

# HUMILITY

## CHARACTER



***People who refuse to admit their mistakes can never be successful, but if they acknowledge and correct them, they will get another chance. Proverbs 28:13***

Humility is an awareness of our continual need for growth and having a proper respect for the contributions that others have made to our success. It is not always easy to be humble and say, 'I made a mistake' or 'I'm wrong'. We all like to be right because it makes us feel good and accepted. It boosts our ego and self-worth. As good and right as we may be or want to be, we all make mistakes. Living is learning based on practice and mistakes. The problem is not in making mistakes but continually making mistakes mainly because we fail to recognize our failures.

The judicial system says to not admit or say anything because it may be held against you in a court of law. This encourages us to believe we can get away with anything that cannot be proven and to hide our wrongdoing and consequently live with guilt. Guilt is of the heart, not only when proven by law. It will make us hard, and we become defensive and protective. We must recognize that we are not always right or complete in ourselves. If we refuse to admit our mistakes, we stop growth and progress in our lives.

We can't change or heal what we won't acknowledge. When we make a mistake the only way to bring about real change is to admit it as quickly as possible, accept our responsibility and get ourselves back on track. Whoever admits to making a mistake practices humility in the situation. This means accepting the responsibility for our behavior. The most serious mistake we can make is to know we are wrong and

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not do anything to make it right or to change it. When we are truthful and admit our mistakes, we help ourselves and those around us and have a chance at another opportunity.

Some people think that humility is in some way a type of inferiority and avoid this attribute of character. In fact those who are not humble have to defend themselves with false self-justifications with every mistake they make, and they end up destroying their character and generate negative feelings in people around them. In reality not being humble could be a problem of an over excessive ego. Many times when we fail to practice humility, we accept false flattery from our friends, family, or the people who are just meeting us. It is possible that we also give false opinions to others to not hurt their ego. Where is the honesty? With this conduct we will never learn to be humble, and we impede our personal growth and the growth of others we are not honest with.

### **Benefits**

1. We will have personal peace because we will not be on the defense since we will have nothing to hide.
2. We will be at peace with others because we will look for and recognize the good qualities in others rather than having an over-inflated opinion about ourselves.
3. We will gain favor from others because we are transparent and not afraid of criticism. We will know when to be on offense or defense.

### **Practices**

1. Admit it when we are wrong and recognize it publicly. When we voluntarily accept our mistakes, others will respect us.
2. Avoid Pride. The way to humiliation is when others discover our mistakes and make them public.
3. Never cover your faults, excuse or lie about your mistakes or you may end up believing your own lies. Even though there are consequences like being criticized or loss of popularity for the immediate future, humility will be your guarantee of character.
4. Admire the success of others and recognize and give credit to them. Truly successful people always give credit to others rather than boasting about how great they are.

Humility will bring about character. This may appear to be a contradiction, but humility requires great courage.

To practice humility is to recognize that we are still learning, we don't know everything and that we are in a process of growing. As we recognize the areas, we need to change we gain opportunities for personal growth, as individuals, families and as a society. We avoid committing the same mistakes over and over and begin to know who we really are. Those around us will be given permission to do the same and will be attracted to us because they don't feel defensive around us.

Humility is one of the finest assets in a person. To lose it is a devaluation of oneself. It is like the oil in a machine. It lasts longer, runs quieter, and gets the job done. It works rather than squeaks. It allows us to show who we really are, without the need to pretend or hide our mistakes. Humility makes a person valuable and will gain you favor.

### **Key Scripture**

- "For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar." Ps. 138:6

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- “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” Matt. 23:12
- “Toward the scornful he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor.” Prov.3:34
- “Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 1 Peter 5:5

### Quotes

- “If you think you can’t learn from someone, you are probably right. Likely, your pride has blinded your eyes, deafened your ears and hardened your heart to be teachable. Everyone can learn from anyone something.” John Scroggins
- “True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less. ” - Timothy Keller
- “A great man is always willing to be little.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Remember...thoughts produce actions, actions become habits, habits form our character, and character determines our destiny!*

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### Reflect & Respond

1. What has been your experience when you have admitted your mistakes?
2. What has been your experience when you have been humble in front of others?
3. What benefits do we receive when we practice humility?
4. Evaluate yourself from 1 to 10 in this character quality:
5. Why did you give yourself this rating?
6. What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?

### Ask Your Mentor

1. How have you seen humility (or lack thereof) played out for you and in coworkers that you have known? Do you know of a story of someone who exemplifies this principle that you can share?
2. How has God taught you humility?
3. The bible has a lot to say about humility. Why do you think God thinks it’s important?

### Creative Connection

Think of a song, character or person from a book, movie or history, an animal, or an everyday item that personifies the main idea of this lesson and share it.

### Go Do

1. Ask your boss or someone who knows you well to rate your overall level of humility.
2. Ask God, “Which of the above ‘steps to follow’ should I prioritize? What would it look like to trust you to help me with that?”
3. When you sense that you are “looking down” on someone or conversely, feeling like you aren’t good enough, pray “God, help me to see this person as you do. How have you gifted this person? What can I learn from them?”
4. Serve someone (or a type of person) that I may look down upon.
5. Practice. How I will practice this over the next month:

**Go Deeper:** Further Conversation & Study for those who want to go deeper.

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1. What big problem do you think this session may be addressing?
2. What emotions, if any, did you have from what you learned in this session? Was there anything that surprised, excited, or angered you?
3. Look up: Matthew 18:4; Psalm 69:32, James 3:13,4:10, Proverbs 22:4, 15:33, 11:2, 3:34, 15:33, 18:12; 1 Peter 5:5; Colossians 2:18,23, 3:12-13; Ephesians 4:1-2; Philippians 2:1-3; 1 Corinthians 1:20, 4:7; Psalm 45:4; Zephaniah 2:3; Acts 20:19; 2 Corinthians 10:1.
4. How is this quality shown in the life of Jesus Christ?

### Sources & Resources

Photo credit: rawpixel

Global Priority (LaRed), <https://globalpriority.org/>

Humility: The Journey Toward Holiness, Andrew Murray, <https://a.co/d/babyV7w>



### Videos/Songs

Song: I Surrender - Hillsong Worship, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7jXASBWwwI>

Video: What True Humility Really Looks Like,