



Fully Human A Biblical Pursuit of Virtue Session IV: Humility

Opening Prayer Psalm 25:1-10

To Be Humble

Humility is a difficult virtue on which to turn a spotlight. As soon as we give favorable attention to this virtue, it seeks to turn that attention elsewhere, to something more worthy of praise, or more important in life, making humility all the more praiseworthy and noble as a pursuit. It is said that humility is the cure for selfishness, as it is a virtue which sees others as more important, setting their needs above the one who is humble. Humility also leads us to that place where we grow aware of our unworthiness of God's grace, which is the very place where we find we freely receive His grace on account of Jesus' sacrifice for us.

How would you define the virtue of humility?

Share a story of someone you believe is humble. What marks them with this virtue?

Luther on Humility

Luther regarded humility as one of the most significant of virtues and believed only followers of Jesus lived in true humility. While he may not have described himself as a humble man (the thought itself, he would likely advise, would lead to this virtue's opposite, pride), his humility is seen in his stalwart confession that there was nothing in himself that would find any merit before the Lord. Read how Luther writes of humility:

"But the truly humble look not to the result of humility but with a simple heart regard things of low degree and gladly associate with them. It never enters their minds that they are humble. Here the water flows from the well; here it follows naturally and as a matter of course that they will cultivate humble conduct, humble words, places, faces, and clothing, and, so far as possible will shun great and lofty things. Thus, David says in Psalm 113:1 'O Lord, my heart is



not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high.’ And Job 22:29 says: ‘He who has been humbled shall be in glory; and he who bows down his eyes shall be saved.’ Hence, honors always come unexpectedly to them, and their exaltation is a surprise; for they have been content with their lowly station and have never aspired to the heights.” (What Luther Says, CPH #2083)

- How does Luther link contentment here with humility?
- According to Luther, how does humility shape one’s entire life?

Humility in Suffering

Read Matthew 15:21-28

- What is the Canaanite woman suffering as a result of her child’s possession? What would you do to rescue your child from the clutches of Satan? What does this woman do?
- What are factors which would reckon this woman unworthy to receive any help or rescue from Jesus? As His disciples ask Jesus to send the woman away, what does Jesus say is the priority of His earthly ministry?
- What does Jesus call this woman and, by implication, her child in verse 26? How do Jesus’ words reveal the great humility in her response?
- What does Jesus then declare about this woman in verse 28, and what is His gift of grace to her?

Humility of a Sinner

Read Luke 5:1-11

- What specifically was Jesus doing before His dialogue with Peter in this text? Why is the teaching of God’s Word important to the gift of faith in Jesus? (Romans 10:17)



- How does Peter at first demonstrate that he, at times, could be brash even while obedient? (Luke 5:5)
- After the miraculous catch of fish, how does Peter's response to Jesus reflect humility? (Luke 5:8) How does Jesus share God's abundant grace with Peter?

Humility of Jesus

Read Matthew 11:28-30; Philippians 2:1-11

- How does Jesus describe Himself in the Matthew reading? Share a favorite moment in Jesus' earthly ministry which demonstrates His humility to you.
- How does Paul describe Jesus' humility in Philippians 2? What is the result of His willingness to be obedient to death on a cross?
- According to these verses, how does Jesus' own humility shape ours?

Being Humble Today

- What are some ways our world today reflects that it doesn't value humility?
- Where do you find it most difficult to be humble?
- How does humility help you to count others as more significant than yourself? (Philippians 2:3)
- How does Jesus' humility give us rest?

Closing Prayer