

LOVE THE LORD



Lesson Six - Humbling our hearts before God

August 2023

Summary of key points

- We worship a God who is humble.
- God calls us to follow His example of humility.
- Humility brings wisdom, riches, honour and long life.
- Pride is based on insecurity and fears. Pride does not trust God.
- Humility is not about putting yourself down or being stepped on by other people.
- Humility is about trusting and obeying God, and dying to our fears.

Watch the lesson online

<https://youtu.be/sfe2m-hLm7o>

Transcript

Welcome to lesson six of Love the Lord where we discuss what it means to humble our hearts before God.

Let us begin by inviting God to speak to us personally through this study. Please follow along as we pray together. Click pause at any point if you need more time.

First, let's thank God for His perfect character and will for our lives.

Next, please tell Him about the things that have been stressful lately and ask for His help and guidance.

Let us put down our burdens of sin. Confess the ways we have sinned against God and against others, and ask for His forgiveness.

Now, let us confess the ways others have sinned against us, and forgive them in Jesus' name.

Next, let us ask God to purify and open our hearts to receive His teaching.

Finally, please repeat these words, "In Jesus' name, I silence all distractions and voices that are not from God. Amen."

Let's begin the lesson for today. "What does it mean to humble our hearts before God?"

One of the promises that Jesus made when He taught the Beatitudes during the sermon on the mount was that those who are humble will inherit the whole earth.

Matthew 5:5 God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth. (NLT)

Humble people are teachable, open-minded, submissive, and cooperative. They also tend to be joyful and grateful. They are not stubborn and do not presume to know what's best. With humility comes wisdom.

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

When we humble our hearts before God, He is able to lovingly and faithfully teach us His way and lead us in doing what's right in His eyes.

Psalms 25:9-10 He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way. The Lord leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep his covenant and obey his demands. (NLT)

This is how He will crown the humble with victory. God wants us to become just like Him.

Psalms 149:4 For the LORD delights in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. (NLT)

Did you know that God Himself is humble?

1. Supreme as He is, God humbles Himself to stoop down and notice every detail of our lives. | *Psalms 113:5-6 Who is like the LORD our God, the One enthroned on high? He humbles Himself to behold the heavens and the earth. (BSB)*
2. Jesus even gave up His immense and infinite heavenly riches to be born as a finite human being, and also to share these riches with us. | *2 Corinthians 8:9 You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich. (NLT)*
3. He came to carry our burdens and to give us our souls rest. | *Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (NLT)*
4. Jesus is a shining example of humility. He served His people rather than demand to be served. | *Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." (NLT)*
5. Jesus also engaged with people from all walks of life, including those who were most despised by society. | *Mark 2:16 But when the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees saw him eating with tax collectors and other sinners, they asked his disciples, "Why does he eat with such scum?" (NLT)*

-
6. In addition, He showed us how to submit to authority by obeying the Father's will. | *Philippians 2:8 he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. (NLT)*

Do you consider yourself to be a humble person? How would you rate yourself? Let's look at what the Bible says in order to examine ourselves according to God's Word.

1. One, do we willingly submit to authority as well as to others? | *1 Peter 5:5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." (NIV)*
2. Two, do we associate with those whom other people look down on? Do we make time for them? | *Romans 12:16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. (NIV)*
3. Three, do we value others above ourselves? | *Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, (NIV)*
4. Four, do we bear with other peoples' shortcomings and faults, rather than complain about them and put pressure on them to change according to our desires? | *Colossians 3:13 Make allowance for each others' faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (NLT)*
5. Five, do we readily forgive those who say or do things that we find offensive? Do we ever hold on to grudges or resentments? | *Colossians 3:13 Make allowance for each others' faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (NLT)*
6. Six, are we shining examples of God's mercy, kindness, gentleness and patience? | *Colossians 3:12 Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. (NLT)*
7. Seven, do we welcome advice and correction or do we become defensive and offended? Do we tend to take comments personally? | *Proverbs 15:32-33 If you reject discipline, you only harm yourself; but if you listen to correction, you grow in understanding. Fear of the Lord teaches wisdom; humility precedes honor. (NLT)*

Looking at this list now, can you confidently say that God would consider you to be a humble person?

The Bible shows us that the proud will

1. not submit to authority
2. not associate with the lowly
3. not value others above themselves
4. not bear with others' faults
5. not forgive offences

-
6. not show mercy, kindness, gentleness, patience
 7. not welcome correction

Pride keeps us from loving others, learning from them, reflecting on ourselves, and asking for help.

James 4:6-7 And he gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (NLT)

The Bible reminds us to humble ourselves before God and resist the devil. This is because Satan is proud and when we become proud like the devil, God will directly oppose us, rather than help and bless us. This is certainly not something we should take lightly.

Psalms 138:6 Though the LORD is great, he cares for the humble, but he keeps his distance from the proud. (NLT)

God cares for the humble but keeps His distance from the proud. Have you felt distant from God? Could the reason be that God considers you to be too proud?

James 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor. (NLT)

Because pride elevates people, we may be mistaken to think that humility must be about putting ourselves down — but this is not true. God has no interest in tearing down His own creation or allowing people to step all over us. He desires to lift the humble up in honour!

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

God's Word shows us that true humility and fear of the Lord lead to riches, honour, and long life. A godly fear of the Lord means that we will exalt His ways, His will, or His opinions above our own or another person's ways, will, or opinions.

2 Kings 17:14 But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their ancestors, who did not trust in the LORD their God. (NIV)

Godly humility means that we will elevate God to His rightful position and trust Him wholeheartedly. The Bible shows us that the proud are stiff-necked and stubborn and will not trust in the Lord. They will resist the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 13:10 Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice. (NIV)

God's Word also says that where there is strife, there is pride. Pride comes from a place of insecurity, where we strive to overcome our fears or our shame using our own strength, rather than trust and turn to

God. Pride keeps us in the state of striving, godly humility keeps us in a state of rest because we trust the Lord with all our hearts. But what keeps us from trusting in God?

Proverbs 3:5,7,34 Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil. The Lord mocks the mockers but is gracious to the humble. (NLT)

One common reason is that we do not know God for who He truly is. We are ignorant and suffer from unbelief. Another common reason is because we still hold onto our fears. Fear keeps us in a state of self-defence. It leads us to depend on our own understanding, rather than trust in God with all our hearts.

We may think of ourselves as being confident people, but we all have the same hidden fears in our hearts. These fears are common to all people. No one is immune. For example, we fear

1. Feeling abandoned
2. Feeling accused
3. Feeling alone
4. Feeling ashamed
5. Feeling forgotten
6. Feeling humiliated
7. Feeling helpless
8. Feeling insignificant
9. Feeling neglected
10. Feeling pain
11. Feeling pressured
12. Feeling unfairly treated
13. Feeling rejected
14. Feeling vulnerable

Let's slow down here and take note of the subconscious fears in our own hearts. Which ones of these can you relate to? What reactions do they trigger in you? How do such fears continue to rule your life? Please click pause here if you need more time.

Welcome back. Are you aware that you can even repackage your fears into your life ideals?

If we have a fear of rejection, for example, we may decide that we need to please everyone. It may appear that we are likeable people but in reality, we don't really know who we are at our core, because we have enslaved ourselves to pleasing other people's opinions.

Or perhaps we have made an inner vow to never show our weaknesses or cry in front of others, in case people reject us. In doing so, we rob ourselves of the chance to have authentic relationships.

Or we may decide that speaking the truth or sharing the gospel is too dangerous, in case people turn away from us.

If we have a fear of abandonment, we may repackage that fear and tell ourselves that we don't need people anyway, and we can just be strong on our own.

Or we find ourselves being suspicious of other people's intentions because we expect them to leave us one day.

In some cases, we might decide to cut off relationships before other people leave.

If we have a fear of loneliness, we may re-package that fear into something that sounds more positive, such as living a full productive life, packed with activity.

Some use sex or money just to stay in a relationship.

Others choose to start a family of their own so they are never technically alone.

If we have a fear of failure, we may decide to pursue success at any cost, even at the cost of our relationships. Or we may become perfectionists without even understanding why it's so important for us to get things right all the time.

We may also become hyper anxious about our children and any potential mistake they may make. Instead of giving them the freedom to learn on their own, we control their behaviour at all times.

The fear of failure can also lead to procrastination, where we try to avoid anything that looks a bit challenging and may potentially not succeed.

We hope these examples show you how the hidden fears in your hearts keep you in a state of striving and anxiety. We need to die to our fears and humble ourselves before God and obey Him. Otherwise, our fears will continue to rule our lives.

1 Peter 5:6-7 So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. (NLT)

God's Word tells us to humble ourselves under God's mighty power and give Him all our worries and cares because He cares for us. We all need to turn away from our fears and unbelief.

Let us read from Psalm chapter 25 together. Ready? *“The Lord is good and does what is right; he shows the proper path to those who go astray. He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way. The Lord leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep his covenant and obey his demands.”*

(Psalm 25:8-10 NLT)

“Who are those who fear the Lord? He will show them the path they should choose. The Lord is a friend to those who fear him. He teaches them his covenant. My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues me from the traps of my enemies.” (Psalm 25:12,14-15 NLT)

If you have noticed that you have not trusted God and humbled yourself before Him, here is an opportunity to ask Him for forgiveness. Let's pray together.

1. First, let's ask God for forgiveness for not trusting Him.
2. Next, let us confess our fears, list them one by one. This is a time to renounce our fears and excuses for not trusting God.
3. Let us thank God for His unfailing love and faithfulness.
4. Let us also renounce the life ideals we have developed around our fears.
5. Now, please commit to obeying God, both His Word and His Spirit.
6. Finally, please ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen you to obey and trust God.

We praise God for your time of confession and re-commitment.

Here is what the Lord says, *“I live in the high and holy place with those whose spirits are contrite and humble. I restore the crushed spirit of the humble and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts.”* (Isaiah 57:15 NLT)

May you be filled with fresh joy as you humble yourself before your good and perfect Father in heaven. Be liberated from all your burdens and fears, as just Jesus Christ is manifested in you. Choosing to be humble before God is a daily exercise. Our sinful nature will always try to come back to self-rule. This takes daily dying.

Isaiah 29:19 The humble will be filled with fresh joy from the LORD. The poor will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. (NLT)

Here are two questions for today's lesson to reflect on as well as a testimony to watch. Please prepare your answers before your small group meets. We pray that you will be blessed. See you next time.

Time for reflection

1. Who are some people you find it the hardest to be humble around?
2. Please ask the Holy Spirit to show you why.

Watch the testimony for this lesson



Personal notes