

## A Mindset of Humility

**Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;**

We come to the third garment of the soul that we are to ‘put on’ or allow ourselves to be clothed by the Holy Spirit.

**Humility** or **humbleness of mind** (King James). It is also translated **humility of mind**

What we are to grasp from this Greek word is that this occurs in the mind! Not emotionalism but a mental attitude. The late Whittaker Chambers wrote in ‘Cold Friday’ that the battle today is a battle for ‘the mind.’ Satan knows this as does all his disciples. Education today, in America teaches children ‘what’ to think, not ‘**how**’ to think.

And so, it is no surprise that this word for ‘humility’ centers on what goes on in the mind. The Greek word used here for humility comes from the noun meaning ‘low minded.’ Humility is “lowliness of the mind,” the thinking of a person. “The esteeming of ourselves small, inasmuch as we are so, the correct estimate of ourselves.” (The Complete WordStudy Dictionary of the New Testament)

Plato, in the defense of Socrates, gives an excellent understanding of this word. This is a state of mind which submits to the divine order of the universe and does not impiously exults self.

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So, the first thing we are to recognize about this much misunderstood Christian virtue is that it is in the mind, the thinking of the believer.

**Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinks within himself,  
so he is**

You are what you think. Therefore, it is so important to control your thoughts, as to who you are in Christ! Whenever you begin to have depressing thoughts about yourself, immediately grab hold of your thought process and change it to who you are in Christ. It is as easy as a radio, where you change from AM to FM: that is, from *Adamic mindset* to *Faith mindset*. Of course, you have to know who you are in Christ. From Col. 3:12 alone, you are Elect in Christ; you are Holy and you are Beloved of God. From 1 Corinthians chapter 3 you are a temple of God; you are indwelt by the third member of the Godhead; you are a member of the Royal Family of God; you are a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are just a few of the things you are, so start thinking of yourself as God sees you. False humility often leads to severe depression. True humility leads to a bold serving of Jesus Christ. Look at:

**Acts 20:17 From Miletus** (about 30 miles from Ephesus) **he** (Apostle Paul) **sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.**

**Acts 20:18 And when they had come to him, (Paul) he said to them, “You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time,**

**Acts 20:19 serving the Lord with all humility**

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**and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews;**

True humility which comes from the Holy Spirit, gives boldness to serve the Lord in the midst of opposition.

**Acts 20:20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, (of spiritual benefit) and teaching you publicly and from house to house,**

Every pastor-teacher must have humility from the Holy Spirit as does everyone who sits and listens to the teaching of the Word of God. Arrogance rejects the authority of a pastor-teacher and always seeks out someone who does not intently teach from the Word of God.

**Acts 20:21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God...**

Repentance is a deep and often a difficult alteration in one's thinking. True repentance requires 'deep' humility that will allow you to make this change in your thinking.

**Acts 20:21 ...and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Repentance is never enough. The issue is what you think or do after you have changed your thinking. Do you turn to the Lord in simple faith? Or do you turn to some form of religion of works.

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Humility is absolutely necessary for the unity of an assembly of believers. Arrogance attacks your thinking about someone in the assembly and causes ‘biting one another’ and ‘devouring one another’ Gal. 5:15. And soon, that assembly has no impact in the Angelic Conflict. This is well taught by Paul in

**Ephesians 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord,** (the humility to properly understand who you are) **implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,** (his exhortation starts with reminding them who they are in Christ.)

**Ephesians 4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,**

This verse is packed with the dependence on the Holy Spirit by faith and begins with humility.

**Ephesians 4:3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

This is where humility is demanded. This is not unity at any cost, giving up truth from the Word of God for the sake of unity, but, this is unity brought about by the Holy Spirit.

In Philippians we have further understanding of what makes a Christ serving assembly.

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**Philippians 2:1** **Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, (and there is) if there is any consolation of love, (this is Spiritual Love and there is) if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, (this depends on faith in the Holy Spirit) if any affection and compassion, (and if from the Holy Spirit there will be)**

**Philippians 2:2** **make my joy complete by being of the same mind, (like-mindedness of Biblical teaching) maintaining the same love, (Spiritual Love from the Holy Spirit) united in spirit, (most everyone will be walking by faith in Holy Spirit) intent on one purpose. (Glorifying Jesus Christ not self)**

**Philippians 2:3** **Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind (here humility is the opposite of selfishness and conceit) regard one another as more important than yourselves;**

Here is where the battle of humility sets in. This is impossible in the flesh, but in the power of the Holy Spirit and in thinking of purpose, humility can shine forth from you. People, don't be in denial. We all from time to time regard ourselves as more important than someone else.

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It is humility to be aware of this and combat it in Spiritual Love from the Holy Spirit.

**Philippians 2:4 do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.**

I often use these verses in discussing marriage where this should be the thinking of the husband toward the wife and the wife toward the husband.

Now in bringing God's thinking toward humility let's look at:

**1 Peter 5:5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to *your* elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**

This is part of the responsibility of parents to teach this to their children. But, it is also important in the local church - and all of you, not just the young.

**clothe yourselves** OK, I hope you can see the relationship here and in Col. 3:12 **put on**, while here we are challenged to **clothe ourselves or allow the Holy Spirit to clothe us**. It is therefore no surprise that the first garment to be put on here in 1 Peter 5 is our word *humility*: **and all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another**. Think about what is being said here. This is not just a beckoning of

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humility but humility toward others in the assembly or other believers in your family, work, social life etc.

**1 Peter 5:5 ...for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**

We saw in Phil 2:3 that the opposite of humility was self-centeredness. Here, the opposite of humility is *pride, arrogance*. But, what is a stern warning to us on a daily basis is that God is **opposed to the proud and gives grace to the humble**. So, here it is. If you want to know how to receive grace from God, be humble, have humility ruling in your life. We are each one of us going to have to battle arrogance and walk by faith in the Holy Spirit so that we will have humility. But there are people who have to battle constant arrogance, constant self-centeredness. To these people, this is the ‘trend’ they must battle. But remember, every individual believer has some trend toward sin. This is one reason why you do not judge one another.

We noted this word in the important passage on our appearing at the Judgment Seat of Christ in Col. 2:18.

**Colossians 2:18 Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in *self abasement* (or as King James) *voluntary humility***

Do you remember what this is? This is humility from our flesh nature! which has no merit before God. This is the humility that most people have and it is self satisfying. It is like *voluntary love*. This is love that comes from the flesh, not the Holy Spirit. And like love from the flesh,

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God rejects humility from the flesh. The only humility that is acceptable to God is a humility that comes from the Holy Spirit. Another way of looking at these people who try to defraud you of your prize at the Judgment Seat of Christ is self-righteousness. Out of their self-righteousness and humility of the flesh they set themselves up to judge others. Do not listen to them, they are not worth the time you may spend out of fellowship with Holy Spirit.

We saw these self-humility people in verse 23:

**Colossians 2:23** These are matters (legalism) which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement (voluntary humility) and **severe treatment of the body, *but are of no value*** against fleshly indulgence. (Only the power and leading of the Holy Spirit have value.)

***Doctrine of Humility***

1. Define and understand humility. Basic understanding of humility is that it starts in the mind. It is the thinking required by God. The humility that God is looking for is not *voluntary self-effacement*. Nor is it lowering your head and saying things like ‘aw shucks that was nothing.’ Nor is it beating yourself for your failures. God is not looking for a humility that comes from the flesh but a humility that recognizes that God is and that He is responsible for all that is in the world that matters into eternity. Please don’t be taken in by false humility. Humility that God is pleased with, is in your mind, your



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thinking. It often will express itself in gentleness but humility is in the mind, the thinking. Remember that your mind is the battlefield. God is looking for a humility that comes from the Holy Spirit. It is the ability to endure injury with patience and without resentment or reaction. This humility is not deficient in courage. In fact, it is the demonstration of courage in gentleness, and kindness. Jesus Christ was guided by humility from the Holy Spirit. We saw Him getting down on the floor and washing the feet of the disciples. It was also highly demonstrated by enduring the cross for the salvation of sinful, unrighteous mankind. As we will see, this humility, desired by God, does not come from comparing yourself to others and recognizing that they are superior to you in some way. No, this humility comes from comparing yourself to God, to Jesus Christ and coming to the conclusion that the only way you can have any form of relationship with God or with Jesus Christ is if they provide the way, independent of you doing anything.

### 2. We must be humble to exercise Faith.

Faith is fundamental to our salvation — faith in Jesus Christ. And faith is fundamental to spirituality — faith in the Holy Spirit. Faith is how the Christian is to live, for we walk by faith. Now, the point here is that our flesh nature is opposed to faith. Paul teaches that **‘Faith is the battle,’** that we must fight (1 Tim. 6:12). With whom are we fighting? Ourselves. Our flesh nature is opposed to faith. The flesh nature demands that it be the center of activity. The flesh demands that it figures everything out: evolution, not creation; no God etc. We must understand that humility is often a *painful* recognition of our own inadequacies. So, we are constantly

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reminded of humility every time we use our faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Word of God. Humility recognizes our own unworthiness and complete inability to do anything to please God but to humbly come to Him by non-meritorious faith.

3. Salvation demands humility. We are saved by grace through faith. This is why so many prefer to ‘invite Jesus into your heart.’ When you do the inviting, you are taking an active part in your salvation. You give yourself some worth. You are doing something. You are inviting Jesus into your heart. Nowhere is this the basis of salvation in the Bible. Over and over...faith in Jesus Christ is the issue, never inviting Jesus into your heart. So why has this become so popular? Because it satisfies the arrogance of people. I get to be part of my salvation, I have the responsibility to do something. I have to invite Jesus into my heart. I have some worth, I can do something for God to save me. You see, simply faith is non-meritorious. It is not based on something you do, but by your non-meritorious faith. You receive the Salvation offered by Jesus Christ.

There is another false concept about salvation, another way of averting humility required by faith: I receive Jesus Christ as my savior. Again, this is an active verb, you get to do something, you get to be part of your salvation. Please note carefully:

**John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,**

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The act of receiving is defined in the Word of God as believing in Jesus Christ. The word 'receive' can be either active or passive. Passive is where the subject is not doing the action but is instead being acted upon. One who believes in Jesus Christ receives Jesus Christ as his/her Savior. But many insist on making the verb active...*I receive Jesus Christ as my Savior.* No, you believe in Jesus Christ as your savior and in so doing you receive Him as your Savior. The process of salvation is passive, we are acted upon by our Savior, not active as though we make Him our Savior. We receive Him as our Savior. The Bible is very clear that we believe in Jesus Christ and in so doing we receive Him as our Savior.

Now, some of you may be thinking, 'big deal.' Why this fuss between believing and inviting and believing and receiving? Oh, this is so important to understanding other things in the Plan of God. It is grave humiliation to recognize that I am totally dependent upon God for my salvation. There is nothing I can do but to trust in Jesus Christ. And to avoid this deep humiliation, man has come up with 'inviting Jesus into your heart' or 'receiving Jesus.' This is so important. For if a person is off only a little at the Gospel, they will be 'way off' when it comes to other things in the Bible, like how to be Filled with Holy Spirit. An example: if a person is off just a fraction, when shooting a pistol, he/she will hit the target at close range, but when the target is further out, he/she will miss it completely. Misunderstanding the Gospel is one of the reasons why some teach you can lose your salvation. Or others, teach you have to do something for salvation or you are elected to believe in Jesus Christ. This is also why so many are so far off when it comes to how to be Filled with the Holy Spirit. They move away from 'by grace through

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faith' to some form of works like repentance, confession, yielding, asking God, feeling very sorry for your sins, etc.

So, it is so important to understand why God made the Gospel by faith alone: no merit from man. Faith is opposed to our flesh nature; flesh does not want to turn everything over even to God. So, our flesh resists faith and for this reason, faith is the battle and salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone.

4. Grace thinking recognizes that we, at no time, earn or deserve anything from God. Humiliation as we are studying here from the Bible may be painful, but it is the wonderful beginning of God-consciousness. And then, be saved by grace through faith. We do not earn blessings from God.
5. Humility understands that everything depends on who and what God is and all that He has done. Whittaker Chambers wrote something insightful about our time in history in his book "Witness."

**... my century... is unique in the history of men for two reasons. It is the first century since life began when a decisive part of the most articulate section of mankind has not merely ceased to believe in God, but has deliberately rejected God. And it is the century in which this religious rejection has taken a specifically political form.**

And people, when you reject God, you are left with nothing but yourself where humility plays no part in your thinking.

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6. Humility is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**

**Galatians 5:23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.**

Note the word **gentleness**. The King James is much closer to the truth of this Greek word when it translates it **meekness**. The Greek word means gentleness or humility.

Like all the fruit of the Holy Spirit, humility is in the mind, the Holy Spirit effects the mind to cause outward affects that can be seen by the world.

7. Only in humility can the spiritual life grow.

**James 3:13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. Or “the Humility of wisdom”**

This of course refers to a wisdom from God, from above, from the Holy Spirit. As you grow in your spiritual life (and the only way we can grow spiritually is by the power and leading of the Holy Spirit), as we grow in wisdom and understanding, we grow in the knowledge of the Word of God, living in the word; pursuing the understanding of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:18). But now, you have this wisdom in your soul, in your thinking, and you have this divine understanding of time and eternity. It

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is to be manifested, revealed to the world. And the world will see it by good behavior (as God defines good, not as man defines good), by our deeds, things we do in our marriages, in our local churches, at work and in society. And these deeds must be done in humility, not in arrogant superiority.

8. Our defense of the gospel is to be done in humility and Spiritual Love.

**1 Peter 3:15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, (your thinking) always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with or in humility and reverence.**

Ok, you are speaking with an unbeliever, who is a Communist or Muslim or Mormon etc. You do not run them down, attack their thinking. You softly present the gospel to them without judgment, without sounding like you think you are superior because of the truth in which you stand. Your knowledge and wisdom do not make you superior but humble in that you did not deserve to have it any more than they. In giving defense of the gospel or any biblical principle upon which you base your life, your marriage, your rearing of your children, you present it to the world in humility and reverence. Let us not forget that in giving us the New Commandment, Jesus Christ taught us that the world will know that we are followers of Jesus Christ, not by our arrogance but by loving one another just as He loved us. So, we demonstrate that we are followers of Jesus Christ by our love and by our humility.

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**Matthew 11:28 Come to Me,** (by faith) **all who are weary and heavy-laden,** (they are weary and heavy laden from trying to work so hard for God, to earn something from God, from keeping the Law.) **and I will give you rest.** (Soul rest and assurance)

**Matthew 11:29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart,** (Do you see it? Jesus Christ is humble in His own thinking. And why not? He lived by the power of the Holy Spirit) **and you will find rest for your souls.** (Peace and rest and confidence in eternity.)

**Matthew 11:30 “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”**

And what is His yoke? What is His burden? Simple faith!!

This is further seen as He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

**Matt. 21:5 “SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, ‘BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, (this is our word for humility) HUMBLE EVEN MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.”**

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(if you look at Zech. 9:9 the Hebrew word is also humble) **humble and mounted on a donkey**

So, if you desire to be like Jesus, you must love as He loved and you must be humble in your thinking. If Jesus Christ, the Son of God in humanity, is humble, how much more you and I.

**Colossians 3:12 ...Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility...**

Please remember you do not make a decision to have a heart of compassion or kindness or a mindset of humility. No, you make a decision to trust the Holy Spirit to pour these valuable traits into you, in your marriage, single life, local church, work etc.

To let the world know that you are a follower of Jesus Christ.

If they want to know His love, it will be from you!

If they desire the calmness of humility of mind, they will see it in you!

**Only one life  
Twill soon be past  
Only what's done for Christ  
Will last  
Live your life in light of eternity**

[Quoted from C.T. Studd poem "Only One Life Twill Soon Be Past"]