

PHILIPPIANS 02:03

HUMILITY (TAPEINOPHROSUNE), LOWLINESS OF MIND (TAPEINOS)

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. **Philippians 02: 03***

To offer oneself as lowly and submissive; to walk in a spirit of lowliness; to present oneself as lowly and low-lying in mind; to be of low degree and low rank; not to be high-minded, proud, haughty, arrogant or assertive.

Note: a humble person may have a high position, power, wealth, fame and much more; but he carries himself in a spirit of lowliness and submission. He denies himself for the sake of Christ and in order to help others.

Men have always looked upon humility as a vice. A lowly man is often looked upon as a coward, a cringing, despicable, slavish type of person. Men fear humility. They feel humility is a sign of weakness and will make them the object of contempt and abuse and cause them to be shunned and overlooked.

Because of all this, men ignore and shun the teaching of Christ on humility. This is tragic:

=> for a humble spirit is necessary for salvation (Mt. 18:3-4).

=> for God's idea of humility is not weakness and cowardice.

God makes people strong, the strongest they can possibly be. By humility God does not mean what men mean. God infuses a new and strong spirit within a person and causes that person to conquer all throughout life. He just does not want the person walking around in pride. He wants the person to do what the definition says: *to offer himself in a spirit of submissiveness and lowliness; not to act high-minded, proud, haughty, arrogant or assertive.*

Humility is to be developed. Scripture tells us how:

Mat 11:29 *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”*

Mat 18:3-4 *And he said: “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”*

Mat 23:12 *“For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”*

Rom 12:16 *Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.*

Eph 4:1-2 *As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.*

Phil 2:3-4 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

Col 3:12-13 *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

1 Pet 5:6 *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.*

Contrary to what the world thinks, humility reaps unbelievable benefits. A close study of the above verses shows this.

1. Humility results in a person coming to Christ and learning of Him. It leads to self-evaluation, an honest and courageous evaluation. When a person looks at Jesus Christ, he sees what he should be and it motivates him to become what he should be. He sees where he needs improvement and he is driven to fill in the gaps.
2. Humility results in conversion, assuring our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.
3. Humility results in our being exalted by Christ in that glorious day of redemption.
4. Humility results in healthy relationships and in community and social benefits (see Rom. 12:16; Eph. 4:1-2; Phil. 2:3-4; Col. 3:12-13; 1 Pet. 5:6). For example...
 - It acknowledges and boosts others
 - It leads to better relationships
 - It encourages and helps others
 - It motivates others to grow and do more

Christ demands that His followers walk in humility. Practicing humility demands two things.

1. Humility requires an honest evaluation of oneself. Barclay points this out (*The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*, p. 39). Humility comes from knowing ourselves, just who we really are. It comes from an honest appraisal of ourselves. It takes courage to look at ourselves and it takes honesty to see ourselves as we really are: basically self-centred, a bundle of self-admiration and self-love. We tend to dramatize ourselves. We tend to see ourselves unrealistically. We see ourselves...

- at the centre of action.
- as the hero of some spectacular rescue.
- as the great politician marching to victory.
- as the renown sportsman saving the game in the last second or bagging a record catch.
- as the beauty queen dazzling the crowds.
- as the labourer of brilliance.
- as Prince Charming or Cinderella sweeping others off their feet.

We are always at the centre of the picture. Humility begins to come when we honestly face ourselves and admit our self-centredness. Self-centredness weakens and limits relationships and achievements. Humility reaches its height when we lose our lives in the cause of Christ and welfare of others.

2. Humility requires courage. It takes courage to be honest about our self-centredness, and courage to convert or to change by coming to Christ as a small child (Mt. 18:3-4). It takes courage to become Christ-centred and people-centred and to give ourselves to the cause of Christ and others.

Rom 12:16 *Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.*

1 Cor 8:2 *The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know.*

Gal 6:3 *If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.*

1 John 2:16 *For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.*

2 Sam 22:28 *You save the humble, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them low.*

Psa 10:2 *In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak, who are caught in the schemes he devises.*

Prov 11:2 *When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.*

Prov 13:10 *Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.*

Prov 16:18 *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*

Prov 21:4 *Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin!*

Prov 26:12 *Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

Prov 28:25 *A greedy man stirs up dissension, but he who trusts in the Lord will prosper.*

Isa 5:21 *Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.*

Isa 24:4 *The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the exalted of the earth languish.*

Oba 1:4 *Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down,” declares the Lord.*

Hab 2:4 *“See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright — but the righteous will live by his faith.”*

Zep 3:11 *On that day you will not be put to shame for all the wrongs you have done to me, because I will remove from this city those who rejoice in their pride. Never again will you be haughty on my holy hill. □*