

Self-Exaltation and Humility

by Bob Jennings

The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and the dangers of self-exaltation, highlighting the universal problem of pride and the consequences of not humbling oneself before God.

Duration: 46:59

Scripture: Matthew 20:21, Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, Luke 18:14, 1 Timothy 3:6

Topics: "Humility"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of humility and serving others. He encourages the congregation to have a humble attitude and to be willing to serve, rather than just seeking to be served. The preacher references biblical passages, such as Deuteronomy 17-18 and James 1-21, to support his message on humility and receiving the word of God with humility. He also highlights the dangers of arrogance, laziness, lying, and not dealing with sin, as these behaviors are connected to pride and hinder humility.

Transcript

Self-exaltation and humility. Matthew 23.12 Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted. Notice the context above that.

Verse 6, those who love the place of honor. Verse 7, respectful greetings. Verse 7, honorable titles called rabbi and so on.

And then verse 11, he's talking in contrast to that, being a servant, and then he says whoever exalts himself will be humbled, humbles himself, shall be exalted. Then a second is in Luke 14. Luke 14, verse 11.

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Exactly the same thing. And it's in the context of that parable of the guests.

The guests were invited and they selected the place of honor, the place of being distinguished. And he says don't choose a high spot, choose a low spot. And then verse 11, not the place of preeminence, not first place, but last place.

Now let's turn to Luke 18, verse 14, where we find a third time the same words. 14 of 18, I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but

he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Almost the exact same words, the exact same message anyhow. And it's in the context of the Pharisee and the publican. You know, the Pharisee, I thank you that I'm not like other men in contrast to the publican.

So, let's look at this matter of self-exaltation in contrast to humility. I take my first point from the first three words where the Lord says, I tell you. The Lord is telling us here, isn't He? He's got a message for us over and over again that self-exaltation, which I will use interchangeably with pride, obviously in contrast to humility, self-exaltation, pride, arrogance, all those are interchangeable terms and synonyms, that that is not God's will, but rather humility is the will of God.

You know, I tell you, I'm trying to tell you, this is not the will of God. This over here is the will of God. And self-exaltation, it is so contrary to the nature of God, isn't it? So contrary to the nature of God.

Isaiah 57, verse 15, for the sake of time, we won't turn there. If I can quote it, thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place with Him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the contrite and to revive the heart of the humble and the spirit of the contrite ones. That's just about right.

But here, God is high. He's holy. He lives there.

And yet, it says He lives and He revives the lowly and the humble and the contrite. Isn't that amazing? I mean, that's a verse a person ought to memorize and get it word perfect. What a mystery though that God is there and like that, and yet, He lives down here, visits those down here, the lowly and the contrite.

Contrite means feelings of guilt over sin. Contrition. It's just we're dealing with mystery here, aren't we? That God is, I mean, He in a way is the most self-centered of any person in the universe.

I mean, He demands that we all center our attention and our lives around Him, and yet, He is the most selfless One in the universe too because He gives to everybody everything, even His own Son, for a Savior. And so there's mystery here. It says in Isaiah 66, where's the house you're going to build for me? I've made everything.

Heaven's my throne, earth is my footstool. But to this man will I look, to him who's poor and of a contrite spirit and to him who trembles at my word. So I'm looking for that man, that woman.

And again, Psalm 51, verse 17, the sacrifices of God are what? A broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart. O God, You'll not despise a broken spirit, a broken heart.

That is, that self-will has been broken like a horse. No more will he go his own way. He's broken.

His pride is broken. He's willing to take instructions and orders from the Master. And also we see it with Christ, Jesus, our Lord.

His invitation, come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden. He said, I am meek and lowly of heart. That's how He characterized Himself.

Nobody else said that about Him. He said that about Himself. I'm meek and lowly of heart.

And so we're talking about the character of God, the character of Christ, how that humility fits with Him. Not pride, not self-exaltation. You know, we talk about the gate being a narrow gate.

It's narrow, yes. It's also low. It's a low gate.

You've got to get way down to get in that gate of salvation. A person's got to get way down to the place of seeing himself as a big, fat zero to get in that gate. Nothing in my hand I bring.

I've got nothing. I simply cling to what Christ did on the cross. I put my confidence, like Betty was just saying, right there.

Plus nothing. I am trusting, Lord Jesus, that You've died for sinners and nothing more. And the Holy Spirit is characterized not as an eagle, but a dove.

Again, the idea of lowliness and humility. God's blessing is upon who? The poor in spirit. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The poor. Not proud. Not pushy.

Not peevish. Not particular. Not presumptuous.

But the poor in spirit. So my first point was that the Lord is telling us that humility is like Him. That's His will.

And secondly, this phrase, everyone who exalts himself. Self-exaltation or pride is a major universal problem, isn't it, in the human race. I say a major problem.

I mean, here we've got this repeated three times in the Gospels and other things similar to this all over. You read the Bible from one end to the other and it says, get down. Get down.

It's a universal problem. I mean, the folks we've got right here in this one verse, they're either folks who are proud or else folks who were proud and did humble themselves. It's a universal problem with man.

And it all started where? It was way back in the beginning before man when the devil sinned. He said, I will exalt myself. I will.

I will. I will five times. In Isaiah 14, I know it's talking about on the surface, the king of Babylon, but there are things there that could only apply to Lucifer, the shining one.

And what happened when he sinned? That was his fall. Ezekiel 28, similarly, although talking on the surface about the king of Tyre, there are things there, the anointed cherub, the covering cherub, and all of those phrases that could only apply to the devil. And it says, your heart was lifted up.

Thus, you see, a new convert is not permitted to be a candidate for an overseer. Why? 1 Timothy 3.6. It says that he is not a new convert lest he become conceited or proud or arrogant and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. In the ministry of the Word of God, whether itinerant preaching or whether pastor or anything, it's like the territory is covered with landmines.

I mean, it's a landmine of opportunity for arrogance. Pride. And not a new convert.

Apparently, there should be as we seek to become mature, some awareness, some sensitivity that must be developed to pride. Not a new convert. You see how to pray for me right there.

Pride is the father of all sins. That's where the root's at. That's where the levy broke on the human race introducing this flood of sin.

Way back there, it was pride on the part of the devil, and now man has been infected. The heart of man has been infected with this same spirit, this attitude of pride. Man thinks highly of himself.

Something like seven times in the Bible, it speaks of being wise in our own eyes. Isn't that something? You know, we tend to think that we want to look good in the eyes of others. And that is true.

That is a danger. That is something we have to fight against. But you know, deeper than that, it's deeper than that is this problem of wanting to look good in our own eyes.

Looking good in our own eyes. That's what it says many times. Wise in their own eyes.

I don't care how they think I look. The deep thing is how I think they think I look. And apparently, this attitude is getting worse.

It says in 2 Timothy 3 that in the last days, difficult times will come. Men will be lovers of self. Lovers of self, self, self.

Exaltation with all of its forms. And here we've got this self-esteem Gospel. Surely that is promoting.

Surely you can't help but think about, Lord, is this a sign of the times? In the last days, difficult times will come. Self must be denied if we will follow the Lord. Jesus said if any man will come after Me, what? He could have said a lot of things, but He said he must deny himself.

Take up His cross and follow Me. I heard of a homosexual woman and in her conversion experience, demons were being cast out. It was an experience that was fairly terrifying.

And obviously, the supernatural was at work. But here this woman, even though a homosexual, even though that might seem like such a terrible sin, you know the last thing to go in her life? The last thing to go. The last stronghold, the last barrier was what? It was death to self.

It was whether or not she was going to bow her knee to King Jesus and give her life to Him and serve Him from there on out. That was the last thing to go. That's the stronghold.

Let Him deny Himself. One said, if you want to please the devil, admire yourself. John Calvin said, everyone flatters himself and carries a kingdom in his own breast.

Isn't that something? That's insight. If everyone flatters himself and carries a kingdom in his own breast, there's the battleground. Is self going to be king? Or Christ king of my life? Another one said, pride is the overestimation of oneself by reason of self-love.

And another, pride is the inmost coat that we put on first and that we put off last. Another said, in the same way, pride is the last thing to go before conversion and the first thing to try to return after we're converted. A fallen heart is idolatrous and there is no limit we will not go to to save face and to save our idol.

It is so subtle, isn't it? Ryle says, no sin is so deeply rooted in our nature as pride. It cleaves to us like our skin. So subtle.

And especially the spiritual, the religious pride, that is especially subtle. I saw this. God put it, I think, probably the chief thing that I got out of the HeartCry Conference.

I mean, that God gave to me, showed me, was right there at the beginning when I stood up to speak. I was asking for input from the congregation and someone called or answered a thing that I was getting ready to answer. You know, here's my punchline or whatever you'd call it.

And they spoke it. And my response was not just exactly as kind as it should have been. And I mean, it's just so subtle, so disgusting, filthy.

Pride. Brooks says spiritual pride is a white devil. Tozer, there is no pride as hideous and yet so powerful as the pride of religious orthodoxy.

The more we become involved in the work of God, the greater the danger of self-deception. The deeply religious man thinks he must appear strong. Isn't that it? Subtle, but yet, the Bible gives us some examples, some kinds, some illustrations of what to watch out for.

Three of them we just got through looking at. Matthew 23 and Luke 14. You know, the context in which the Lord spoke these words in those first two verses that we read.

Whoever exalts himself, what are you talking about, Lord? I'm talking about the love of praise, the love of honor, the love of respect, the love of preeminence, all of that kind. That's examples of self-exaltation. That was the context in which those first two verses occurred.

3 John 9. Diotrephes, he loves to be first among them. Matthew 20, verse 21. Isn't that surprising how John and James, their mother came and said, how about for my boys? Could you give them top seat in the kingdom? Right hand and left hand? You know? And you can tell there was some pride there, some flesh there, because the disciples, they despised it.

It bothered them when they heard her say that. But looking for the preeminence, even in the spiritual realm. When a proud man hears another person praised, he thinks himself wronged.

Andrew Fuller, if the love of fame is a governing principle in us, our ministry, our entire life, will be tainted by it. It ought to make us very reluctant to promote ourselves in any way, to beat somebody else in any way, to put them down, to belittle them, to manipulate or to connive. Watch out for these forms of self-exaltation, right? And then, the idea of superiority, that's self-exaltation too.

You see, that brought out here in this third verse we read right here in Luke 18. The idea of superiority. I mean, that Pharisee, he said, I thank You... oh, it sounds so religious.

He said, I thank You, God, that I'm not like other men. You know, he put a cloak over that thing. But he still was saying, I thank You I'm not like other men.

Phew! I'm better than others. I've got a little bit more than they've got. Maybe I'm not perfect.

Maybe I don't have it all. But I've got more than others. I'm not like other men.

It was the other man that went down to his house justified not that man. And so this business of comparing yourselves with somebody else, you know, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 10, they compare themselves with one another and in doing that, they are not wise. Don't! Don't do that.

Don't compare yourself with anybody else. Or even talking to others, say, well, his sermon was better than the other guy's sermon. That's dangerous.

It can hurt somebody. It can hurt the one guy. It can hurt both guys.

Both speakers. Comparing one with another. Bragging.

Interestingly, in Romans 1 and in 2 Timothy 3 where those lists are given, side by side with arrogance is bragging. The boastful pride of life. Showing off.

Hezekiah got trapped, got caught on that. The delegation was sent from Babylon. Man, what's happened here in the land? Such prosperity and so on.

Such victory and so on. And the delegation was sent over and he showed them all of his treasuries. The prophet came and said, who were they? Where'd they come from? What'd you tell them? He said, I showed them everything.

The prophet dropped the hammer on him. And the only consolation he had is the destruction won't occur in my reign. This idea of I'm better, superiority.

Wealth is such a snare. I heard two men, two farmers one time there. They'd gotten in an argument.

This one fellow had inherited quite a bit of what he had. And the other fellow, he started from scratch. And he told that first guy, well, I had to work for mine.

They didn't have much of a friendship after that. But Psalm 49, even those who trust in their wealth and boast in the abundance of their riches is such a snare for pride, such an opportunity for pride, self-sufficiency from wealth. And that's why the kings were warned in Deuteronomy 17.

Kings, do not multiply wives or gold or silver or horses. Don't do that. Argumentative.

An argumentative way. That's self-exaltation. Pride.

You've got to take everybody on. You've got to argue about that thing so you can win an argument, convince everybody you're right, show your wisdom, and so on. Self-exaltation.

Watch out. Putting others down. That's another manifestation of self-exaltation.

Being harsh to others. Not gentle, but rough. Angry with them.

It's because you think you've got it going. You think you're right and you can afford to put them down, be rough on them. You're better than they are.

Proverbs 21, proud and haughty, Scorn is his name who deals in proud wrath. Isaiah 13 speaks of the haughtiness of the ruthless. Proverbs 28, an arrogant man stirs up strife.

Well, it takes a lifetime, doesn't it, of observation and carefulness to discover and deal with all the forms of pride that crop out of our old heart. Someone outlined it this way. There's the pride of race.

You know, like the Jews, they were very proud of their heritage. Then there's the pride of place in the church or in the world. The pride of place.

And then there's the pride of face. You know, look at all those references on the proud look. The proud look of man will be abased.

Isaiah 2. Whoever has a haughty look, I will not endure him in My house. Psalm 101. A proud look.

God hates that. Proverbs 6. Proverbs 21, Haughty eyes is sin. Ezekiel 28, Satan, your heart was lifted up because of your beauty.

A proud look. Think of that. We can appear proud.

We can appear arrogant in our looks. In contrast, the Bible calls us to dress and appear modestly, especially the women. A modest appearance.

Not a proud, arrogant, sensual, but a humble appearance. Pride of race, place, face. Pride of grace.

The worst kind of pride. Isn't it amazing that we can be proud of our humility? Look how I did that. Proud of our knowledge.

You know, it puffs up. That doesn't mean you shouldn't excel in knowledge, but you've just got to watch out for it. Add to your knowledge virtue, is it? And self-control.

2 Peter 1. It's got to be under control. James 3, it says, who is the wise man and dude with knowledge? Let him show. You want to show? You want to show something? Let's see your good deeds.

Let's see your behavior. Pride of progress and success and usefulness and achievement even in the spiritual area. The concept that I've arrived and God has nothing more to say to me.

No, that wasn't Paul's attitude. He had a broken heart. He said, oh, that I might know Him.

I press on. I want to apprehend that for which I've been apprehended. He wasn't settled.

He wasn't satisfied. He was on the stretch. For God, there's so much more.

And the danger of being self-satisfied, satisfied with your progress, your achievement. Josiah, it says, when he became strong, his heart was so proud, he acted corruptly. And here's King Josiah.

He was a good king. He was a good king. Very good.

But in the end, he got tripped up. There was another king coming up, you remember? And Josiah was preparing to make war against him. And that king said, Josiah, you've defeated Edom, and now you're proud and you're taking on a battle with me.

Go home and enjoy your peace. He didn't listen and he lost his life. That was the end of his career right there.

He was proud over his achievement. You defeated Edom and now you've become arrogant. And so, the danger of pride, these forms of pride, so subtle, but we're given examples and a lot of Scripture on it.

Incidentally, Michael and I have talked about this. At the factory, they exhort you to take pride in your work. Is that a valid pride or isn't it? Have you thought about that? I don't know if it works even.

It seems like that it is valid if it were God-centered. But because it's man-centered, it's not valid. You know, you ought to take pride in your work for the Lord's sake, but not self.

You know, King Jehoshaphat, it says his heart was lifted up in the ways of God. It's put forward as a good thing. Number four here.

This next phrase, who exalts himself will be humbled. That is, my point, God will humble the proud folks. God judges the proud.

And look at all these Scriptures that remind us of this. Proverbs 16, everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. 29, pride will bring him low.

2-11 of Isaiah, the proud look of man will be abased. Malachi 4, a day is coming like a furnace and it's going to burn up all the proud. And James 4, God is opposed to the proud.

Think of that. A lot of times we think it's devilish opposition, but it's actually God who is opposing. God resists the proud, it says in Peter.

So, Satan, it was pride that brought him down. It was pride that brought Pharaoh down. It was pride that brought Nebuchadnezzar down.

And he came out afterward with that famous saying. He said that God is able to humble those who walk in pride. You know, you could pray that Daniel 4 verse.

You could pray that verse. Lord, You're able to humble those who walk in pride. Would You humble me? And there is where I'm walking in pride.

There's a man who's walking in pride. Lord, would You humble? You say You're able. Would You humble that proud man? Daniel 4, verse 37, Belshazzar, his son, when he knew all of that, yet, it says in 520, his heart was lifted up, his spirit became proud, and he acted arrogantly and was deposed from his royal throne.

His glory was taken away. God intends to humble the proud. It says that in Luke 18, 14.

That's our text. Everyone who exalts himself will be, not might be, will be humbled. And God humbles His people that way too.

Hezekiah, because of his pride, God had to humble him. Uzziah, the same thing. Josiah, the same thing.

Paul said God examines our hearts. John Calvin, the most effective poison to lead men to ruin is to boast in themselves and in their own wisdom and willpower. David Morgan, the Lord would give us great things if only He could trust us not to steal the glory for ourselves.

Hmm. My fifth point is that we can humble ourselves. We can, we should, humble ourselves.

He who humbles himself will be exalted. We ought to be intent on humility. We ought to be watching for pride.

How can we do that? How can we humble ourselves? Again, going back to our three texts, in Matthew 23, right before that verse that we read, you know, if you would be great, you must be a servant of all. That's a way we can humble ourselves is to serve others. Take the position of a servant.

To forget about others and act independently is arrogant. Think of the Lord's example. He humbled Himself to serve others.

He gave His life to serve others. So, be on the lookout for ways to serve others. You want to humble yourself? Be on the lookout for ways to serve others.

Don't just sit there, get up and do something. Humble yourself and do something. Daniel, two or three days ago, he said on the phone, what can I bring to the meal? The Lord bless you for that attitude.

I mean, that's a humble attitude. What can I bring to the meal? I want to serve, not be served. When you come to the meeting, what is your attitude? I mean, not only the meal down there, but the meal up here.

Do you come to church just to get? You go away, I didn't get anything. Or did you give anything? Come to give. Take the humble position and try to bring something to the love feast.

Be intent on taking the low position. That's what you could gain from Matthew 23 and Luke 14. Taking the low position, not looking for the high position of dignity and prominence.

The humble man looks for authority and wants to get under it. But the proud man has trouble with authority. Insubordination is a mark of pride.

1 Peter 5.5 You younger submit yourselves to the elder. Yes, all of you be subject to one another and be clothed with humility. You see, this matter of authority and humility.

Be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, gives grace to the humble. Take the low position. Even in conversations, let the other person talk a little.

Esteem other better than self. Another way, I've mentioned these things that were right in the context of our three texts. But some other things.

I think one of the most powerful things in humbling ourself is to welcome criticism. Isn't that it? To welcome criticism. Instead of trying to avoid it, instead of being offended at it, welcome criticism.

That is one of the most humbling things. Be so humble as to desire criticism by your Christian brother and sister. 1 Corinthians 1.41 of the Psalms, let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me.

It is oil upon my head. Do not let my head refuse it. Asa was angry with a seer and put him in prison and oppressed the people.

He didn't humble himself. God judged him. He got diseased in his feet.

It's that old hurt pride that distresses us so badly. Be prayerful. You want to humble yourself? Go more in prayer.

You see, it's the proud person that won't pray. Or won't pray much. Why? Because you see, to pray, it's by the very act of it.

Not to mention the words, but the very act of prayer is saying to God, I can't handle this. I can't handle anything. I need You.

I'm not self-sufficient. I'm insufficient. I'm dependent.

I need You. And so, the proud person, he doesn't have much time for prayer. If my people are called by My name, they'll humble themselves and pray.

This poor man cried to the Lord, and the Lord heard him. Be thankful. Number five, be thankful.

Be thankful to men. Be thankful to God. Beecher says a proud man is seldom a grateful man, for he never thinks he gets as much as he deserves.

Deflect that praise. You want to pursue humility? Deflect praise to others. Especially to God.

Avoid murmuring, griping, whining. These are marks of pride. You know, things aren't going my way.

Self-exaltation. Be thankful. Be thankful.

That's a humble attitude. Be thankful to God for each and every one of your weaknesses is a great grace given by God to resist pride in your life. A sixth way of humbling yourself is by obeying the Bible.

It says in 119 of the Psalms, verse 21, you have rebuked the proud, the cursed, who err from your commandments. The proud, the cursed, who err from your commandments. Obey the Bible.

Probably everything in the Bible. It counters the pride of man. It just comes crossways with us time and again.

You know, the king, Deuteronomy 17, he was supposed to have a copy of the law written and placed before him at all times. Why? To keep him from becoming arrogant. Deuteronomy 17, 18, this copy of the law in a school in the presence of the Levitical priests, and it shall be with him, the king, and he shall read it all the days of his life that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and he turn aside.

James 1.21, Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the implanted Word. James 1.21, in humility receive the Word. Work, number seven.

You want to humble yourself? Don't be lazy. Laziness is a manifestation of self, self, self. You know, I am not about to work.

I want to be served. I'm going to sit here and let others serve me. It says in Psalm 1.23, Our soul is exceedingly filled with contempt, exceedingly filled, sorry, with a scorning of those who are at ease and the contempt of the proud.

Number eight, Lying is a form of self-exaltation. You want to humble yourself? Tell the truth. Yeah, tell the truth.

Why do people lie? It's to look better than they are. To protect self in some way or another. I won't read all of that.

Number nine, you want to humble yourself? Deal with sin. Puritan Swinock, he says, arrogance is a weed that ever grows in dung hills. A weed that grows in dung hills.

It takes a violent act of renunciation to deliver us from the hidden idol of strength and pride. A violent act of renunciation. You want to humble yourself? Deal with that old sin.

Sin is always connected with pride. Number ten, you want to humble yourself? Put God first in every crossroad decision. God is going to bring you to one crossroad after another and it's going to be am I going to choose God or flesh? God or self? God or pleasure? God or this or that? And you want to humble yourself? Go with God.

Number eleven, this was an interesting quote by J.C. Ryle, seek knowledge. You want to humble yourself? Seek knowledge. And I won't read the whole thing, but he's saying know God, know Christ, know the Holy Spirit, know your Bible.

The more you know about Him and yourself, the more humble you will be. The last line, he who knows himself will find nothing within to make him proud. My last point is the word exalted.

It says, he who humbles himself will be exalted. God will exalt the humble man. God will exalt the man who humbles himself and deals with the pride.

This is the place of exaltation. This is the place of grace. It says God gives grace to the humble.

Grace is just like water. It flows to the low spot. You want more grace? Get down there.

That's where the grace of God is going to find you. 1 Peter 5.5. Proverbs 15.33, before honor comes humility. David was exalted when? After the humiliating experience of the wilderness wandering.

Job was exalted after the humiliating experience of all that consternation and suffering. The Lord Jesus was exalted when? After the humiliation of the cross. First the cross, then the crown.

In closing, if you're here today, not a Christian, I'll guarantee you the biggest obstacle that you have between you and heaven is pride. It's self. That is the main thing that is going to keep you out of heaven.

And the Lord has set things up so rightly, so beautifully, that if you're going to get to heaven, it's going to have to be death to self and all to Christ. He has set it up so beautifully. The way of salvation is what? Nothing in my hand I bring.

Simply to the cross I cling. In other words, I am trusting that Jesus died for me. It's not faith plus anything.

It's faith plus nothing. It's not faith plus baptism. Not faith plus circumcision.

Not faith plus church attendance. Not faith plus good reputation. It's not faith plus anything.

It's faith plus nothing. Faith in Jesus Christ and His death on the cross. And you see, if I can have anything else in addition to faith, I mean the least little bit, the little finger of help to God is an offense to Him.

It's a manifestation of self. And so there must be nothing else. Faith is a self-despairing look to Calvary.

Oh, if you're not a Christian here today, it isn't going to be long. It's not going to be long before self will be humbled. You see, there's no options.

There is no options because the Bible says every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He's Lord. Everything's coming down. We can either get down today by faith and love or else in that day, be forced down at the foot of the cross.

If you are a Christian here today, then the exhortation to us would be to watch out for pride. Seek to humble yourself. Be on the lookout for manifestations of pride.

That's the place you're going to find more grace. That's the place you're going to find more joy. Right down low.

That's where it's found. God has set it up so you don't have to be great or anything, just nothing. Get down there.

It is very dangerous and deceptive. Pride is deceptive. Do you know that? It says in Obadiah 3, the arrogance of your heart has deceived you.

And Paul says if anybody thinks he's something when he's nothing, he deceives himself. Watch your heart. Pride, remember, is a heart problem.

I've got about six references there. Pride is a heart problem. Mark 7, out of the heart of man proceeds pride.

And that defiles the man. God is after that pride. It's the biggest problem we've got as Christians.

And you know humility is where there's a thousand reliefs. George Whitefield, for example, he was crossing the sea another time. It got into a big storm.

Thought he was going to go down. All this anxiety was multiplying in his heart. He went down to the bottom of the ship and cried out to God and rolled all of his life, his ministry, everything on the Lord and cast it off on the Lord.

His peace returned. He humbled himself, put himself down there where he realized he was zero. Lord, I'm nothing.

I don't have anything. I don't have any claim, no agenda. That's where his peace returned.

Zephaniah 2, 3, seek humility. All you humble of the earth, seek humility. There's an address to the humble folks.

Seek humility. Zephaniah 2, 3. Matthew Henry says high places are slippery places. The way up is down with no flesh but glory in God's presence.

Somebody said if we're even one inch higher than the foot of the cross, we're too high. The cross? The foot of the cross. What's at the foot of the cross? It's death to self.

All to Christ. illbehonest.com

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24694.mp3>

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