

Grace
The Humble Side Of Grace Will Surprise You.

Proverbs 3:34

“God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

Did you know both Peter and James quoted this old testament scripture? They latched on to this teaching because it was very important. First, it tells us that God gives grace. But this verse also tells us that God gives grace to certain kinds of people— humble people as a matter-of-fact. Finally, it also tells us that God can withhold grace from another kind of people— The proud. Keep in mind that Peter and James were writing to believers.

Three times the scripture reminds us, **“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”** This means **there is a link between humility and grace.** Humility draws the blessing and favor of God. The same one who stripped to the waist and washed the feet of his disciples will rejoice when we learn to prefer one another over ourselves.

There are also four separate occasions where Jesus says this phrase, **“the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”** Four times Jesus lays out the challenge for us to humble ourselves, and by grace God will exalt you. Let’s take a look at each one of them. The first example is found in **Matthew 18:1-4**

What Jesus is saying here is **we have to lay down visions of greatness and embrace dependency upon God.** Living with this kind of mentality requires God’s intervention every day. We cannot make it happen ourselves but what we can do is depend on him to invade the ordinary with his presence and power.

Our second reference comes from **Matthew 23:1-12.**

Matthew is trying to teach us to **lay aside the need for recognition and find the joy in serving.** If we are honest, we will recognize ourselves in the people Jesus describes. Those who get off on recognition by the way they dress, or what they

drive, or buy the title they hold. William Wells Brown once said, **“People don’t follow titles, they follow courage.”** Courage to live a life of humility and let the Lord advance you. Courage to serve instead of striving to be recognized.

The third example is found in ***Luke 14:7-14.***

Luke is trying to Teach us to **forget about looking for honor from others and honor others instead.**

The last example is found ***in Luke 18:9-14.***

We need to learn to **depend on God’s mercy instead of our own accomplishments.**

Jesus draws a picture of two men in prayer. The first man begins his prayer with “thank you”, but quickly tallies up the score of the game he has been playing. He has been keeping score all along and reminds God that he is the winner. The other man starts with God’s mercy instead of leading with his accomplishments. Scorekeeping and judgment belong to God. If we have a measuring stick, we will eventually be asked to stand next to it!

Jesus is our greatest model for living in the past year of humility. I love how Paul describes the humility of Jesus in ***Philippians 2:5-11.***

“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by Becoming obedient to death even death on the cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Humility is the doorway to the kingdom of God. Many believers are surprised to learn that there is something they can all do to bring the grace of God into our lives: we can humble ourselves. But the opposite is also true. Pride can block the grace of God. Human pride Hides the deepest in our souls. And because God’s

grace meets us in our weakness, we think Grace will expose us as frauds, when all the while grace flows even stronger toward the humble in heart.

It's so easy to step across the border from truth and enter into arrogance, to label those who cannot see the truth as fools. Even a smarty what the apostle Paul recognized, "**knowledge puffs up.**" Sometimes, the most insightful people appear uncaring and cold, like an oncologist who diagnoses the cancer, but misses the human being standing before him. Inside is never enough. The line between inside and judgment is drawn by grace.

C.S. Lewis once said, "Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is not thinking of yourself at all."

Pride leads us to the flaws of others because we are haunted by our own. It makes us seem bigger than we are and deflates those around us. Because we detest the lies, we tell ourselves, we try to expose the same lies in others. **We try to hide the very flaws he is willing to love.** Isn't it any wonder that "***God resists the proud?***"

Today I invite all of us to take inventory of young hearts. Because a humble heart paves the way for a greater grace, they pray for heart does the opposite. This morning I asked the question which one describes your heart?