

The Spartan Sower

The sower soweth the word... Mark 4:14



Dec. 10, 2006 (Vol. 6)

"CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY"

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Humility is a state of mind. As it is written: "Serving the Lord with all **humility of mind**" (Acts 20:19). It is thinking of oneself in such a way that you do not put yourself above others: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." (Phil. 2:3)

Thus, being arrogant is esteeming self as better than others, putting yourself higher than others. Pride or high-mindedness can even be seen in confidence in riches, rather than God (1 Tim. 6:17). Basically, being high-minded is a **false confidence**. Whatever the confidence is about, if it is not according to God's will, it is wrong.

Romans 11:20-21 says, "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee." Just because we become Christians does not mean we should think better of ourselves than the lost. Nor does our current right behavior in many things, mean we are truly profitable to God: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." (Luke 17:10)

Consider also the rich young ruler who told Jesus about all the good things he did (Mark 10:17-22). Jesus didn't dispute his claim. But Jesus did point out one thing that young man lacked (loved his riches). That one thing showed he needed grace just as surely as if he had sinned in all those other areas listed. And he had to be willing to give up that one thing (love of riches) in order to be saved.

The Truth is that we must guard ourselves carefully against every sin, inward and outward. For Satan can so easily get hold of us if we are not careful. Things that we are ignorant of and unaware

of - can hurt us. If I unknowingly drank poison - I will still be harmed. If my parents taught me to curse and swear - and I see nothing wrong with it -that does not make it right. When Saul of Tarsus opposed Christ, he did so in a clean conscience (Acts 23:1).

The Wise God of Heaven says, in Romans 12:16 "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits." May we never allow ourselves to be lifted up in vain conceit.

We must also consider that some things can appear humble, that are not. "Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, dwelling in the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increasing with the increase of God." (Col. 2:18-19). Some men do things which give the appearance of humility, while they are actually arrogant and puffed up. Some who depart from the leadership of Christ, still know how to present themselves in such a way that everyone thinks they are amazingly humble. I've known, for example, a young man that admitted openly that he had divorced his wife for financial reasons - no fornication was involved. Yet a preacher who was exceedingly respected for his patience and soft spoken demeanor - married them anyway. I asked this preacher how he could do that, and he admitted that he had doubts when he married them.

If we doubt something is right, but we do it anyway - is that humility (1 Sam. 13:12-14; 15:17-23)? Everyone may think us to be humble. Generally speaking, we may in fact be humble in many things. But in this we are not, since it is a violation of the Truth revealed in Matt. 19:9. Such is not humility of mind.

Colossians 2:20-23 continues, "If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances, Handle not, nor taste, nor touch (all which things are to perish with the using), after the precepts and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh." Again, some things appear to be acts of submission, lowliness of mind, and humility. But we must learn to see the difference between the precepts & doctrines of men

(which have no genuine value in helping us resist temptations) and the doctrines of God (which help us overcome Satan).

Also, some things can appear arrogant that are not. For example, we are told that we can know that we know Him, when we do what He says (1 John 2:3-5). We can have assurance of heart before God in prayer, because we keep His commandments (1 John 3:19-22). We can even be bold in Christ to plainly proclaiming Truth (Eph. 3:12; Phil. 1:20), or to sharply rebuke error (Titus 1:13) and teach with authority (Titus 2:15). As it is written in 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." A sound or healthy mind is one that has accepted Truth, holding on to it firmly, and expresses it in faith. Some consider us arrogant for taking a stand on baptism as we do. While it is possible to be arrogant or even to present ourselves in an arrogant way concerning Truth - does that mean it is actually arrogant to take a firm stand on baptism? No.

Sometimes it is hard to sort through all these things. Sometimes it is confusing. For even in doing what is right, we may come across in a way that we do not intend or do not realize. Sometimes it is just the way people perceive us. But sometimes it is that we do and say things in ways that are seen as pride. Even if in our heart we don't mean to be a certain way, our conduct can still be harmful.

We need to so conduct ourselves that we are indeed "clothed with humility", as Peter writes: "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." (1Pet. 5:5)

As one dear brother well said, "It is never wrong to be humble."

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Home Bible Study** – Sat., Jan. 6 & 20.
- **Business Meeting** – Sun. Jan. 7.
- **GM** - Jeff Smith, April 15-20, 2007.
- **GM** - R. McPherson, Oct.14-19, 2007.
- **GM** - Brian Yeager, April 13-18, 2008.
- **GM** - Lanny Smith, Oct.12-17, 2008.

PRAY FOR

Othena Kinnard, Mag Bumbalough (Home & recovering from surgery), Thelma Cunningham, Mary Cox (Awaiting the results of tests), Monie Petty, Dave Poteet, Joshua & Misty Poteet, Rose Taylor, Dorris Williams, Robert England, Johanna Fletcher, Ed Williams, Joe Smith (cancer), Lydia Poe, Mike Tenpenny (back), Thelma Klein. Also, Reba Jones (Dorris Williams' niece), Jackie Tindle (cancer, relative of the Sims), John Ross Key (Mary Cox's son), Marci Miller (Alisa Fletcher's mother), Ocia Bell Jones (Doris William's mother), Ruth Williams (Betty England's niece), Pauline Hickey, Nanny Witaker, Dylan Roberts (grandson of Marilyn's friend); Kitty Mahan (Kathy Tenpenny's mother), Dwayne Williams (Dorris William's son), Jeff England (Robert & Betty's son).

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| <p>North Sparta Church of Christ 359 North Spring Street Sparta, Tennessee 38583 (931) 836-3321</p> <p>Douglas W. Hill Evangelist</p> | <p><i>Speaking where the Bible Speaks & Silent where the Bible is Silent</i></p> | <p>Service Times</p> <p><u>Sunday</u> 9:00 a.m. Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Wednesday</u> 7:00 p.m. Bible Study</p> <p><i>All are welcome to all of our services!</i></p> |
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