

Holiness and Humility

by Samuel Logan Brengle

True humility is the key to experiencing the fullness of God's holiness and being made great in the kingdom of heaven.

Scripture: Isaiah 1:5, Ezekiel 36:31

Topics: "Holiness", "Humility"

Description

Samuel Logan Brengle emphasizes that true holiness uproots pride and fosters deep humility. He explains that a holy person recognizes their own shortcomings and seeks to be cleansed by Jesus, leading to a profound loathing of past sins and a longing for Christ's humility. Brengle illustrates that humility is attractive to God and is marked by a lack of offense, a willingness to serve, modesty, and a focus on pleasing God rather than seeking human admiration. He encourages believers to embrace humility as a pathway to greatness in the Kingdom of Heaven, reminding them that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Transcript

Those who oppose holiness often say that we who profess it are proud, and that the doctrine tends to spiritual pride. But the truth is, that holiness goes down to the root of all pride, and digs it up utterly. A holy man is one who has found himself out, and pronounced judgment against himself, and comes to Jesus to be made every whit whole. And so long as he keeps the blessing, he is deeply humble.

God said to Israel by the Prophet Ezekiel, 'Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, and for your abominations.'

This is a certain effect of entire sanctification. The sinful heart apologizes for itself, excuses inbred sin, favors it, argues for it. A man who still has the carnal mind says, 'I think one ought to have a little pride. I would not give a snap of my finger for a man who had not some temper. A man who will not stand up for his rights is weak.' And so he excuses, and argues in favor of, the sin in his own heart.

Not so the man who is holy. He remembers his former pride, and loathes himself for it, and longs and prays to sink deeper and deeper into the infinite ocean of his Saviour's humility, until every trace and stain of pride are for ever washed away. He remembers his hasty temper, and hates it, and cries day and night for the perfect meekness of the Lamb of God, who, like a sheep dumb before her shearers, 'opened not

His mouth,' while His enemies worked their fiendish will; and, so far from smiting back, would not even talk back, but prayed, 'Father, forgive them.'

He sees the beauty of God's holiness, and loves it. He sees the full extent of his former corruption, and acknowledges and loathes it. Before, he thought man had some natural goodness, but now he knows and confesses that 'the whole head is sick. and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.' (Isaiah i. 5, 6.)

He sees his own evil ways. At one time he thought that there was not one holy man on earth, for he could see a mote in every man's eye; but now he discovers that there are many holy men, and the mote which he was sure he saw in his neighbor's eye, he now finds to have been the shadow of the beam that was in his own eye.

An earnest, sanctified man once said to me, 'There are certain sins I once thought it was morally impossible for me to commit, but the Holy Spirit has shown me the awful deceitfulness of my heart, and I now see that before He cleansed me there were in me the seeds of all iniquity, and there is no sin I might not have committed, and no depth of moral degradation to which I might not have sunk, but for the restraining grace of God.'

One who has thus seen the plague of his own heart may be cleansed in the precious Blood, and may have a holy heart, but he will never say to another, 'Stand thou there, for I am holier than thou;' but, remembering his own former condition, he will point him to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.

True humility makes a person particularly attractive to God, Listen to what Isaiah says, 'Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones' (Isaiah lvii. 15.)

Jesus said, 'Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted' (Matt. xxii& 12;); and James said, 'God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble (James iv. 6.)

'Do you wish to be great?' asks St. Augustine, 'then begin by being little.'

'Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child,' said Jesus, 'the same is greatest' (not shall be, but 'is greatest') 'in the kingdom of heaven.'

Here are some of the marks of a truly humble person.

1. A truly humble soul does not take offense easily, but is 'pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.' (James iii, 17.)
2. He is not jealous of his position and dignity, or quick to resent what seems to touch them. Before the disciples were sanctified, they found a man who was casting out devils in the name of Jesus, and they took offense because he did not follow them; and forbade him. Self is very sensitive. 'But Jesus said, Forbid him not.' (Mark ix. 39.)

One day the Spirit of the Lord rested on two men in the camp of Israel in the wilderness, and they prophesied. 'And there ran a young man, and told Moses..... And Joshua,..... the servant of Moses, said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses' (the meekest of men) 'said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!'

3. A truly humble person does not seek great things for himself, but agrees with Solomon when he says, 'Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud.' (Prov. xvi. 19.) He rejoices in lowly service, and is more anxious to be faithful to duty and loyal to principle than to be renowned among men.

The disciples were often disputing among themselves which should be the greatest, but Jesus washed their feet as an object lesson, and commanded them to become servants of one another, if they would be great.

4. Humble people are modest in dress. They think more of 'the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit' than of the clothes they wear. They will endeavor always to be clean and neat, but never fine and showy.

5. They are also plain and simple in speech. They seek to speak the truth with clearness and accuracy and in the power of the Holy Spirit, but never with 'great swelling words' and bombast, or with forced tears and pathos that will arouse admiration for themselves. They never try to show off. To them it is painful to have people say, 'You are clever,' 'That was a fine speech.' But they are full of humble, thankful joy when they learn that through their word some sinful soul was saved, some erring one corrected, or some tempted one delivered. They speak not to please men, but their Heavenly Master; not to be applauded, but to feed hungry hearts; not to be admired of men, but to be approved of God.

And, on the other hand, their humility keeps them from criticizing and judging those who have not these marks of humility. They pray for such people, and leave all judgment to God, who in His own time will try every man's work by fire. (I Cor. iii. 13.)

'Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.' (I Peter v. 5.)

Anger and sloth, desire and pride. This moment be subdued! Be cast into the crimson tide Of my Redeemer's blood!

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