

Morning Sermon August 17, 2014
"The High Value of Humility"
Luke 18:9-14 How valuable is humility?

1. Justification before God, Heaven, will not be attained without it –

This is the main message which Jesus spoke: "to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:" Luke 14:9

What is the WORST MISTAKE a person can make in this world?
Trusting in self! Self-righteousness!

Pride, self-confidence, haughtiness, despising others, exalting yourself, according to Jesus and the rest of the Bible, these are the worst ways to be! Why?

1. Because self-righteousness is a LIE, we are all sinners –
As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;"¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. (Romans 3:10-11 NKJ)

2. Because self-righteousness is a LIE that will not fool God or Christ –

A. The lie of the Pharisee was, I am righteous, I am beautiful, I am superior to the others around me, it is a lie he probably even told to himself -

¹¹ "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men-- extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector."¹² "I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.

B. Yet, God is not fooled by this lie, he can see our hearts and knows them –

"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9 NKJ)

The Answer to the question about Who can know the heart, is given in Jeremiah 17:10 –

I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:10 NKJ)

"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. (Matthew 15:19 NKJ)

²⁷ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men's* bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ "Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. (Matthew 23:27-28 NKJ)

3. Yet, self-righteousness comes naturally, easily to us –
We think we can cover ourselves with the fig-leaves of our "good works" –

⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. (Genesis 3:7 NKJ)

A. We think our "good works" outweigh or outnumber our sins, but God tells us the truth about our so called "good works."

⁶ But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away. (Isaiah 64:6 NKJ)

^{BBE} Isaiah 64:6 For we have all become like an unclean person, and all our good acts are like a dirty robe: and we have all become old like a dead leaf, and our sins, like the wind, take us away. (Isaiah 64:6 BBE)

B. Jesus speaks boldly against even "good" deeds when done with the wrong motivation / heart –

^{NKJ} Matthew 6:1 "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² "Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ³ "But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ "that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. ⁵ "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ⁶ "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (Matthew 6:1-6 NKJ)

II. Answered prayer, will not be attained without it –

¹³ "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to Heaven, but beat his breast, saying, `God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ¹⁴ "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other;

1. Stood afar off – in a humble position
2. Would not raise his eyes to Heaven
3. Prayed for mercy
4. Daniel is a good example of this, consider part of one of his prayers -

⁴ And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, ⁵ "we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. ⁶ "Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. ⁷ "O Lord, righteousness *belongs* to You, but to us shame of face, as *it is* this day-- to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You. ⁸ "O Lord, to us *belongs* shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. ⁹ "To the Lord our God *belong* mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. ¹⁰ "We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. ¹¹ "Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. (Daniel 9:4-11 NKJ)

III. Understanding God's Word is impossible without humility –

⁹ The humble He guides in justice, And the humble He teaches His way. (Psalm 25:9 NKJ)

1. God's Word is a mirror that shows us our sins –

²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. (James 1:23-24 NKJ)

If we do not see our sins when we look in the mirror of God's Word, it is proof we have just glanced and we have not "continued" in God's Word.

2. Yet God's Word also shows us the punishment our sins deserve –

¹⁸ Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw *it*, they trembled and stood afar off. ¹⁹ Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

(Exodus 20:18-19 NKJ)

The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do *His* commandments. His praise endures forever. (Psalm 111:10 NKJ)

3. A right understanding of God's Word will make us humble, fearful, prayerful ... and distrusting of our own understanding –

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6 NKJ)

There is a way *that seems* right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death. (Proverbs 14:12 NKJ)

IV. A right relationship with God is impossible without humility –

⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." ⁷ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. ⁹ Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. (James 4:6-10 NKJ)

1. A right relationship with God is worth not only humility, but even humiliation – **Daniel 4**

¹⁹ Better *to be* of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. (Proverbs 16:19 NKJ)

2. God resists the proud – James 4:6
3. But gives grace to the humble – James 4:6

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