

# OUR MISSIONAL ATTITUDE: HUMILITY

## Kick It Up Sunday – September 13, 2009 Perth Bible Church

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Please note: This message is inspired by and adapted from a message called "Greatness, Humility, Servanthood" by John Piper (8/30/2009).

### INTRODUCTION

As we seek to spiritually Kick It Up to the next level this new ministry year, I thought it would be a good idea to review the essence of our mission and identity as a Church of Jesus Christ:

**Perth Bible Church** is a family of imperfect people who are unrelenting in our desires and efforts to be like Jesus in character and in action - **loving God absolutely and loving others sacrificially**. We are committed to this for the benefit of all (in and outside of the church) and, most of all, to the glory of God!

The ONLY way we can live out or fulfill our mission to **love God absolutely and love others sacrificially** is through a genuine and pervasive attitude of humility. As John Piper encouraged his congregation: "Every good thing in the Christian life grows in the soil of humility. Without humility, every virtue and every grace withers."

**Video: Kids Talk – Humility (38 secs)**

### SCRIPTURE: Mark 8:32-45

– summarize/re-tell vv. 32-41; read vv. 42-45

### PRIDE: **ACCUSATION VS. REALITY**

– **Jn. 5:17-18**

– Even Jesus, the One who 'lowered' Himself from heaven to earth and from fleshless to embodied in flesh, from King of Kings to homeless son of a rural carpenter was accused of arrogance. In fact, the Son of God – perfect in all ways, including humility - was tortured and killed after being falsely accused and convicted of blasphemous arrogance.

– Therefore, even the most humbly outspoken witnesses of Him should expect to be falsely accused of pride and arrogance for proclaiming His Truth.

– Though false, this should be expected and accepted by those who proclaim His greatness and absolute Truth as revealed by Him.

– What we must, however, beware and avoid is the REALITY of pride in our attitude, speech, behavior, choices and reactions.

– The reality of pride is demonstrated and described in **Ezek. 28:11-19**.

– This description of the Fall of Lucifer into the Accuser – Satan should be a powerful lesson for us.

– The archangel Lucifer was indeed a model of God's created beauty, majesty, power and wisdom. If any, apart from God Himself, ever had reason to boast in oneself it was Lucifer. And, yet, by turning his focus from and service to God to himself and his own praise Lucifer lost everything!

– This, friends, is a good Biblical definition of pride: **PRIDE is exhibited any time anyone – in**

**private or public, in their heart or through their lips – turns from an absolute focus on and service to God for His Glory and begins instead to consider oneself and expect the positive consideration of others in turn.**

WHAT MIGHT THIS LOOK LIKE?

– **Illustration:** *There was an Adirondack turtle who wanted to spend the winter in FL, but he knew he could never walk that far. So, he convinced a couple of geese to help him by each taking one end of a rope, while he clamped his vice-like jaws in the center. Off they went. The ingenious plan was working wonderfully until someone on the ground looked up in admiration and asked, “Who in the world thought of that?” Unable to resist a chance to receive recognition and respect, the turtle opened his mouth to shout: “I did -----” Pride never looks pretty – especially after the fall.*

– **HUMILITY, then, is just the opposite: never taking our focus and singular purpose away from serving and glorifying God without regard for the self.**

## **GOD'S DESCRIPTION OF HUMILITY**

*Please, don't just take my word for it! Let us look together at what how God's Word describes true humility that represents and honors Him and therefore brings blessing rather than cursing.*

### **1.) Boasts In God 1 Cor. 1:26-31**

- Humility not only agrees, but greatly desires and takes joy in giving all the credit for anything we may have, accomplish or receive to God and God alone!
- Humility recognizes that no matter our gifts, abilities, ideas, efforts or intentions we ourselves deserve no merit but only God. Rather than sink into feelings of being unnoticed or unappreciated, we rejoice in Him and His work in and through us!

### **2.) Accepts Everything As A Gift 1 Cor. 4:6-7**

- Humility freely and joyfully boasts in God because it recognizes that ALL the self has or receives is completely a gift from God!

#### **Video: God Did It (1:16)**

- Yes, we may have worked hard, endured much, sacrificed, risked and proven unique in certain respects of our knowledge, abilities, skills, intellect, wisdom, creativity, recognizing opportunities, etc. But **the godly person recognizes even all of this is only by and according to the grace of God!** The humble does not boast even in that which distinguishes them from others, for this too is a gift from God.

### **3.) Embraces God's Sovereignty James 4:6-10; 13-17**

- The humble follower of Christ not only recognizes and accepts, but fully embraces the completeness of God's sovereignty over every aspect of their lives.
- Biblical humility is always aware and embracing of the fact that every beat of their heart, step of their foot, open and closed window of opportunity is ultimately according to the Will and Grace of God and never simply our own ingenuity, skill, decisiveness, wisdom or effort.

### **4.) Is Rooted In The Gospel Col 3:12-17**

- Our humility in its nature and our outward reflection of it is rooted within and thus a growing

extension of the Gospel – the good news that Jesus humbled Himself to give everything (including His dignity, freedom and life) for undeserving humanity!

– The true spirit of humility and its reality in our character is demonstrated through self-less compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, acceptance, forgiveness and reconciliation. A rejection or lack of these qualities toward another, then, is a reflection of pride and rejection of humility and the gospel of Jesus Christ!

### **5.) Is Demonstrated Through Sacrifice Phil. 2:3-8**

- The ultimate measure of humility is willful sacrifice and the ultimate measure of willful sacrifice is obedience to the will and spirit of God.
- Humility brings itself low and on its belly in order to be in position to lift others up!
- Object Illustration: NY Giant Brandon Jacobs. Full-sized male volunteer. Try lifting by the head. . . By the legs. . . On hands on knees, have person stand on my back.

### **6.) Seeks Greatness In Servanthood Mark 10:42-45**

- Humility is measured by the degree to which others are blessed through service.

**Video: How To Be Great (1:24)**

## **BENEFITS FROM A LIFE OF HUMILITY**

### **1.) Freedom To Laugh**

- As John Piper puts it: “gospel humility frees you from the need to posture and pose and calculate what others think, so that you are free to laugh at what is really funny with the biggest belly laugh . . . Proud people need to keep their dignity. The humble are free to howl with laughter.”
- Personal Illustration: Strawberry long underwear.

### **2.) Courage**

- The best confidence that leads to the greatest and most consistent courage is that which is found in God rather than the self.

### **3.) Fuel**

- Absolute dependence on God in recognition of one's own limitations and inadequacy is what produces the most energizing and limitless fuel to our lives and activities for Him!
- **1 Corinthians 15:10**
- **Colossians 1:29**

## **CHALLENGE: KICKIN' IT UP WITH HUMILITY**

The Church which is the Body of Christ will either survive and thrive by its pervasive servanthood, OR it will flail and die upon the spikes of pride, individualism and selfishness. Which will it be for Perth Bible Church? To which will you personally contribute?

As Peter Marshall prayed: “*Lord, when we are wrong, make us willing to change. And when we are right, make us easy to live with.*”

**LORD, help me to crucify my self and be your humble servant and may your church at Perth be marked by godly humility!**