

A Humble Heart

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having a humble heart before God, contrasting the dangers of pride with the blessings of humility. It explores the stories of Ahab and Manasseh, two wicked kings who, when humbling themselves, received God's mercy and restoration. The sermon highlights how God responds to humility, even in the most unlikely individuals, and encourages listeners to seek a heart of humility before God.

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:5, Matthew 18:4, John 13:5, 2 Chronicles 33:12, 1 Kings 21:29, Philippians 2:5, Isaiah 57:15, James 4:10, Proverbs 22:4

Topics: "Humility", "God's Mercy"

Description

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Transcript

I want you to turn in your Bible to 1 Peter chapter 5. 1 Peter chapter 5. We started a couple of Sundays ago on dealing with a heart for God or a heart after God. Or what does a heart look like that is set towards God? Or what does a man or woman look like who has the heart of God? I mean the heart that is in God or the heart that God is looking for. Take whatever way of explaining that you want to this morning.

But we started in part 1, we're in part 3 here. In part 1 we started looking at the danger of a hard heart. You cannot, and I cannot emphasize enough how dangerous a hard heart is.

Then secondly, last time, we looked at a broken and a contrite heart. To this man will God look. Him that is of a broken, remember what that was? Shattered into separate pieces.

To be contrite means to be crushed beyond repair. I assure you there is a crushing beyond repair that you want. Because God looks to that man and stays very close to that man.

But here this morning in part 3, I want to deal with a humble heart. Reading from 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 5. Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Ye, all of you, be subject one to another and be clothed with humility.

For, or for this reason, God resisteth the proud and he giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore, or because of this, under the mighty hand of God, that ye may, that he may exalt you in due time. Cast on all your care upon him, for he careth for you.

Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. Will you pray with me this morning as we seek to have the heart of God.

As we seek to understand the heart that God is searching for and looking for. I believe in these messages we are building a picture of what that heart looks like. Father, we do want to humble ourselves as we come to this message under the mighty hand of God.

We want to take heed to the word of God that says that you resist the proud. That you go to war against a proud man or a proud woman. You set enforcements and besiegements against a proud person.

But you gladly give grace, your ability, your strength, your influence, the very fragrance of heaven. You give all of that to the humble, to those that are broken, that are contrite, that tremble at your word. To this man will you look.

And oh God, we're desperate that you look to us. We're desperate, oh God, that you'd look at this church. We're desperate to draw your presence, the manifestation of your person, of your character, of your nature.

That your heart would abide here. That your eyes would be in this church. Lord God, we desire for a manifestation of the most high God.

Lord God, we have read in history what happened to nations and cities. When you rent the heavens and came down in the midst of a small gathering of believers. Lord God, nations were changed, mountains melted at your presence.

The enemy was vanquished for an hour and a time. Lord God, we're asking again that you do find a contrite people, a broken people, a trembling people, and a humble people. Soften our hearts this morning by your grace and your mercy in Jesus' mighty name.

Amen. In these messages, we're seeking to reveal a certain kind of heart. It says in the Old Testament in 1 Samuel chapter 13 and 14, about the older King Saul and the young David, who's being anointed of God for the task to replace him.

Listen to what it says. But now thy kingdom, Samuel speaking to Saul, now thy kingdom shall not continue. Do you know why God spoke it to a man that was king, the anointed of Israel, who had delivered the entire nation from her enemies? Do you know why God says your kingdom will not continue? Because of a certain kind of heart.

Two years before this, he had another heart, a humble heart, a broken heart. He was small in his own eyes. Remember on the Wednesday night when we preached on that, being small in your own eyes.

Saul had a certain kind of heart. So God anointed him and raised him up and used him and gifted him. But here he is saying, your kingdom's not going to continue.

Elsewhere he says, I reject you. I refuse you. I remove you.

I'm cutting you off. In fact, the prophet of God said, I'll never come and see you again. I'll never speak to you again.

God, for the next 38 years, never once spoke to him. He sat in meetings. He sat under preaching.

But God never spoke to him. He had to go to a witch to try and get God to speak to him, to hear anything supernatural. God had cut him off.

You know why? Because of a certain kind of heart. But listen to the rest of the verse. The Lord has sought him a man after his own heart.

Imagine being told by God himself, you are not such a man. I am rejecting you. And I am actually in search, seeking after a man who has my heart, who is after my heart, who is actually longing for my heart.

You see, I am setting you aside. I'm not interested in you. I don't care about your gifting and your ministry and your position and your height and your looks and your words.

I don't care about it. I don't care about your past testimony. I don't care about your great fighting against the enemies of God.

I don't care about any of that. Do you know what I am seeking after? Do you know what I am searching after? Is a man after my own heart. That's what I'm looking for.

If you understand this this morning and what we're saying in these messages, you will understand God, the pursuit of God in this generation. Do you know God is looking for a man, looking for a woman, looking for a church, looking for a people who are after his own heart. Can I ask you, are you a people after God's own heart? Are you a man or a woman who has a heart, a condition of heart that is after God's own heart? Are you such a man or woman? Because if you are, God is seeking for you.

God is actually looking, searching the nation, the city, this entire generation saying, I want such a man. I want such a woman. I want such a church.

He'll bypass kings and kingdoms, the anointing, the gifting, the numbers. He'll bypass it all to find one such man, a little shepherd boy on the hillside who's forgotten about by his own father, who's disregarded by his own brothers, and he's left out there looking after a handful of sheep that don't even really belong to him. That's my man.

That's who I'm seeking for. I'm not in the palace. I'm not even in Jerusalem.

I'm going out to little Bethlehem, and I find a little 17-year-old boy on the hillside. Do you see the heart of God? Do you see the plan of God? God's like this this morning, you know. And it goes on, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.

Saul, do you know why I've rejected you? You've got no interest in keeping the word of God. I know your heart. I know your attitude.

I know your thoughts. You are not interested in keeping my commands. You disregard it.

Therefore, I disregard you. Can I tell you, your attitude to God's word is God's attitude towards you. Do you realize that? How you treat the commands of Scripture is how God will treat you.

That's either going to scare you this morning and make you a Saul, or else you're going to be very glad this morning and say, I want to be a David this morning. When you come over to the New Testament in Acts 13, 22, again it says this, and when he had removed him, that is Saul, he raised up unto them David to be their king, to whom also he gave testimony. And he said, I have found David the son of Jesse.

Do you see that? God had sought for a man and he found a man. He laid his hand on young David. He said, I found him, a man after my own heart.

I have been searching. I have been seeking. I have been desiring this.

I reject those in the church that don't have a heart after me, but I'm seeking for someone. He said, he found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all of my will. What is a heart after God? Someone who will fulfill all of his will.

You can either fulfill your will, your plans, your desires, or you have a heart to say, God, not my will, your will. That is a heart after God. Is your heart after God? You say, oh, I want him to save me.

I want him to bless me. I want him to answer my prayers. That isn't necessarily a heart after God.

Do you know what a heart after God is? God, I want to do your will. God, what do you want me to do? God, I'm going to keep your commandments. Lord, I want to know your heart.

I'm here for you. And so we see someone who thinks the church revolves around them. They go church shopping.

They go looking and going, what can this church offer me? They're going to be in trouble. Whereas if we come to God saying, God, what do you want me to do for you? What is your will for me? That is a whole different thing. You remember last time we dealt with Isaiah 57.

And it says there, for thus saith the high and the lofty one that inhabits eternity, whose name is holy. I will dwell in the high and holy place with him also that is of a contrite. And listen to this, humble spirit.

That's our message this morning. Do you see what I'm doing is building a picture of the heart that God is after, or a heart after God. What does it mean to have a heart for God? What does that mean? What does that look like? We've already began to look.

It's going to be a soft heart. It's going to be a broken heart. It's going to be a contrite heart.

Now it's going to be a humble heart. And so in Isaiah 57, it puts humility beside contriteness. Don't think these are all different separate hearts.

What I'm showing you in these messages is marks of that heart that's after God. What is a heart after God? It's broken. You can't have a heart after God and not be broken.

If you've got it all put together and all of your plans and you're not broken to his feet, you do not have a heart after God. But connected to a broken heart is a humble spirit to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. And so we see humility goes with brokenness and contrition.

But here this morning, let me deal with a humble heart. What does it mean? What does it look like to have this humble heart? As we just read 1 Peter chapter 5 and 5, likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Peter here is just about to talk about humility.

And before I leave him to talk about humility, he talks about submission. Do you realize that submission, a heart that says, I will submit to my brother and sister, is the essential element of humility. If you think you're humble, but you are not easily submissive to those around you, you're not humble.

Because submission is central to being a humble person. If you don't easily submit and yield and come under and find your place, you're not humble. You're actually not humble.

Look what it says in verse 5. Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Then he goes further. Ye, all of you be subject one to another and clothed with humility.

So we say in here that you've got to be submitted one to the other. Submission is absolutely essential. You'll remember in Ephesians chapter 5, verse 21, we read, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

And then he goes on all the way through the chapter 6, verse 9, all the way through Ephesians. He deals with husbands and wives and children and servants in the workplace. And he deals with submission and authority and coming under all of these areas of submission.

But do you know what he says? We all submit to one another. In the church, we all submit. I am submitted to you.

Do you realize that? Do you realize my entire life is submitted to you in this church? And all of you ought to be submitted to me and all of you ought to be submitted to one another. Do you realize that is the mark of humility? And without this mutual submission, we do not have humility. It is the mark.

It is the very basis of true, genuine humility. And you cannot be clothed with humility as an individual unless you have this, unless you have this attitude. The word submitting here, hypotasso in the Greek, it means to be arranged in right order under somebody else or to stand in right relationship to others that are around you.

It means to find your right place in the church and to stay there. You know, if you're given a God-given place in the church or calling or task, and you're always trying to move into someone else's task, do you realize you're not in submission? Do you realize if you're a covenant, I could do that, I should do that, I should be recognized, do you realize you're not a submitted person? To be a submitted person is you find your place and say, all hell will not move me from this. I find my place, I know the will of God, I know how to function towards others.

This is submission. It is to arrange the entire church, to assign everyone to their right place, for everyone to fit a certain task and to stand there unmovable. This is mutual submission in the body of Christ.

But notice what Peter says here, having talked about submission, yes, you younger ones better submit to the older. Are you going to say amen, brother chair? I'm sure that those younger ones, you are commanded to submit to the older. If you're younger, it's a basic attitude of heart that you submit, you show respect.

Hasn't it been destroyed in this generation? You can't tell me what to do. I don't need to listen to you. It used to be when I was young, and that's not that long ago.

If a lady come in, you'd open the door for her. If an older person come in, you stood up and gave them your seat. This was basic things in society.

We have destroyed it. There is a new attitude come in and it has destroyed all of these things. Peter says here, for you Christians who are submitting to one another in the church, what does he go on to say? Be clothed with humility.

And I want you to underline this and understand this term. It's so important. If you're to have the heart of God in the church or a heart for God or the heart of God, you're going to have to clothe yourself with humility.

Be clothed with humility. That's not an option. That's a command.

That's not for certain people in the church. That's for every Christian is commanded to be clothed with humility. It's a command.

It's a actual must. It means that in the church, if you're not clothed with humility, do you know what you are? If you're proud and arrogant and selfish and independent, do you know what you are? You're naked this morning. You are a shameful thing here this morning.

You ought to be ashamed of yourself. You see, to be clothed with humility is the actual proper clothing of a Christian. Let me go a little bit deeper because it's so important.

The word to be clothed here means to be girded round about you. Listen, the actual Greek word means you've got tethers. There's a garment that you're wearing, a garment you're putting on over your body, over your clothes, and that garment has tethers or ties, and you have to tie yourself with knots.

That's what the Greek means. And when you tie and knot it, do you know what it is? It's like an apron you've just put on. Follow me with this.

It's very important. And so Peter is saying to everyone in the church, you are to clothe yourself, put on this garment of humility. It's an apron that you put on.

Not everyone wears an apron. I rarely wear an apron in our house. I want to tell you someone else wears the apron in our house.

And if you ever have a meal at our house, you'll be very glad I don't wear the apron, I want to assure you. But hear this word for being clothed round about. This garment, this apron is the mark of a servant.

And when you had a great feast and all the people gathered together, the servants at the meal were marked by this garment. They wore a white garment. It was the mark of a servant.

You're there with a task at that meal. You're not sitting down. You're not eating.

You're not feeding yourself. You're not satisfying yourself. The servant is actually clothed.

It was the emblem of a servant. It was the mark of a servant to have this garment upon him. He was recognized by it.

The Greek word here is a unique word used only here in the New Testament. And it is for this very unusual, unique garment. An old Bible teacher called Moffat from Scotland, listen to how he translated this.

He says, put on the apron of humility. Another Bible teacher said this, Ellicott. He said, tie yourself up in humility.

So there's no room for pride. You're all tied up, knotted up in humility. I've got this humility tied on.

It's not getting off. Some people tie to themselves pride and destroy themselves. Lightfoot, the great Greek Hebrew scholar of England, listen to what he said.

This word is not found in classical Greek at all. Sorry, let me just move to the word humility. The word humility, clothed in humility is not found in classical Greek.

You can search all the writers. They never use this word for humility. So you're to be clothed with humility.

And you know all the culture in around the early church, all the Roman culture, all the Greek culture, they didn't use this word humility. They actually, it wasn't in their tongue. They didn't use it.

They didn't talk about being humble. It was utterly ignored. But when the Greeks did start to use it, it was a very negative thing.

You didn't want to be this. To be humble meant you're very low caste. You are at the bottom of the barrel.

You are nothing. You're not to be recognized. You're a non-entity.

That's what the word meant. And so the Greeks and the Romans, they said, we don't want to be humble. We are not desiring to be humble.

And you know what? The Christian church was to be marked with humility. The Roman empire and soldiers in the Roman empire, do you know what they desired? It was ambition. It was the highest rung to push your way to the front or to push your way up the ladder.

That was the mark of Roman Greek culture, but not humility. Notice in these verses, Peter goes further. You're to clothe yourself.

You're to put on this garment of being a servant or submitting to one another. You're to tie it around your body. In fact, in the church, you're to be recognized by this garment.

You put on humility and I should recognize the humility that you're clothed in it, that you've tied it to your body and that you're a servant to the body of Christ. I ought to see that, not by your words, but by your action, by an attitude of heart. I am clothed with this mark of humility.

It goes further and it says here in Peter that God resisted the pride. You're to be clothed with humility. Why? You better this morning be clothed with humility.

You don't want the other. You don't want to disobey this. I promise you, you don't want to forget this.

You don't want to miss this because if you do not have a heart after God, you really have a serious problem. In fact, I believe many in the church have serious problems because they're proud in heart and

they think it's the devil. Devil, I bind you.

Devil, get behind me. The devil's giving me a hard time. No, he isn't.

You're not doing anything for God. You think the devil's caught up with you and saying, oh, she's so dangerous. She's so righteous and holy that I have to pursue after.

The devil's not a bit interested in you. Do you know what your problem is? You're proud and arrogant in heart. Peter actually gives a very clear warning in this scripture.

You better be clothed in humility for God resisteth the proud. The word resisteth there is the Greek word for organizing an entire army, marching to war. Not one soldier, not one general.

It's the general putting an entire army organizing it and say, we marched out to war against who? A proud person. Do you know God goes to war with proud people? Sinners in the world, as well as Christians in the church. It is the attitude of heart.

Don't think it's only sinners that God is against. Oh no, if you get someone in the church who is proud, God marches or goes to war. He resists you.

He stops you. You're not getting past. You're not gonna do your will.

You're not gonna go forward. You're not gonna accomplish your own little life. You see, God goes to war and this pride, God resisteth the proud.

Who are the proud? The word means to appear above all others. You wanna be seen as being above certain others around you. You look down upon others.

You want it to be manifest and seen that you are better than others, that there is something good in you. That is pride. And wherever God finds that in a heart, he resists it.

He goes to war. Do you know it's so dangerous in your heart? Even as a Christian, pride is so dangerous. God doesn't go to war with you.

It's with that pride. That pride will destroy you. That pride will undermine you.

That pride will destroy everything that is precious. And so he says, he resists the pride, but he gives grace to the humble. Pride and humility.

Resisting and giving grace. Who does God give grace to? The humble. Do you need God's grace? What is God's grace? It is his ability, his influence, his strength.

It's the actual influence of heaven. Who does God give grace to? To the humble. If you humble yourself, God gives you grace.

If you become proud, God resists you. And so we're to be clothed and marked by humility. Or we're gonna find we're at war with God.

There's attitudes in our heart that God says, that isn't okay. I'm against it. I fight against it.

You know, people can think it's the devil when it's actually the character of God. What you need to discern is, is there pride in my heart? I'll never forget the day in a breaking of bread service. And I've told you about this before.

And it wasn't this church. It was another church. And as I sat there, almost unexpectedly, proud thoughts, simple thoughts rose up in that mind against the guy that was breaking bread, sharing in that service.

I mean, little, tiny, unexpected thoughts that I never thought were there. They rose up against that man thinking, there's no ability to do what he's meant to be doing. Do you know, I went through the most terrible time.

God smoked my heart. I was broken. I said, God, I do not want to take the Lord's table this morning while this is in my heart.

Oh God, I began to repent. You'll say, that's nothing. I know, I know.

If you ever have an experience of God dealing with something small in your heart, it feels like an unforgivable sin. It feels like leprosy has attached itself. You say, oh God, get this off me.

God, I don't want this in my heart. You will cry out to God for deliverance. And so he says, humble yourself, clothe yourself with humility.

God gives grace to the humble. I want to have a humble heart. You know why? God looks at that heart.

God is drawn towards that heart. God gives bountifully towards that heart. The word humility in the Old Testament and the New Testament means to be low, to lie very low or to be very close to the ground.

That's true humility. You're not exalted. You try to get as low as you possibly can.

It means to afflict yourself in heart, in attitude. It means to rend your heart before God. It's a violent thing.

Humility is a violent thing against anything that contradicts humility. It is a true deep sense of your own littleness. When you look at yourself and you feel your littleness before God, that is humility.

Don't define it any other way. It is a mind that thinks little of itself in relation to other people. It is a true perspective of yourself before God.

And listen, it is produced. How do you produce this? It's produced by comparing yourself to the Lord. Do you know what pride is? Comparing yourself with others.

Pride is always marked. You look at others and compare yourself with Jimmy or Sally. And you're marked by pride.

You're comparing yourself. But if you want to produce humility, you know what I'd suggest you do? Compare yourself to God. Compare yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now you see yourself as you truly are. Are you a servant? Christ was. Are you humble? Christ was.

Are you taking the low place? Christ did. Are you going the way of the cross to say, let me die for the sake of others? Christ did. Do you see the mark of humility there? What it is? It's produced by comparing yourself to God, not others.

It is modesty of heart, meekness of attitude, poverty of spirit, lowliness of character. It is to have a low status. And that's what it was in the Roman culture and Greek culture.

It was to have a low status, to be undistinguished, to go unnoticed. Could you imagine at one of these big feasts when you've got all these important dignitaries sitting around the table and you're the servant that night, one of 10 servants, and you've got your apron on and you've pulled it tight and you've got your nuts at the back and you're carrying the plates out and there you are looking for attention. Can you imagine that? And you're there saying, do you know, have you noticed what I'm doing? Are you going to thank me? Are you going to acknowledge it? Are you going to do a toast to me tonight at the end of this beautiful meal? Should I not be the center of this? And yet that's the attitude of many.

I haven't been recognized. Why didn't they mention my name? What about me? I should be more noticed. I should be center stage.

What they don't realize is that's the embodiment of pride. Pride actually marks them. A servant ought to be unnoticed, ought to be undistinguished from the crowd.

It is a position of low status. Jesus says in Matthew 11, 29, take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. Can I ask you, are you yoked to Christ? Do you want to learn humility? Do you want to have a heart after God that is a humble heart? You need to be yoked with the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is lowly. Remember how I wrote into Jerusalem, lowly, humble, a lowly position on the back of an ass coming in and they sang Hosanna. What a position.

Do you know there's a day Christ is going to come riding on a white horse with a sword in his mouth to wreak judgment on the nations, but not that day, not today, not in the church of this hour. I want to assure you, we need to be yoked to the Lord Jesus Christ. If you're not joined him, you're not humble.

If you're not fellowshiping with him, if you don't spend time with him, if you're not learning from him, you will not be meek and lowly. He is the embodiment of this. In Matthew 20, he said, whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.

It's the same word. Or in Luke chapter 18, every one of you that exalteth himself shall be a beast and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. And so Peter writing here in chapter 5 verse 6, he says, humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time.

You know the pathway to God exalting you, promoting you, using you, opening doors to you. Do you know how you get there? Through humility of heart. God will shut doors in your face where humility is lacking.

God will not exalt you. Men with pride are ambitious. See in the church, they're ambitious for ministry and their ambition is for position.

But God says, I don't exalt men like that. You've got to be humble. You've got to be lowly.

You've got to become insignificant. Then God works to exalt you. In Philippians chapter 2, there's only my introduction.

Two, three hours here, okay? Stand if you're tired. Philippians chapter 2 verse 5, let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ. And he goes on there to deal with the mind of Christ.

What sort of mind was in the Lord Jesus Christ? It says in verse 7, he made himself of no reputation. That is an act. To humble yourself is your action.

Nobody's going to do that for you. There's no point praying the prayer making, Lord, humble me. You won't find a prayer in the Bible like that.

God commands you, humble yourself before me. Humble yourself under my mighty hand. You know, my hand has the power to hold you down.

And my hand has the power to lift you up. You better humble yourself under my hand because I can do anything. I can take the last breath of the King, Putin, Biden.

I can take their breath today. I have the power. I can dash them down or I can lift them up.

Nobody can oppose that. You realize humbling yourself under the hand of God is the greatest thing. Jesus said he made himself of no reputation.

What do we do? We want a reputation. We build a reputation. You know, online with churches and ministries, we're trying to build a reputation.

All the time Christ said, I made myself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant. He chose to do that. He says, I want to be a servant.

I want to serve mankind. It goes further. I was in the fashion of a man.

He humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Even the death of the cross. Christ humbled himself.

You realize putting yourself in such a position, going the way of the cross, dying for others, walk in the place of suffering for other men and women, that is humbling yourself. Let me give you three points here concerning a humble heart that I believe are very important. Number one, the greatest enemy of humility is pride.

Pride is the most destructive thing that you can ever imagine. The greatest enemy of humility is pride. Do you realize what the first sin was? It wasn't Adam and Eve in the garden.

That was not the first sin. It wasn't Eve disobeying God's command. Don't touch that tree.

That was not the first sin. The first sin was Satan's rebellion against God. Pride found in his heart.

Listen to what it says in the Bible. Isaiah chapter 14 verse 12. Heard thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning? Heard thou cut down to the ground which did weaken the nations? For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven.

I will exalt my throne above the stars. 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. Yea, thou shalt be brought down to hell to the sides of the pit. And so we see that Lucifer was created as a musical instrument.

Scholars believe he led the worship of heaven. And that's why he uses music in our world. He was a beautiful angel.

In fact, he was a unique angel. He was the covering cherub. He was given the job, the position, the anointing.

He's the anointed one. So he's a music leader. He's got the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

He has a position. He has a task. And he covered the glory of God's throne.

You can't get any closer to God. You know what? People, when they get close to God, think they're like God. And they act like God.

And they try to take a position that is not theirs. That's the danger of spiritual things. Oh, I walk with God.

I know God. I know church. I know ministry.

I know the Bible. If you're not very careful and keep humility, you could be in dangerous ground. Here's Lucifer in the very presence of the Lord.

He's called the carrier or bearer of light. He is an angelic being of extraordinary power. Do you know God endowed him with great wisdom? As few beings in all of creation, God actually gave him wisdom and put him in that position.

You know what happened? Pride was found in his heart. It says also in Ezekiel 28, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Cyprus and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God, Thou sealest up the sun full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Then verse 13, he moves to not a physical king, but the spiritual power behind him.

The physical king was proud. I wonder why. Do you know why Eve began to say, I could be like God? Because someone was speaking to her who's very proud.

His words were proud. Did God say that's pride? Do you not know that God is keeping something back for you? You're in this legalistic Christianity with boundaries. You could be free, you could be under grace.

There's no law. Someone got onto me during the week saying, because I pointed out that wine wasn't just alcoholic. There were 13 different words in our English Bible.

13 different Hebrew and Greek words for our one word wine. And I said, you know, one glass of wine, you've lost 25% of your response time. And so you're trying to bring me under law and under legalism.

I said, no, no, sir, I'm telling you some basic facts, but you think I'm attacking your grace? We're in a messed up hour. You know, when Satan came to Eve, he's filled with pride and arrogance. And you know what his words were? They were poisoned with pride.

You realize Eve took on and swallowed pride. She didn't just eat fruit that day. She ate poisonous words that were filled with pride.

She started to think, I can be like God. I can have my eyes open. I can have the knowledge of what's good and what's wrong.

I don't need to live under boundaries. I know better than God. Oh, how dangerous.

Listen to what it says here in chapter 28, 13. Thou hast been an Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was thy covering.

The sardus, the topaz, the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, the carbuncle and gold. The workmanship of thy tablets, pipes, of thy pipes was prepared in the day that thou was created. Lucifer, you're created.

I created pipes within your body, a musical instrument. I created you, but you want to exalt yourself. Can you imagine a man born 30 years ago being proud against God? I know better than God.

I don't need to do that. It doesn't matter how I live. It doesn't matter how I think.

Do you know what that is? And you think you'll be okay. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth, and I have set thee so. Thou was upon the holy mount of God.

Thou walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou was perfect in thy ways from the day that thou was created till iniquity was found in thee. It goes further to say about his beauty, his brightness, his wisdom and of the pride that is found in his heart that exalted him.

This is why I think in the church, there's a war on the danger of pride. Pride is dangerous in this church. Pride is dangerous in your heart.

Pride is dangerous in your marriage. Pride is dangerous in ministry. One of the great things I hate in ministry is reverence.

I'll never call a man reverent. Reverence is only used to one person in the entire Bible, and his name is the Lord Jesus Christ. Reverent means to revere or hold in highness.

And there's only one man called reverent, the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why Jesus talked, don't call a man father. Don't seek after titles.

I heard a man once begin to call himself revivalist. He claimed the title. There's no revival.

He's not seeing thousands saved. He said, I am a revivalist. You ought to call me a revivalist.

Nothing of the sort. There's something wrong with seeking after that, seeking after positions where you manipulate, you move, whether in friendship or in the church. You begin to blacken someone to get in close by someone else.

You know what that is? That's pride. And God resists the pride. Self-exaltation.

Pardon me. Independence of spirit. The serpent's words carried the poison of hell, and it's embodied in pride.

Pride is the source of every sin. Humility is the source of all holiness. You know, in the nine fruit of the spirit, there's no fruit of humility.

There is none. Because all of the fruit come out of a humble heart. They all grew in that ground.

There's a thing much talked about in our generation called narcissism. I don't know whether you know about it, but it is widely talked about. It is a self-centered personality.

In fact, doctors now have it as a mental medical condition, an illness that they treat with drugs and psychology and counseling. They'll say, oh, this isn't sin. This is actually a sickness, and we want to help you with it.

You're a narcissist. You are a self-centered, ignorant, rude person. No, they don't say that.

They say you're a poor soul who thinks that you're the center of your world, and you have no thought about anyone else, no natural compassion, no feeling. You are the center of your world. And you know what? It's such a terrible sickness.

We want to help you with it, and we understand that your mommy didn't treat you right, or your daddy didn't love you as he ought to. And so you're a terribly spoiled person. Now, really, I think a good rod when they're a young child would have helped them an awful lot with this, would have a whole lot less of it, I can assure you.

But what they say is it's a preoccupation with your own needs, often at the expense of others. It's a fixation with yourself. And narcissism is taken from an old Greek mythological person called Narcissus.

And this Narcissus, there's about several different stories or versions. You know, when you get one of these old myths, and they write different versions of it, all similar but close, you know what that means? It was such a good story that someone says, I think I can improve that. It's such a brilliant story.

Let's just add a little bit. And so we've got seven different stories about it. But here's the gist of it, that he was created by the gods looking so, so uniquely beautiful like nobody else.

Doesn't it sound like Satan? Do you realize some people, if God had made them as beautiful as they desire to be, it would probably end them in hell. Or if they had the voice that they covet to have, it would probably have destroyed you through fame. Or some gift to preach or eloquence or notability in the world.

Do you realize those things? If God had given it to you, it may well have destroyed you and put you in hell. Do you realize how dangerous the thing you could be saying, if only I had that, I want that, I desire that, I covet that. Do you realize how dangerous it could have been? I can't even emphasize that enough.

But Narcissus, he actually was so beautiful that he was told, his mother was told at his birth, that he would live a very long life if he never discovered himself or recognized how beautiful he was. Many girls came along, falling in love with him and young men who wanted a relationship with him. And he shunned all their proposals, saying, I'm too beautiful for you.

I'm utterly unique. You're not beautiful enough for me. And so the gods decided to teach him a lesson.

And one day they provided a pool and he came along and he looked in the pool and he seen his own reflection and he fell in love with himself. He said, aha, this is the man for me. This man is so beautiful.

He'll love me the way I deserve. And he become infatuated with his own picture in the pool. I mean, he gazed at himself and spoke to himself and admired himself.

But you know what he found in that pool? The image could not love him and satisfy his demand to be uniquely loved. And so one story says he committed suicide because he could not get satisfied or have someone love him as he deserved. And another one says that he died there of a broken heart.

And in his place, a yellow golden flower grew up called a daffodil. I told Candice this morning, enjoy your daffodils. You'll look at them differently later today.

Enjoy them this morning. Every time you look at a daffodil during the springtime, you're going to think of narcissism, Satan. But let me tell you something more dangerous, pride.

See, we all can laugh at that. Do you know, I've met young guys in this city who used to come to this church. My entire life, I never met guys that were infatuated with themselves, but I met it in this city.

Never seen it before in my life. I went, guys who constantly look in the mirror. I want to tell you, when we were young, we didn't do that.

In fact, you would be called some names if you'd done that. It's not natural. When you're consumed doing that, there's something seriously wrong.

That isn't even normal pride or normal flesh. You've got a serious problem and it's not a medical problem or mental. It is a hard attitude.

Pride is dangerous to humility. One of the big preachers in America at the minute, he says he is the only preacher in the world that preaches the cross. Nobody else knows how to preach the cross.

Nobody else has a true revelation. His name is Swaggart. And in the late eighties, I can remember watching BBC as he wept having committed fornication with a prostitute and he got caught.

And so he wept. And a few years later, he'd done it again. And then several years later, he got a revelation of the cross.

And he said, ah, I know why I sinned because I didn't have this revelation. Now he's in America saying, all of you are wrong. No other preacher preaches it.

The Pentecostals never preached this. The Baptists don't preach it. Only I preach it.

Only I have the revelation. Number two, two great examples of humility. I'm going to be very brief on this.

What did Jesus do in Matthew 18? He sat a child before them. Remember what they're doing? Talking about who's the greatest. Do you know what that is? Do you know what pride is? It is to lift yourself up and to look down on others.

You cannot think that you're greater than others and not be proud. It's impossible. You cannot be there with attitudes going, look at them.

I'm better than them. That's pride. And it's from the serpent.

And I'll destroy you. You think it's harmless. No, it's not.

You think you're the best preacher, the best singer, the best guitar player. What is it? The most beautiful. If you ever meet a girl and she knows that she's beautiful, it's a horrid thing.

I don't know where you've had that. You meet a beautiful girl. She knows she's beautiful.

You know, for a guy, it's disgusting. I don't care how beautiful you look. Your attitude utterly makes you into a monster.

You're horrible. You're disgusting. You're vile.

And yet this world thinks that's beauty. It's not beauty. You know, in the Proverbs, it actually says to fear God.

That is true beauty. To actually have the fear of God. And so Jesus, they're all arguing who is the greatest.

He comes and sets a child in the midst of them. I'm talking about two examples. This is my point.

Two great examples of humility. And they're all saying, who's the greatest? Jesus looks at the child and he says, there you have it. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Humble yourself. It's a choice. Like a little child and you'll be the greatest.

Jesus gave the example. You know what the other example was? Remember at the last supper when he's going to wash their feet. They gather for the last supper.

And you know, in those days, there was always a servant. Like I said, you'd go to a gathering. You'd go to the restaurant and say they provided a last supper, a meal, a Passover.

Where's the servant? Because when we arrive, we need our feet washed. We've traveled. We've walked.

We've been on those dusty roads. So there'll always be someone here and you'll recognize them with that apron on. And so they come in.

John comes in and goes, oh, he must be a bit late. Maybe he's getting some more stuff for the table. Just wait here.

I'll sit down. Peter comes in, goes, man, who's going to be washing? Well, John won't be doing it. I wonder who.

We'll just wait on the guy. I'm sure he's just popped out for a minute. And one by one, Matthew comes and Simon comes and I'll sit down.

And they're going, I wonder when we're going to get started. And Jesus comes in. Do you hear what I'm saying? John chapter 13, we're told about this concerning Christ.

Listen, he rises from supper, laid aside his garments and he took a towel and he girded himself round about. He made himself the servant and he pours water into a basin and he began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Do you realize he took on the lowest position? He said, all of you are too proud to do this.

Peter, you wouldn't have done this. And John, you wouldn't have done. The one who loves me, you wouldn't do this.

You're the youngest one here and you wouldn't do it. You know what? I'll do it. I'll wash all your feet.

Judas, I know you're going to betray me. Thomas, I know you're going to doubt me. Peter, I know you're going to deny me.

I know all of you apart from John is going to run and scatter. And he got down on his knees, took the garment of a servant and he began to wash. I know who you are.

I know you. I know everything about you. I'm going to wash your feet.

If there's anyone in this room whose feet you wouldn't wash, you've got a problem. If there's anyone who comes in and out of our meetings and if we had a foot washing service and you said, nobody would get me to wash their feet, you really have a problem. Listen to what Jesus said.

He says, know you what I have done? You call me master and Lord and you say, well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them. I've only been in one service, foot washing service in my life.

And that's shocking in the church of our generation. And you know whose feet I washed in that meeting? Brother Tommy McKinstry from the north. Thankfully, I was happy to do his feet.

Two great examples of humility. Christ says, don't you know what I've done? You's bunch have not learned very much. Pushing for the greatest position in ministry, I think I'm first.

I think I'm first. Don't you understand what this is about? Clothe yourself with humility in the church, one towards another. This is an example.

Third and finally, two surprising cases of humility. And if you hear this as I close, this is a bombshell. If you don't know what I'm about to tell you, these scriptures, I have sat in awe of them.

Because I'm going to show you God's heart response when he finds humility. But you know the two examples I'm going to give you, I believe they're the greatest examples in the entire Bible. And you're going to be surprised.

They're the two most wicked men in the entire Bible. They're named such, they're described such, they're the most vile, wicked, evil men. And yet when humility were found in their heart, God immediately was there and responded to that humility.

Do you know one day reading this and reading those scriptures, I said, God, if that's your heart in finding humility in a wicked, vile man, what is it for someone like me who loves you with all my heart, but I need to humble myself? The first is in 1 Kings chapter 21. Do you know what his name is? Ahab, the king of Israel who sold himself to do evil, who married Jezebel, that wicked queen. This man was vile, utterly vile.

And in chapter 21, we read the story how he desired the vineyard of Naboth. He cried, he went back to his wife. He says, I want that vineyard.

He's got all the vineyards he wants. He's got all the money, but he goes crying to his wife. I want that one.

He's like a little child and says, just leave it with me. I'll get it for you. She killed him, took it and says, it's yours.

Listen to what God responds. God sends Elijah to him and says, you know what, Elijah? You're so wicked, so vile, so despicable, so beyond imagination. I have had it with you.

Do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to cut you off today. I'm going to kill you. I'm going to destroy you.

I'm fed up with you. You're a vile man. This is your last day.

And God sends a prophet. Listen to how he responds. It's so important.

I'm talking about a humble heart. And if you hear what I say when I close, you're going to realize how precious humility is to God. Verse 29, sorry, verse 27.

And it came to pass when Ahab heard these words, that he rent his clothes, he put sackcloth and ash upon his flesh. He fasted, lay in sackcloth, and he went softly. Verse 29, then seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

Ahab was the most vile man. He didn't get saved. It wasn't repentance that sent him to heaven, but it was a brokenness of humility that said, I'm sorry, he got low.

And God says, you know what? I'm not going to do it. This is a vile, wicked man that never made it to heaven. And God says, you know what? I'm going to delay it to your children.

It won't come in your day. Do you see how God looks at humility when a vile, wicked, evil king like that humbles himself? And God says, okay. Do you see how God responds? Do you not think when you humble yourself in an act this afternoon or this evening, and you get along with God, and you range your heart and say, oh God, don't you know an act of humility God sees and God responds to? Don't you know that? And it can make a difference in your life.

We say, God, I'm sorry. And you lower your views of yourself. The other example is in 2 Chronicles 33, and his name was Manasseh, King Manasseh of Judah.

You know what the Bible says? He was the most evil king in Judah, in Jerusalem, in all of history. He was a vile man. We read in 2 Chronicles 33, all of his sins, he put abominations in the house of God.

He destroyed the religion of his father. You know who his father was? Hezekiah, the revivalist. And there was revival in the land.

When this young boy, only as a boy, he reigned as king 55 years, longer than any other king in Israel or in Judah. He was the king that gained sovereignty longer than any. But he was a vile, wicked man.

He destroyed an entire revival. He destroyed the house of God. Listen to what happened.

God sent the Assyrians against him, defeated their army, took him prisoner, carried him to Babylon, and he's sitting in a prison in Babylon. Do you know what he does as vile, wicked man? If he humbled himself,

would you forgive him? You say, sir, if you're right, you can stay there and rot until you end up in hell. That's what you would say.

That's what I would say. You deserve it. You destroyed an entire revival.

Hezekiah's revival. You destroyed it. You destroyed God's house.

You're a vile man. Listen to what the Bible says. That's why I know this book is real.

This is a real book, not mere myths and stories. It says there in chapter 33, verse 12, And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God. He humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.

He prayed unto him, and he was entreated of him. And he heard his supplication, and he brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.

Do you really realize this evil, wicked man was forgiven and restored? And God says, I'm going to bring you out of Babylon, out of prison, and bring you right back into Jerusalem again, and restore everything because of one act of humbling himself. One act in one day, in one night, he humbled himself, and God restores him. Ahab and Manasseh.

These are two surprising cases of humility. They're extraordinary. And if you begin to understand this, you'll realize that the act of humbling yourself is a powerful thing.

It can turn the hand of God. It can change the destiny of your life. It could affect this church and what we accomplish in the future.

It could affect my life and my ministry because I humbled myself before God. If God responded to wicked men, you know what God's doing? He is searching the nations. He is looking.

He wants to find a man or a woman who has a heart after him. And that heart is not only a broken contrite heart, but it is a humble heart for the Lord. As we close here, we're going to sing a song called, If Thou Wouldst Have the Dear Savior from Heaven, Walk by Thy Side from the morn to the evening.

This song is birthed by God. I consider it one of the greatest hymns I've sang. It has all the elements of how to get God to walk with you, of brokenness and humility.

Will you pray with me here this morning? As we close in prayer, can we humble ourselves? Lord God, we love you. And we know this morning that you're searching the nations. It's an evil and a dark hour.

And yet you are actively searching for people in your church, in the nations, in government. Lord God, in our cities and towns, in this church, you're looking for someone that will rend their heart, that will humble themselves. Lord God, that will seek you earnestly, that will desperately lay a hold of you, that will cause themselves to take a low position, that will bind on or garment themselves with humility.

You are seeking for such individuals. This is where your heart is. This is where your search is.

This is where your desire is. And Father, I pray for all of those online, for all of those here in this meeting this morning. Father, I pray, oh God, be very gracious onto us.

As we humble ourselves, we need your grace. We wanna draw your presence. We want your hand to be open to us and that you will exalt us in due time.

We do love you this morning and we bless you. In Jesus' mighty name.

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