and humble yourself and witness, to be such that we can humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, because before honour is humility.

Let us pray. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. desde desde Thank you.