

The Power of Humility

Do you have any idea how much God loves you? Do you have any idea how special you are to Him? Anybody could have been born in any time and place and God picked you to be born now.

He wanted you. He has a plan for your life. He wants you to turn to Him. He is a loving God. No matter what you have heard about God, if it is bad it is not true. It is a lie. The devil wants you to believe it. Mean people might want you to believe it, but it is not true. Even if you see somebody who says they belong to God and they do not live like they ought to, you keep your eyes on God.

He is real. He is wonderful and He wants to help you so much. If you could meet God what do you think you would think about the first time you saw Him? I have thought about it a lot. Have you ever thought about what I would do if I saw Him as soon as I get to heaven, what would I do? One man said, "I know what I would do. I have a lot of questions. I would want to ask God all of these questions." Somebody else said, "I think I would just jump and shout." I said, "I think I would cry." I already cry over the Lord all of the time anyway in my own house. I probably would, just at the thought of seeing this person that I have loved all of these years and I get to see and be with Him. I do not know. I will tell you something, the person who created the universe is so powerful that all He had to do was speak for light to be, and there was light. People try to figure out how all of this happened and it is right there in Genesis. "Light be. Day be. Night be. Sun be. Moon be." He just spoke. He is so powerful. His words are so powerful. He controls the universe. He is so orderly. He has the stars in place. He knows their names. He knows what is going to happen from the beginning to the end. He knows everything. Nothing was made that was not made by Him. What do you think it would be like if you got to go be with Him and spend the day with Him? Do you think that He would be so far above you, so mighty, so powerful, that you could not think of a thing to say to Him? Have you ever been around somebody really important and you thought, "I am going to ask them this and I am going to ask them that." You get there and you cannot think of anything to say.

The Bible says that God is very humble. It says that Jesus, though He was very rich became poor for our sake. He humbled Himself and took on the form of a servant. Those of you that are watching who live in countries where people are servants, maybe you are very wealthy and you have a lot of servants, think about the Lord of the universe became one of them. I think it is because He just wanted to show that when you are powerful you do not have to pretend. You do not have to be anything but what you think you need to be and do. That is why He took on the form of a servant. He wanted to help us get to God.

There is a great gulf between us and God. People try to get there by doing all of these great works or trying to please God. They work themselves so hard trying to please Him and they have these great philosophical ideas. They think that if I do this I will get to God. If I believe this I get to God and it may be just so off the wall, because the Bible says that God is reaching out to you. He is not waiting for you to reach out to Him. He is coming for you. He is wanting you. There is a humility. I have been around some very big, important Christian leaders. The first thing I ever noticed about them was how humble they were.

Do you remember Tom Landry? He was the coach of the Dallas Cowboys for years and years and years before he died. Everybody thought so much of him. One time I was going to work in a Billy Graham crusade in the Dallas area and they said Tom Landry is going to come and speak to the women today. I thought, "Oh this is going to be fun. I am going to get near him. I am going to see what he is like and see what it is like to be somebody like Tom Landry." It was amazing. He stood there in a circle and it was like Farmer Jones. He was not trying to be anything. He was just standing there talking to people. I have seen the same thing happen like that. I met Norman Vincent Peale one time and he was like that. Interesting that when you have it and you know who you are there is no need to impress anybody. There is no need to prove anything. You just are who you are. These godly, godly Christian people feel that when God is control, God is in charge and it is all about God.

It is not about me. I do not need to make it anything about me. There is a power in that. You can feel it. I bet you know what I am talking about. If you have been around people like what I am talking about, there is a power in them and they are not even trying to be powerful.

Contrast that with somebody who is like this, "I am important, everybody know it, everybody pay

attention to it. Everybody cater to me. Everybody do it the way I want to do it. Everybody listen to me. I am right. Everybody else is wrong unless I think it is right. There are only certain times I will talk to you. There are only certain times you can get near me, but I am right and you need to know that. You need to know who I am. It is very important that you know who I am." We have all seen people like that. They really turn you off. They turn me off. It is like, "Get a life. You are just a person." And yet, sometimes when you get raised to really high places, there are temptations that go with it. One of them is the temptation to walk in pride and not walk in humility. There is a really good example of somebody in the Bible who did it. Nebuchadnezzar. He got to thinking, "I did this. Oh look what I have in my country. I have these hanging gardens, lands, slaves, all the women I want. I have a big army, strong, powerful; look who I am." Then, that fast, God let him see who he was and it was a disaster. It is very interesting to read about it and study from that angle. Sometimes it hard to be humble because you feel very insecure about yourself and you think, "If I am not trying to make everybody think I am something then I am nothing." That is not true. You have to get over that. You have to learn to know God strengthens me and knowing who I am in God.

Sometimes even in the Bible they got to quarreling about who was greater. Here is an example. Let me read this one to you. In I Corinthians 3:2-4, they were supposed to be healthy Christians. Paul had gone to them and helped them grow in the Lord. They had wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit, just operating in their midst but instead of treating them with honor and respect they just got to getting off on tangents and not keeping everything like it ought to be. That does not mean the gifts were not real. It does not mean that all. What it means is they were not handling them wisely and they were quarreling. I would hate to be the person over all of that. I guess God put the right person there.

Listen to what Paul had to say to them in this letter. "And even now you still have to be fed on milk. For you are still only baby Christians controlled by your own desires and not God's." There will be so many Christians in diapers in heaven. That is a sign that you are not able to walk in humility, when you are controlled by your own desires and not God's. You do not walk in humility because you have to be sure you get what you want. You have to make sure it happens. That is the way they were arguing. In fact, it says, "When you are jealous of one another and you divide up into quarreling little groups, does that not prove that you are still babies just wanting your own way. In fact, you act like people who do not belong to the Lord at all. There you are quarreling about whether I am greater than Apollos and dividing the church. Does this not show you how little you have grown in the Lord?"

That is the truth. The closer you grow to Jesus, the more humble you will be. D.L. Moody had a prayer and I put it at the very beginning of a spiritual journal I started keeping in 1972. Here is what he said, "Lord, make me humble and do not let me know it." Is that not an amazing prayer? Why did he not want to know it? I think it is because if you start thinking about how humble you are, you might get into pride about that.

Where else did we see people jostling for place in the Christian world instead of just being humble and seeing what God does? The Jewish mother of James and John pulled Jesus aside and said, "Jesus, do something for my boys. Let them sit near you." Jesus said, "I do not have any say in that." If you will just relax and totally dedicate yourself to God, He will raise you up when you need to be raised up. He will do it and you do not have to worry. It will happen. You just occupy your mind and your thoughts with whatever it is that God needs you do to right now and you have to be content with this. Sometimes God just says sit down for a while, just rest, do not do anything, just be with Me. Sometimes He says, I am going to put you down and you are going to be serving people who used to serve you, can you handle it? Sometimes He says, "I am going to put you on the shelf for a while. You are going to see other people going ahead, your friends, but it is okay and I want you to rejoice for them when they succeed." One time a lady came to me and gave me a prophetic word and it was when I was doing some of this waiting that I have done so much of. She said, "Betty, I just had a vision, a picture of a big waiting room. It had this door and you and your friends were sitting out in this waiting room. God would come to the door and point and one would go in. In a little while the door would open and He would point and one would go in. Pretty soon, Betty, you were the only one sitting out there waiting. You were just waiting and waiting." That produces humility in you. Waiting, if you do not let it make you bitter, will produce humility. There are all kinds of things that produce humility. One of the worst ones is humiliation; that will make you humble.

There are other ways; occupying yourself with Jesus, being willing to wait forever, being willing to wait on God's time, being willing to be used anywhere He needs you. Think about saying this to God, "I will go anywhere you want me. I will let you do anything you want with me, anytime, any place, anywhere, anyone, I do not care. I just want you to use me."

If you have ever studied the life of Isaiah, he was in the king's court so he was probably a noble person. Nobility, wealth, and yet when God came to him and revealed Himself to him, he said, "Lord, I am a man of unclean lips and I live in the midst of a people with unclean lips." He knew who he was. That is humility when God shows you, "I want to use you, but you need to understand that this is who you are." What was his response? His response was "Here am I Lord, use me." That is music to God's ears. That is all that is required. So many times we say that I do not have the money or I

to God's care. What's all that is required? So many times we say that I do not have the money or I do not have the education or I do not live where you can. Just say, "Here am I God use me." Say it every day. He will use you every day.

What are some examples of humility? What are some definitions of it? I thought I would give you a couple that I try to live by. Here is one. Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less. Is that good? Do you think I am humble if I say, "Well, I am not very good at things. There is just a lot wrong with me. Somebody else could do it better." Do you look at me and think what a humble person? No, you do not. I would not. That is putting yourself down, so humility is not thinking less of yourself and do not say that stuff about you. It is not humble. It is not humility. Do not say it. And yet, think about yourself less. Think about how you can help somebody today. "How could you use me? What can I do to help?"

Another definition of humility, and this is when you are in the ministry or you have a big job or you have a big position, humility is knowing your gifts and walking humbly in them. Is that not beautiful? Let us say you are a great opera singer. You have a beautiful, trained voice and it is a gift from God and you know it. You walk in that, but you are not a diva. You are just you, and yet when you stand up to sing everybody knows that is not just her, that is God. What a gift. It can be the same way about a musical instrument, any talent you have, but it is not about putting yourself down.

Who was the most humble man on earth? Moses. I thought about that. Was he considered humble because he said, "Lord, do not use me because I am not a good speaker?" I do not think so. I do not think that is why God said he was the humblest man on earth. I think he recognized in his limitations, but there was something in him that was willing to lay down all of his desires, everything, and do what God wanted him to do and to listen to God's orders. Go to God and ask, "What do you want now? What do you want now? What do you want now?" I think he probably had the hardest job, so maybe the hardest job requires the most humble person to get it done right. There is nobody else in the Bible that had to lead millions of people from one country to another and see that they were taken care of. The whole time they were moaning and groaning and complaining. What a job!

Conceited people do not like to be corrected, but humble people do because they want to be better. Let me ask you a question. Are you teachable? Can people come to you and say this and this, or are you one of those people who say, "I know. I know. I know." Basically, what your body language and you are saying is that, "I do not want to hear it. I know I ought to hear it but I do not want to hear it." Sometimes teenagers do that. Are you teachable? You never ever get so big in God that you know everything. I heard something the other from a man I was listening to on a tape, a pastor, who said, "God is so big that anything you know about Him your whole Christian life is a grain of sand compared to what God is, just a grain of sand." That was exciting to me.

Are you a person who is correctable? Humble people can be corrected. People who are in pride, "No, do not talk to me. I have made up my mind. I am doing it the way I want to do it and I am not wrong." Humble people can say, "Am I? Now what do I need to do?" They listen. People who are prideful never ask for advice. They just think, "I know it all. These poor people, they just cannot figure it all out. I know it." They hate to be scolded. They do not want anything bad happening. The Bible says that we have to be servants. Jesus said that the servant is not greater than the master. Sometimes you get to thinking that God needs me. That is what Peter did. Jesus was saying, "Guys, I am trying to tell you that I am going to go to Jerusalem. I am going to be crucified and in three days I am going to be raised up from the dead and this is God's plan." Peter thought he knew more than God. By then, he and Jesus had such a great relationship that he thought too much of Jesus just being like a man. Not that he was God, the Messiah. He said, "Oh no, Lord, that is not going to happen to you." He thought he knew more than God.

How do you become powerful in God if that is what you want to be? You have to die. How do you like that? The Christian life is to die first, live later. Oh, how you live. How great it is. It is a good feeling to be dead. Dead men cannot be hurt. Dead men cannot do the wrong thing. Dead men cannot do anything. Paul said, "I die daily." He was such a great Christian who did so much.

Another thing is to be a person who can learn from anyone. Are you like that? Moses father-in-law was a Midianite. He was a priest. He was a priest in a non-godly religion. It did not have anything to do with God. God is God, and He does not fit into all of these other things that everybody thinks He ought to. He is not. There is just one way. Jesus said, "I am it." Moses was still so humble he could listen if there was wisdom there. There is wisdom everywhere. Moses listened to his father-in-law. It changed his ministry, set him free to do what he needed to be doing. He said, "Listen, you are supposed to be leading the people, praying and talking to God. You do not be listening to this advice all day long. Here is what you need to do." He gave him great advice on how to set it up. Moses did it and the good thing about it was people got used. It was not just Moses doing all of the

Moses did it and the good thing about it was people got used. It was not just Moses doing all of the work. Other people got to help too.

Another aspect of humility is the courage to surrender to God something that is very important to you that you do not want to give up. It is giving up to God what you are holding onto. It is a very defining moment in your life because the steps to humility lead to greatness. They lead to great effectiveness. Have the courage to let God do what He wants to with you. Especially if you see people being promoted right and left around you, getting raises, just everything is happening to everybody else. The Bible says, "Humility comes before honor. Promotion does not come from the east or the west, it comes from God." That is what it says in Psalms.

You need to be humble to the world and humble to God. They are two separate things. We have been talking about how to be humble to God, but when you are humble like this to God and you let Him deal with you like this, there will be a humility in you in the world and people will feel very comfortable with you. I have always asked God, "Could my home be a safe place? When people come in my home could they feel the Holy Spirit? Could they feel the peace that you can put in a home? Would they know Jesus lives here? Would they know the Holy Spirit is here? You are welcome here Holy Spirit." People who are not even interested in God, could they come in and feel the peace that comes with humility? They feel the peace that comes when there is not pride and arrogance. Pride disgusts God. It says that in the Bible. Pride disgusts Him. When He is naming the things that He hates, there are six things the Lord hates. No, there are seven. One of them is a proud look, the complete opposite of humility. Remember, humility is not about downgrading yourself.

Humility is the most powerful thing on earth. Look how Jesus humbled Himself. He took on the form of a servant and ministered to all of us. In fact, what did Jesus say about Himself? "I did not come to be ministered to. I came to minister." You can be like that. Look around, "Lord, who needs a good word today? Who needs encouragement today? Who needs a prayer today? Who needs hope today? Who needs me to do something that I do not want to do today?"

The next thing is, if you are really walking in humility, how can you have some guidelines for yourself to be sure that you are doing it? Try these. Keep a low profile. Do not toot your own horn. Do not exalt yourself. "Hey, let me tell you about me." I will tell you a funny story on somebody. I am not going to tell you who it was. This person has a self-esteem issue. They were on a plane, had these buttons on and the flight attendant came along and looked. He thought, 'Great, she is interested in me.' He talked some more and she looked again. He thought, "Wow. She really thinks I am important." She said, "Excuse me, my ears are stopped up and I am trying to pop them." It popped him, I am sure. If you do not exalt yourself, people will still notice you. God will make sure they do. Remember to humble yourself and He will exalt you so you do not have to tell people who you are. Do not seek people's favor. Do not seek to be in the "in crowd." Do not seek people's approval. You do not owe anybody an explanation if you know God told you to do something. Just remember, if you could go into heaven right this minute with all of the powerful things that God is doing, He would be so humble and you would not miss it.

Let us pray now. "Lord, I have been walking in pride. I am so sorry. It is not you. It is not your way. I do not want to walk in pride. I want to walk in humility, Lord." When you walk in humility you carry the presence of God with you. Is that now what you want? You would not be listening to these teachings if that was not what you wanted. God bless you. God put His Spirit on you. God touch you. God honor you when you humble yourself. Open your heart today and ask Jesus to come in. If you live in a country where you do not know about Jesus, He is real. Ask Him into your life. You will be so glad you did.

QUIET TIME QUESTIONS

1. What is humility?
2. What is false humility?
3. What are the ways God makes you humble?
4. What are the guidelines for walking in humility?
5. How is God able to use you when you walk in humility?

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To watch the video on THE POWER OF HUMILITY, Pillar Five, Relational Skills, go to www.bettyswann.com.

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