

Living Graciously Through Humility

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C. Elijah Bronner: God has a way of humbling us and it's called, "Brokenness."

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And now for 7793, Living Graciously Through Humility: Part 1.

C. Elijah Bronner: Thank you for joining Brothers of the Word because brother, you need the word.

We welcome all of you joining us by television and those of you joining us online at brothersoftheworld.com and Facebook Live. Thank you for tuning in and streaming us, delighted to have you, always a wonderful joy.

I would like to share just a little humor. A lady was shopping with her husband and he asked her not to buy any new clothes, but she found a dress she likes so much, she bought it in secret. A couple of days later, the husband discovered it and he was really upset. She told him that when she tried it on, it looks so good that Satan tempted her to buy it and she just can't resist. He said, "Why didn't you do what the Bible says and tell Him to get behind you?" She said, "I did and He told me I look even better from behind."

I want to share a couple of scriptures over in the Book of James, Epistle of James. It's toward the end of the New Testament, just a few books before Revelations, few books before the Book of Revelation. Flip back to the left, you're in into the Book of James.

In Chapter 4, James Chapter 4 and we will read Verse 6 and we will read Verse 10, James Chapter 4 Verse 6 and Verse 10. When you get there say, "Amen." Let's read together in -- Verse 6 and Verse 10. It says, "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

And also, I wanted to read the scripture in the Book of 1 Peter Chapter 5, 1 Peter Chapter 5. We will look at Verse 5 and 6, 1 Peter Chapter 5 Verse 5 and 6. In 1 Peter Chapter 5 Verse 5 and 6 reads and says, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time:"

And I just want to use as a subject living graciously through humility. Notice that He says that He gives grace to the humble. He repeated there in James and also in 1 Peter. He repeated that He gives more grace to the humble. Grace is the Greek word "kairos." Kairos is grace. You can kind of see that that's the root word of where we get charisma. Charisma is actually the anointing in the Greek charisma, but kairos is grace. Kairos is grace. In Greek, it means joy, favor, acceptance. It means kindness granted, a benefit, gratitude. It means a favor done without expectation of return. It means absolute freeness of the loving kindness of God to men.

Finding is only motif in the bounty and freeheartedness of the giver. It's unearned, it's unmerited favor. Praise God. Isn't grace good? Grace is good. Praise God. And so, God freely gives grace to the humble. He gives grace to the humble.

Now, humility means to lower oneself, it means to abase meaning that you're bringing yourself down to earth in other words.

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You're bringing yourself down to earth. Everybody just take a deep breath. Take a deep breath. Now, exhale. Well, you just let out all the hot air out of you. Humility means letting out all the hot air. So, you just relax, be yourself, you be who God made you. You realize you aren't all of that.

You have to have a proper estimate of yourself because sometimes, we can get beside ourselves and we think everything is about us and we think that we are the whole show and we can get very selfish. We can get very prideful. We can be very arrogant and don't get a little money. Oh my goodness! You have to forget that you get a little money. Oh my goodness! Don't get a new car. Don't get a new house.

Man, people get puffed out quickly but humility means to lower oneself, means to bring yourself back down to earth, it means total absence of arrogance, pride, conceit or haughtiness or self-exaltation. It's a modest estimate of oneself.

Also, humility has to do with willingly submitting to God and His will. You have to humble yourself to be able to carry out God's instructions in your life. That takes humility. That takes a humble heart for God to be able to give you instruction and for you to carry it out. It takes humility.

You remember Naaman, the leper? He was one of the generals on the Syrian Army, went to Elisha the Prophet to be healed, heard there was healing there and Elisha told him to go dip seven times in Jordan. And Naaman, he was furious. Number one, he was furious because he said, "Shouldn't this man at least come out and waive his hand over me or something? And then, on top of that, he tells me to go this river."

And so, Naaman had a very arrogant attitude but, yet, he was full of leprosy. Imagine what he would have been like without leprosy. Well, his servant finally convinced him and said, "Look, he didn't tell you to do anything hard or difficult. Just humble yourself and follow this." So, he gave him simple instructions and he did, he humbled himself and he got healed.

So, humility is required in our heart to even follow out God's instruction in our lives. God has to be able to get in touch with us and contact us. Even when we repent before God, it takes a humble heart to turn back to God to say, "Lord, I'm sorry. I was wrong." That's humility. That's humility in the heart. And so, that's why God has hard time with the prideful because they wouldn't admit when they are wrong and they're rebellious, and they can get to a place where they don't recognize God. And so, that's why God has a problem with the prideful.

And so, it's willingly submitting yourself to God and His will. Jesus gives us a perfect picture of this, the perfect example of this, actually in the Book of Philippians Chapter 2. Jesus is our great role model of humility because He gave up his divine privileges and came to earth as a man, as a servant.

Now, He was God. He was fully God, so the Bible says, "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" He was fully God, yet, He gave up all of His glory. I mean, He gave up everything and came to be one of us as a man. That was great humility. That was a great humility. I mean, they spit on Him, they talked about Him, lied on Him, and he could strike them dead at anytime He wanted to, but no He didn't. He gave up all of that. And He even told them -- He said, "Look, if I wanted to (00:08:34) if I wanted to." Because he was like, "No, I am God now. Don't get it twisted."

It's an interesting paradox. He was fully man but He was still God. He was all man but He was all God. He was all man and all God. So, it was the interesting paradox there, but that was humility and the Bible says that He even humbled Himself to the obedience of death. So, He humbled himself even to carry out God's will even though it meant death to Him. That was humility. He humbled himself. And so, we get the great role model from Christ Jesus our Lord in the example of living a life of humility, living graciously through humility.

Kind of reminded me of the movie, Coming to America. Anybody remember Coming to America with Eddie Murphy? Well, in that movie, if you remember, he was a prince from a country in Africa and he gave all that up. He wanted to come to America and came to the low live places and got a job at McDonalds as a janitor. And so, in my mind, that was the image of what Christ did. And notice he came seeking a bride. Jesus came looking to prepare a bride, to save a bride. And so, he was a prince, he gave all that up. He walked in humility. Now, his running buddy, Arsenio Hall, he wasn't fully onboard with that. He still wanted to enjoy the privileges of the kingdom.

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But anyway, that's the picture of living graciously through humility. So, humility is not only willingly submitting ourselves to God and His will, but it's also absolute dependence on the Father. Jesus was absolutely dependent on the Father. He said, "I only say what I hear my Father say. I only do what I see my Father do. I've come to do His will not my own will." And so, He was completely dependent on the Father. And so, humility is a complete dependence on Father, complete dependence on the Father.

I love something that Andrew Murray said about humility. He said, "Humility is perfect quietness of heart. It is for me to have no trouble, never to be fretted, or vexed, or irritated, or sore, or disappointed. It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that has done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised. It is to have a blessed home and the Lord where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my father in secret." That's humility.

Now, humility brings great reward. Humility brings great reward. Say that with me, "Humility brings great reward." It brings great reward. Proverbs 22:4 says that, "By humility --" I had never really paid this attention but check this out. Proverbs 22:3 says, "By humility, and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor, and life."

In other words, one translation says, "The rewards of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor, and life." Riches, honor, and life. We actually see that in the life of King Solomon because he had such a humble prayer and a humble request before God. God says, "Because you didn't ask me for any of those things and because you sought to do good for the people, I'm going to give you all of that anyway."

And so, humility has great, great reward. Humility brings great reward. In fact, Proverbs Chapter 15 Verse 33 says that, "Before honor is humility." So, we don't have to try to raise ourselves up. You allow God to raise you up. The Bible says that He will exalt you in due time. You humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. He will exalt you in due time.

In other words, one translation says that, "He will bring your life into significance at the right time." You let God do it. We don't have to try to promote ourselves or put ourselves in places of prominence and all of that, no.

I like the way Michael said. Michael, I believe, is 6'8". He says, "The Lord requires three things of you. Do what's right, treat people well and walk humbly with your God." That's what Michael said. He summed up all of religion. He said, "These are the only three things God require. You do what's right, you treat people well, you walk humbly with God." Is that humble heart? So, before honor is humility. Humility precedes honor. Say that with me, "Humility precedes honor."

I read an interesting story, Booker T. Washington, the renowned Black educator, right after he took over the presidency at Tuskegee Institute, he was walking in a very exclusive section of town one day and a wealthy woman, not knowing who he was, she asked him if he wanted to earn a few dollars by chopping some wood for her. He didn't have any pressing business at the moment so he simply rolled up his sleeves and proceeded to the humble chore. When he finished, he carried the logs into the house and he stacked them by the fireplace. But a little girl, one of her neighbors, she recognized him and she later revealed to the woman who he was. The next morning, the embarrassed woman went to see Mr. Washington in his office at Tuskegee Institute and she apologized profusely. He said, "It's perfectly alright." He said, "I'll enjoy doing a little manual labor." And he said, "You know, actually, it's always a delight to do something for a friend." And she shook his hand and she assured him that his meek and his humble gracious attitude had endeared her to his work and his heart. And not long after that, she led a coalition, some of her wealthy friends and they begin donating huge, large sums of money to Tuskegee Institute all because of his humble, meek, and gracious spirit. Humility always precedes honor.

Now, here's the flip side of that. The flip side of that is called, "The downfall of pride."

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I like something that D.L. Moody said. D.L. Moody said, "Be humble or you will stumble." Well, the Bible says in Proverbs 16 Verse 18, it says, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Be humble or you will stumble. Proverbs 18:12 says, "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honor is humility." Why is that? Well, the Bible tells us why, because God resists the proud. He resists the proud.

Resist means to set Himself against. He opposes it, He frustrates the proud and He defeats them. God has a way of humbling us and it's called brokenness. Brokenness is God's mechanism for humbling us.

I like something that Joyce Meyer said. Joyce Meyer said that, "Brokenness hurts so bad but it hurts good." It hurts so bad but it hurts good. In other words, it produces humility in the life. It

produces something good in your life as a result of being broken. Now, the flesh is broken, the pride is broken. And now, there is a heart that is receptive. There is a heart that's humble and gracious. And so, brokenness is good for us. Brokenness is good. Everybody say, "Humility comes from brokenness."

Now, brokenness happens when we learn at certain points in our lives that we are not as big as hotshots as we think we are. That's when brokenness happens. When you receive the message that you are not as big as hotshot as you thought you were, there's brokenness. When you step out to do something great and you fall flat on your face, that's brokenness, that's brokenness because when you stepped out to do something great, you fall on you face and you realize because you didn't stay plugged in to God and you were caught up in yourself. That's brokenness.

So, brokenness comes when we look down on others and we judge them, we are critical towards them. And then, the same thing happens to us and we find ourselves in their very own position. That's brokenness. When you have talked about somebody and criticized somebody or looked down on somebody, judged somebody, out of your self-righteousness and then through the process of time, you find yourself in that same position. That is brokenness. So, brokenness is good for us. It leads to humility, which precedes honor. So, brokenness, humility then honor. Everybody say, "Brokenness, humility, and then honor." Praise God. So, pride always precedes a fall.

I was reading about these two ships off the coast of Russia, and they crashed and collided and many lives were lost in that crash. And they said, when the investigators went back and researched the incident, they found out that it wasn't anything wrong with the instruments on the ship. It wasn't because the radar has failed or because of any technology. It was because the captains refused to yield to one another. They had been in communication. They had said, "We need you steer clear of us because we're coming." The other one said, "No, no. You steer clear of us because we're coming." And neither one would yield and they ended up -- once they realized it was too late, they collided, crashed, hundreds of lives were lost all because of pride. Pride always causes destruction. It always precedes a fall.

Here are some of the things that can cause pride, titles, positions or authority, education or knowledge, money or possessions, gifts

or talents, accomplishments and successes, self-righteousness, our strength, areas in which we feel we have it all together. All of those are things that can cause pride in our lives. Anytime when you think you have to get on an area, you begin to hold your chest out a little bit because you have pride. And so, these are things that can cause pride. I brought a little one-minute video I want play. Avey(ph), if you have that one-minute video, you can roll it.

Female: I'm looking at you with, I don't know, \$10 million worth of diamonds and gold and everything. And then, I'm looking at your shoes that are just a disaster. Now, will you explain to me what's with the shoes all taped up looking tacky?

Male: You see, well, to some people, they might see this tacky but there's a message in these shoes. You see, these shoes keep me humble. If you recall last time we met, I had these shoes, it wouldn't have been out of shape. But these shoes are handed down to my family. My family wore, my brothers wore, and things like that. So, they keep me humble, keep me and let me remember that I have brothers and sisters back in Chicago and don't know where I got mother and father that I must take care of. So, you see, out in Hollywood and especially all the money that I'm making now, it's so easy for me to get caught up in all these material stuff and forget where I come from.

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So, whoever I'm be, whether I'm with a governor or a mayor or a reception or whatever, I look down at my shoes and let me know I say, "Hey, I can't get too carried away here." So, that's keep me level as I said, "When I keep my feet on the ground and my head towards heaven."

C. Elijah Bronner: Praise God. I like that. He understood the true heart and essence of humility and how we have to guard our lives against pride and find ourselves living graciously through humility. Here are some items about humility I want to share, then I'm closing.

But humility is simply recognizing everything that we are and all that we have and everything that we can do that all comes from God. Is recognizing everything that you are, all that you have, and everything that you can do, those are simply gracious gifts

from God. Those are gracious gifts from God. That's humility when you recognize and realize that.

Humility recognizes how inadequate we are by ourselves, yet, how valuable we are because we are loved by Him. He is so great, we're so insignificant, but yet, He loved us and He invested Himself in us. That's humility.

When you realize how great God is and how insignificant you are, and to know that he loves you and invested Himself into you, man, that's humility. Humility always exalts God and thinks about others not just ourselves. Someone said, "Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less." That's humility.

Paul always relied on God. He always gave God the credit. And you will find him making statements such as, "I am what I am by the grace of God. I can do all things through Christ. He said, "Our sufficiency is not of ourselves but it's of God, our sufficiency is of God." Then he said, "I live, yet, not our Christ lives in me." The life with that now, I live by faith in the Son of God who died for me, who gave Himself for me. Praise God.

Living graciously through humility has something that is so powerful when you understand what grace is and that God gives more and more grace to be humble. Man, it just changes your life and impacts your life in such a wonderful way.

Let me read this -- I'm done, but let me just read this last definition of grace again. This is what happened. He gives more and more grace to the humble, more and more favor, more and more joy, more and more acceptance, more and more kindness, more and more benefits, more and more gratitude, more and more freehearted giving, more and more honor, or unmerited favor. Isn't that wonderful to have that coming in to your life? He gives more and more to the humble, more and more grace to the humble. Praise God.

Well, we're going to stop right here. I'll pick up with part two, have some wonderful things I want to share with you about humility. I want to share with you maybe four or five things that produce humility in your life and we'll look at some other things that I want to share that are so powerful about humility. Praise God.

I'm going to share something with you that show you how humility makes a tremendous impact in our relationships with people, humility. Praise God.

Well, thank you so much for joining us today at Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the Word.

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