

# HUMILITY

BY PAUL M HANSEN

JESUS HUMBLLED HIMSELF, NOT BECAUSE HE WAS PROUD, BUT BECAUSE HE WASN'T

Humility—a word seldom heard from the pulpits of contemporary churches. Humility is not a favored doctrine. The topic of humility is scoffed at, scorned, rejected, and belittled.

Humility is misunderstood, misrepresented, misinterpreted, and certainly mistreated.

Many view humility as a weakness. However, true godly humility generates immense power and strength that would otherwise be unattainable.

The broken spirit and the humbled heart are the power that fuels a genuine relationship with God. God dwells in places of brokenness and humility.

*For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. (Isaiah 57:15)*

Humility is a fundamental building block of both natural and spiritual success. True success is grounded in humility, while all failure stems from pride!

*Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility. (Proverbs 18:12)*

There is a doctrinal misconception about humility, especially regarding the act of humbling oneself. For many, humbling oneself suggests, “I have pride” or “I am proud.” Pride indeed calls for humbling oneself. Humility arises not from pride but from its absence. Pride stems from a lack of humility. Allow me to explain.

Humility existed before pride ever did, and pride came into being when a creature lifted himself up from the place of humility.

The Son of God, the Living Word, has never known pride. He has never exhibited an arrogant, haughty spirit. Pride is a sin, and Jesus never sinned. (Hebrews 4:15, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

*An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin. (Proverbs 21:4-5)*

Christ, the only begotten Son of God, knew no sin; therefore, He did not know pride. However, He practiced humility and humbled Himself.

*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, **he humbled himself**, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. (Philippians 2:5-9)*

**Jesus humbled Himself not because He was proud, but because He wasn't.** Humbling Himself was not an act of war against a prideful heart and an arrogant spirit toward His Father. It was an act of obedience to His Father's voice and will. He willingly did so because He had no pride. Had He not humbled Himself to His Father's voice, will, purpose, and plan, pride would have been born in His heart.

**Pride is the fruit of disobedience and defiance against the will and purpose of God. Pride is the fruit of a will at war with God!**

If Lucifer had "remained" in the position of obedience before God, or in a humble position, pride would never have been born. His initial position before God was one of humility. Humility is not merely a means of dealing with pride; rather, it is by taking our proper position before God that pride is prevented and overcome.

Humility existed before pride, and pride came into existence because humility was defied. Allow me to reiterate that true humility is our bowed position before the throne and the sovereignty of God.

*For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. (Isaiah 14:13-14)*

The Hebrew word for humility is *an-aw-vaw*. This word encompasses condescension, modesty, and gentleness. *Aw-aw-vaw* derives from the root *aw-naw*, which means to abase oneself, afflict oneself, chasten oneself, deal harshly with, exercise force, hurt, and *submit oneself*.

The definitions of humility align perfectly with the ultimate meaning provided: submission. Therefore, the single word I would select to define true humility is "*submission*."

*But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. (James 4:6-7)*

Grace is the favor of God. Favor means working to another's advantage and showing approval, support, and preference. The grace of God is manifold (...as (be) good stewards of the manifold grace of God - 1 Peter 4:10).

God's grace, like everything in His Word, has two sides to it. On one side, God's favor is freely ministered to those who accept it, and on the other side, within God's manifold grace (meaning various in character and diverse kinds), is a favor given to those who find it by accomplishing something, those who strive to fulfill His will.

For example, *Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD* (Genesis 6:8). Why did Noah "find" (meaning to attain) this dimension of God's grace? Because *Noah walked with God*. (Genesis 6:9).

In a similar fashion, there is a favor and grace of God that is found and experienced only by the humble... James called it "more grace," or a greater dimension of grace.

God's grace is power; it is the power of God to achieve, accomplish, walk in, and fulfill God's purpose. We all need His grace, for without it we will surely fail. By humbling oneself and "submitting" to Him, we find MORE GRACE, meaning higher and larger portions, or greater power.

To submit means to subordinate, obey, be under obedience, subdue unto, be in subjection, and to be under and beneath a higher authority.

*Jesus humbled Himself by submitting to His Father's will. He became obedient unto death; He submitted! This is humility! As already stated, true submission, humility, was present in the realms of heaven long before pride was ever born.*

For submission to exist, there must be something or someone to submit to; someone in a higher position or place; someone of greater authority. He, the greater authority, was first, before all things – He is the Ancient of Days, the Almighty God, the unending, eternal One who has always been. Everything He created was created in a position of submission to Him, or under Him. *God did not create anything higher than Himself* – everything He made was made in submission to Him. In other words, submission existed before pride. Pride was the fruit of removing oneself from the position of submission!

Lucifer removed himself from the place and position of submission, never having known pride before. In his heart, he decided to exalt his throne above the stars of God – the angelic host. Take note, this was a heart decision – he never carried out his plan. Again, humility is the position of one's heart before God.

So, what is humility? What does it mean to "humble yourself under the mighty hand of God?" Simply put, it is returning to the original position in which humankind was created – the place of submission. You don't have to be the proudest person in the world to

practice submission. Humbling ourselves means going back to the beginning – back to the Father, back to the throne, and back to submission!

What is submission? Submission is the act or fact of accepting or yielding to a superior force or to the will or authority of another person.

*However, pride is born of a defiant heart that refuses to bow and submit to the will, authority, sovereignty, and purpose of God!*

We must closely examine the nature and character of God if we genuinely strive to emulate Him. Does God humble Himself? If so, since He knows no pride, to what or to whom does He humble Himself?

Yes, God humbles Himself.

It is difficult for the carnal mind of man to grasp the humility of God. We tend to perceive Him solely as seated on a grand throne, with a booming voice and earth-shattering power emanating from His presence.

While this is valid and true, it is nonetheless only one aspect of Him. God humbles Himself!

*The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth! He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people. (Psalm 113:4-8)*

God dwells on high, and yet...

- He humbles Himself to watch over His creation.
- He humbles Himself to lift the poor in spirit out of the dust and the needy from the dunghill.
- He humbles Himself to exalt those who are abased so that He can set them with princes in places of leadership and governance.

Let's examine another way in which God humbles Himself.

*I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. (Psalm 138:2-3)*

A name speaks of character, nature, and power. The Name of the LORD contains all there is to know about Him. His name is the reservoir of eternal power. God's name reveals every aspect of His nature, from the outer to the inner core. His name reveals His

glory. When Moses asked God to show him His glory, the LORD declared His name to him (Exodus 33:18, Exodus 34:5-7).

When Moses was privileged to see the glory of the LORD's Name, he immediately bowed in submission and worshipped (Exodus 34:8).

The Word is His eternal purpose and will, breathed and spoken from the mouth of God. God's Word contains His blueprint for creation and humanity. His Divine purpose is hidden within His Word. God's voice spoke His laws and principles into being. God subjects, or humbles, His own name under the Word that proceeded from His mouth. God submits His almighty and eternal name to the law and Word of His eternal purpose.

How often have we spoken words, for example, words of promise, but due to circumstances or changes in events, we decided not to keep our word? We therefore exalted our own nature or desires above what we had spoken. God does exactly the opposite. He humbles His nature, character, and name under His Word.

The nature and character of God demanded justice for Israel's idolatry. But God had spoken His word; therefore, He submitted His name to it. God is humble!

In the absence of pride, submission is no problem! But a proud heart does not bow. As the people of God, we must reposition our hearts before the LORD, submitting to His commands, purpose, will, and plan. This is humility.