

October 31 Adult Spiritual Growth Class Synopsis

Unshakable Hope: Chapter 6: Grace for the Humble

How does pride hurt our relationship with others? How does pride hurt our relationship with God?

How has knowing Christ changed the way you boast or what you boast in? Or has it changed the nature of your boasting?

Can one love without humility?

The Apostle Peter instructs us to *be clothed with humility for God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5)*. Scripture is clear and direct regarding humility and pride. The prophet Isaiah writes that *the LORD Almighty has a day in store for all the proud and lofty, for all that is exalted, they will be humbled (Isaiah 2:12)*. We are told that *pride ends in humiliation, while humility brings honor (Proverbs 29:23)*. *What does the Lord require of us but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8)*.

Examples of pride and its consequences are given throughout scripture. One of the better-known stories is found in the Book of Daniel, the Israelite exile who humbly lived by his faith in the God of Israel. His antithesis was King Nebuchadnezzar, the powerful and prideful king of Babylon whom God eventually humbled.

In 587 BC, King Nebuchadnezzar was one of the most powerful people in the world. He destroyed Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem and took most of the wealthy Jews captive. He selected the young men with the most potential and had them schooled in the wisdom of Babylon. Among those that he captured were the prophet, Daniel, and his three friends, known by the names Nebuchadnezzar gave them: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. This was the beginning of God's revelation to Nebuchadnezzar in the form of dreams, for which God gave Daniel vision and interpretation. As a result, King Nebuchadnezzar appointed Daniel ruler of the city of Babylon, and awarded high positions to his friends as well. Although God revealed Himself to Nebuchadnezzar in the dream of the statue and His plan of the one true kingdom of Jesus Christ, Nebuchadnezzar only heard that he was the head of gold in the statue. Pride took over such that he had a gold statue built so that people were commanded to bow down and worship him or else be thrown into a furnace. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, refusing to bow down, were thrown into the furnace but were protected and saved by the Lord Jesus Himself, who in the furnace, could be seen by all. Nebuchadnezzar ignored his very eyes such that God sent Nebuchadnezzar a second dream to change his heart. The dream is one of a thriving tree, cut to a stump, to be left in the fields among the wild animals for seven years. Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that *he is the tree and that he will go insane and be sent to live among the animals until he acknowledges the God of Israel. "Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue."* (Daniel 4:27) However, Nebuchadnezzar looked out on his kingdom and all that he had conquered and his heart was hardened toward God. True to God's revelation, an insane Nebuchadnezzar was driven from his kingdom for seven years until God humbled his heart: *"I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever."* (Daniel 4:34)

We are called to humble ourselves to God. The greatest humility is revealed by God in Christ Jesus, *"who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be*

exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:6-9)

The Apostle Paul’s exhortation to the church of Philippi and to us today is to be of the *same mind as Christ Jesus, having the same love, to do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. We are to look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. (Philippians 2:1-5)*

As imitators of God and beloved children, we are to walk in love (humility), just as Christ Jesus also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma (Ephesians 5:2) Praise God for a love that is humble and which always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres and never fails (1 Corinthians 13:4, 7-8).

A song to reflect and pray on:

[Glorious Day \(Living He loved me\) ~Casting Crowns - YouTube](#)

Looking ahead – Sunday November 7

Chapter 7 – God Gets You

God’s Promise

Hebrews 4:15 (NCV)

Our high priest is able to understand our weaknesses.