



**Module** : Understanding, Accessing & Growing in GRACE

**Session 9** : Humility Accesses 'A Greater Grace' - Part 1

**Focus** : Humility as a Grace-Receiver; The Essence of Humility

*But He gives A GREATER GRACE*

*James 4:6a*

When our spirits were regenerated at the point of our initial entrance into the salvation experience and process, we encountered our first deposit of the grace of God. We were shown mercy because of the meritorious work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. We believed, repented, received the forgiveness of sins, redemption and justification all by grace. There was nothing we could do to earn this. This particular 'SIDE' of the many-sided grace of God is unmerited favour. However, now being saved, we are to grow to maturity in the grace into which we were introduced. Access to the totality of the variegated grace of God will require of us certain dispositions, attitudes, behaviours, etc. Some of these have already been alluded to in this series, e.g.

- The prioritisation of God's Word
- Connection to an authentic apostolic fathering source
- Spiritual fathering
- Open hearts of love within the father-son wineskin,
- A house of brotherly love and honour, etc. ...

In this regard, grace would also be that which is 'merited', for failure to adopt the specified mindset or behaviour would render us ineligible to access the grace associated with it. As we continue in this series, we will clearly indicate additional biblical keys for growing in grace. In the present study, we focus on the issue of HUMILITY as opposed to PRIDE. Simply stated, humility recruits more grace, whilst pride prevents the reception of grace.

### ❖ HUMILITY RECRUITS GRACE

One of the heart dispositions and mindsets within sons of God that positions us to be the recipients of a greater quantum and unique quality of grace is HUMILITY. Three portions of scripture indicate this directly:

**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.

**James 4:6** But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

These New Testament passages quote from Proverbs 3:34.

**Prov. 3:34** Surely He scorns the scornful, But **gives grace** to the **humble**. (NKJV)

The message is quite plain here: God actively resists pride, but gives a significant quality of grace to the humble.

### ❖ GOD'S EYES SCAN THE EARTH, LOOKING FOR HUMILITY IN MEN

The eyes of God constantly survey the earth, keenly looking for dispositions within men that are like Himself, and to which He is most attracted towards.

**Prov. 15:3** The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Watching the evil and the good.

**Job 31:4** Does He not see my ways and number all my steps.

**Zech. 4:10b** These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole earth.

**Rev. 5:6** And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

(Also Zech. 3:9)

The Father SEEKS true worshippers:

**John 4:23** But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

The eyes of Lord intentionally seek for those with totally devoted hearts toward Him:

**2 Chron. 16:9a** For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.

Specifically, the heart and mind which is HUMBLE, has an uncanny capacity to recruit the attention of God.

**Isa. 66:1,2** Thus says the Lord, "Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? "For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being," declares the Lord. "But to this one I will look, **To him who is humble and contrite of spirit**, and who **trembles at My word**."

**1 Kgs 8:27** “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built.”

In the texts above, God clearly indicates the virtual impossibility of the entirety of any created thing or order, including the Heavens and anything man could create, to fully accommodate His being. The rationale is that how could He, who personally made all things, be contained within what He has made, since He is much bigger than anything made. Man, the corporate man, the totality of the Body of Christ, is the only possible created item that has any potential to fully house God, for man was made in His image and likeness. The thing that specifically is highlighted in the text that actually recruits God’s attention or ‘LOOK’ (*“But to this one will I look”*), is the condition of humility, contrition and a high esteem for His Word. These set forth the ideal and most compatible framework to house HIM.

**Look = Nabat =** ‘To watch, to regard. It has the sense of **looking somewhat intensely** in a **focused way** at something; to gaze. It is used of the **keen observations** of an eagle from a great distance (Job 39:29); and of the Lord’s gazing on the earth from His habitation (Ps. 102:19 ,20).<sup>1</sup>

God is intent on removing every obstacle within us that impedes His desire to dwell fully within us. Pride is a major obstacle to complete Divine habitation in men.

**Isaiah 57:14,15** And it will be said, “Build up, build up, prepare the way, Remove every obstacle out of the way of My people.” For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, “I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite.

**Note:** The eyes of the Lord search the earth to find His image in men. The very intent of His look is redemptive and not judgemental. He eagerly desires to dispense greater grace to the humble of heart and mind.

## ❖ PERSONAL AND CORPORATE HUMILITY

### Personal Humility:

God seeks for a ‘PERSON’ of humility. God, from the height of the Heavens, scans the earth with intense and keen observance to find HUMILITY in men. His eyes are attracted to humility, and where He finds a humble heart, He chooses to locate Himself there in profound expressions of grace. What the Heavens cannot contain of the fullness of the Divine nature and expression, the humble heart within man, the corporate man, has the capacity to receive and retain. Our personal lives need to be lived out in deep humility.

## Corporate Humility:

God also seeks a 'PEOPLE' of humility. Our corporate expression as a house of God (including our representation as local churches, clans, tribes and our wider representation as the 'Holy Nation' of God) needs to be contexts of great humility. The nature of our collective corporate attitude as a household of God must not be arrogant nor proud, and neither must we give off this perception of ourselves to those who observe us. We must not be an ostentatious nor pompous people individually, nor collectively, in our corporate expression. We must be fully assured and confident in the way in which we carry ourselves with reference to our identity as the sons of God in the earth, but it must never be with egotistical and self-centered conceit that fosters opinions of superiority over others, whom we regard as less than ourselves. Zephaniah 3:11,12 prophetically points to a day where every trace of pride will be thoroughly expunged from our corporate existence, so that there results a "humble and lowly" people.

**Zeph.3:11b,12** "In that day you will feel no shame because of all your deeds by which you have rebelled against Me; For then **I will remove from your midst Your proud, exulting ones, and you will never again be haughty on My holy mountain.** "But **I will leave among you a humble and lowly people,** And they will take refuge in the name of the Lord."

May we not be among the 'haughty' who shall be removed, but among the 'lowly' who shall remain. It is so easy for pride to displace humility. The line separating humility from pride is thin. We must all guard our hearts in this matter.

### ❖ THE 'HUMILITY-PAD' - THE LANDING SPOT FOR HEAVENLY GRACE



Example of a Helipad.

Humility becomes the characteristic that attracts grace, whilst pride is a grace-repellant. The humble recruit more grace unto themselves by virtue of their humility. The proud, by virtue of this arrogant disposition, provide no 'landing spot' for grace. Grace requires humility as a 'landing spot'. Helicopters generally land on a helipad, which is a designated landing pad marked with a circle and/or a letter "H", so as to be visible from the air (See illustration alongside here). These are found at airports, on the roofs of skyscrapers, hospitals, large ships, etc. Similarly, God looks for a 'humility-pad' within our spirits, upon which to dispense more and greater grace.

The HUMILITY-PAD is the HUMBLE HEART over which grace HOVERS, upon which grace lands, and which grace elects as a HABITATION.

Like helipads, our hearts of humility must be 'visible from the air' – i.e. must be observable and regarded by God and not falsely horizontally paraded before men (false humility<sup>2</sup>).

**Col. 2:18a** Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility ... (NKJV)

True humility is a condition of the heart that determines an attitude within the mind. There is a false humility which parades itself as appearing to abide by biblically acceptable principles externally, so as to create an impression of piety. This is Pharisaical. Its intent is purely to create an impression of humility so as to foster esteem in the perception of others in reference to it.

**"When pride perceives humility as honourable, it often borrows her cloak."**

(Thomas Fuller, English author; 1608-1661)

Rooftop helipads vary in their capacity to receive helicopters of a specified maximum weight or less. They display a large two-digit number, representing the weight limit (in thousands of pounds) of the pad<sup>3</sup>. In addition, a second number may be present, representing the maximum rotor diameter in feet. Similarly, the sincerity and depth of humility will determine the quantum and quality of the potential download of grace. The genuine-ness of the humility dictates what grace capacity it can receive and handle.



We could extend this parabolic analogy further. For skyscrapers, with rooftop helipads to be able to receive heavier helicopters whose rotor diameters are large, the helipad needs to be sufficiently well and solidly constructed and prepared. This is especially true, the higher the skyscraper. The principle is that the more God uses you, the greater visibility you have and the greater heights you ascend, the more aware you need to be of the dangers of pride and thus focus upon entrenching an extremely strong disposition of humility within your heart and mind. The scriptures contains many examples of people who were initially humble and thus were abundantly blessed by God, but because of pride associated with the fact of their blessing, they fell out of favour with God and declined into obscurity. A case in point would be King Uzziah – see 1 Kings 15:2 Chronicles 26; Isaiah 1:1. If we are not careful, the event of our **breakthrough** could signal the start of a process of our **breakdown**. True humility is a security measure against failure intrinsic to pride.

As you and I ascend externally because of God's favour on us, may we deliberately descend internally within our hearts. Stay humble and access greater GRACE. 'Great Grace' is looking for an unpretentious heart of humility on which to land.

## ❖ THE ESSENCE AND ANATOMY OF HUMILITY

Humility is God-ward, In-ward and then Man-ward. For one to be humble in reference to others relationally, one has to have the correct appraisal of yourself inwardly, something which is only possible if your posture toward God is established in humility.

### ▪ Hebrew and Greek Definitions:

The English word, humble, is translated from the Hebrew word, 'sapal' and the Greek word, 'tapeinos':

**Humble = Sapal** (Shaphal) = Low; It has the sense of a humble, meek, or contrite spirit<sup>4</sup>; base<sup>5</sup>

**Humble = Tapeinos** = Low, not high, particularly of attitude; Used of the mind, meaning lowly, modest.<sup>6</sup>

SYNONYMS FOR HUMILITY: Meekness, lowliness, modesty, humbleness, lack of pride, lack of vanity; servility, submissiveness, subservience, self-abasement, unpretentious, unobtrusive, simplicity, down-to-earthness, etc.

### ▪ Humility of Heart (spirit) and Mind (soul):

Humility demands lowliness of heart and mind. The humble condition is first a heart-condition (spirit) and then a mind-condition (your soul). It emits first from the spirit and then soul.

**1 Peter 3:8** To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit.

**Psalms 51:17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, **You will not despise**.

**Psalms 35:13b** I humbled my soul with fasting ...

Jesus asked the Pharisees, 'Why do thoughts arise in your hearts?' (**Luke 24:28**). The thought life in the mind of the soul should be determined by the mind of our spirits. In this sense, the state of the heart (spirit) conditions the mind of the soul (our thoughts)<sup>7</sup>. Humility is a lowly position of the state of one's heart (spirit) that has its primary effect in its impact upon the attitude within the mind (soul), making one THINK of oneself in a manner that is not haughty, arrogant or proud. It is a dependable position upon God that one adopts. Humility is not independent of God or man; it consistently realises its need for God and fellow-men and by this attitude, it regards God and others as critically essential to its existence and the successful attainment of all of God's plans for it.

- The Basis of Humility:

At the heart of humility is the esteem and honour placed on God and His Word (See Isaiah 66:1,2 quoted above). The humble man 'trembles' at God's Word, i.e. has a deep reverential regard for the person of God and for God's view and opinion on things.

God's Word must be received with humility, in order for its inherent and intended saving quality to be released and experienced. Note in the text below, the Word is only 'ABLE TO SAVE' dependent on the quality of humility with which it is received.

**James 1:21** ... in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

In the text above, **humility** ('*prautes*'<sup>8</sup> in the Greek) is "**mildness of disposition, gentleness of spirit, meekness**"<sup>9</sup>.

God's Word contains His mind and will. When this is presented to our minds, we must humble any thought or opinion that opposes God's thoughts. We do this in deference to and preference for His thoughts, will and way. This is the essence of humility. In this economy, there is no place for establishing and entrenching one's own point of view above the revealed viewpoint of God through His Word.

It is imperative in humility to bow your heart and mind in a lowly fashion, displacing your own initial thought which may contradict God's, in a bid to accept and receive God's thought as your own. Thus we bend and adopt a heavenly perspective instead of our own earth-based perspective. At the basis of humility is a huge respect and esteem for God's Word. Your mind must bow to the mind of God in His Word.

This is important because without this humility, obedience to the Word is impossible. Jesus 'HUMBLED' Himself, and as a result, 'HE BECAME OBEDIENT'. In fact, more correctly stated, obedience is the ultimate indication of humility. Obedience is the proof of humility.

**Phil. 2:8** Being found in appearance as a man, He HUMBLED Himself by becoming OBEDIENT to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus obeyed to the point of death. Courageous obedience is necessary to God's commandments or the leading of God that demands our total sacrificial commitment and loyalty to His Word and voice. These may seem difficult to us and requires a humble heart that so esteems HIM and His Word, that it does not count the cost to obey. Pride prevents daring obedience and negates the possibility of obeying, because pride places value and importance on the person more than on God and His Word. To be truly humble starts with an immense esteem and respect for God and a high value placed on His Word. Obedience to this Word will require you to die to yourself – to your own thoughts and opinions. I will devote the entire next session to the essential of obedience as the outcome and litmus test of humility.

▪ The Outworking of Humility:

➔ Humility Toward God:

**James 4:10** Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up  
(NKJV)

➔ Humility Inwardly:

**Rom. 12:3** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with **sober judgment**, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

We must not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. To do so would be pride. The text highlights that there is an acceptable manner in which we are to think of ourselves, viz. our view of ourselves must be with sober judgement. The Amplified Bible explains this well ...

**Rom. 12:3** For by the grace (unmerited favor of God) given to me I warn everyone among you not to estimate and think of himself more highly than he ought [*not to have an exaggerated opinion of his own importance*], but to rate his ability with sober judgment, each according to the degree of faith apportioned by God to him. (AMP)

**Rom. 12:16** Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

**Humility within you is not the same as a low self-esteem.** We are not to have a poor self-concept, where we think LESS of ourselves than what we ought. Having a low estimate of who we are and what we are to do or achieve in and through Christ, is not honouring to God our Father (Cf. Gideon in Judges 6). It does not glorify Him.

We are to be confident about who God has made us to be in Christ as His firstborn sons, who represent Him accurately and with full assurance, execute His will. This we do with great confidence. Pride must not be confused with confidence. One may be confident yet humble, devoid of any arrogance.

**"There is a thin line between confidence and arrogance... its called humility; Confidence smiles, arrogance smirks".**

(Anon)

**"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less."**

(C.S. Lewis)

**"As a man thinks within his heart, so is he."**

(Prov. 23:7a)



## Humble Yourself

**James 4:10** Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

We are required to humble ourselves before God. This is our personal responsibility. No human can do it for us.

**Matt 18:4** Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

**Matt 23:11,12** But the greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

When we repent of our sins, it is not something we can boast in, because the fact that we can actually repent is because of the kindness of God that leads us to repent (Rom.2:4). Similarly, when the Scripture says to 'humble ourselves', it simply requires our compliance and cooperation with what God himself desires to effect in you. If you incline your heart to walk in humility, God will grant grace to you already to do this. It is those that 'hunger' for righteous which are filled (Matt.5:6). The hunger for righteousness is commended, not just righteousness itself. So may I encourage to just be disposed towards being humble and walking in humility. God will aid you in this. It will be His work in you, who is willing to regard and receive His work of grace in your life.

Humility is that one thing, which because of its very nature, you cannot boast about, nor take pride in. Mastering humility itself is a humbling thing which we cannot even reference as an accomplishment of our own doing. It is work of God in us which we simply recognise and co-operate with.

Usually, when we repeatedly fail to humble ourselves, God, as an expression of His great love for us, disciplines us through suffering in order to bring us to the resolve and commitment to be humble (Read the whole of Deut. 8 before proceeding). The forty year wilderness journeyings of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land was in part, designed to foster humility in them as a nation.

**Deut. 8:16** "In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end.

If you do not humble yourself, you will suffer humiliation from God's hand. Humiliation only results in one who suffers, because they have not humbled themselves in the trial.

Suffering and trials have the effect of keeping us humble. In a later session we will more fully explore the link between suffering and grace. Suffering prevents pride and fosters humility, to which grace is attracted. **It is not suffering per se that results in 'sufficient grace'. It is the disposition of humility the person has in the suffering that recruits grace.** One can undergo suffering, yet still maintain an unbending attitude of 'pride'. Pride within suffering results in humiliation, not suffering per se.

### ➔ Humility Relationally Toward Men:

God's Word, containing His intelligence and will for us, reveals to us exactly how we should think of ourselves in a sober, healthy and biblically acceptable way. **The view we have of ourselves will determine and shape our view of everyone around us.** The proper estimate of yourself in your own mind will condition the proper regard for all persons within your sphere of relationships. When Adam rebelled against God, His Father, he elected to allow his soul to inform his self-worth and view of his person not only in reference to himself, but also in reference to Eve, his wife.

After the fall, he blamed her in pride, instead of taking responsibility for her actions under his watch and oversight. Instead of protecting her, he reduced her value by using her as a convenient excuse for his irresponsibility. This is pride in action.

So long as we disconnect from God our Father as the primary agency that is to shape what we think of ourselves, and rely upon the fallen-ness of our soul to configure our identity outside of Christ, we will forever have issues of insecurity within ourselves and simultaneously see everyone in our sphere as the **cause of our deficiencies and/or the competition** we need to overcome in order to get ahead. This is the mentality of an orphan and not that of a son.

The one who is not confident in who he is as a firstborn son in Christ, tends to, out of the sheer need of survival, deliberately think highly in pride of himself and so posture himself as the best among everyone else. He then views his own success as requiring an attitude that thinks less of everyone else within his sphere. This will dictate to him how he relates to others.

For example, his socialising will be based only on whether or not the relationship or time spent with the other has any direct benefit to him, otherwise he will not pursue the other. One of the ways to keep our potential for pride in check is to consciously associate with those, who by some standard or criteria, are less advantaged than we.

**Rom. 12:16** Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

Do not be snobbish, high-minded or exclusive and live condescendingly of others. Learn to fellowship with others, whom most regard as unimportant. By doing so, you are indicating to them their importance in your eyes.

**1 Cor. 12:22-25** On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

To prevent falling into the error of pride in how we relate to others, we are to **'CLOTHE' ourselves WITH HUMILITY**.

**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.

In the verse above, we are encouraged to CLOTHE ourselves with humility toward ONE ANOTHER, otherwise God will oppose you. Think about it: The flow of grace in your life will directly be dependent upon the attitude of mind with which you relate to others around you. If you relate to them in pride thinking of yourself as better than they, God will resist you. But if humility towards others governs all your relationships, God will give more grace.

The humble man views everyone as better than himself. Because of this attitude, he is not conceited and selfish, looking out only for his own interests, but by virtue of his internal ranking of everyone above himself, he has absolutely no qualms about actively seeking the betterment and advancement of all people within his sphere. These sentiments are contained in the scriptural texts below:

### **Phil. 2:3-7**

- 3 Do **nothing from selfishness or empty conceit**, but with **humility of mind** regard one another as **more important** than yourselves;
- 4 do not *merely* look out for **your own personal interests**, but also for the **interests of others**.
- 5 Have this **attitude** in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,
- 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,
- 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.
- 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross

The example of Jesus' humility is set before us as a pattern to emulate. As the eternal Son of God, He is co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Yet, in His incarnation as a man sent to fulfill the Father's will on the earth, He willingly gave up this status of co-equality, not considering it something to be eagerly held on to. His mission demanded a humility, requiring the EMPTYING OF HIMSELF of deity, and expressing itself in the form of a servant in order to efficiently execute Heaven's mandate on earth. We all have to EMPTY ourselves to a degree in order to, in the fashion of a slave or servant, execute God's will on the earth. When you know who you are (as Jesus did), you will have no problem adopting a form of behaviour in servitude toward another so as to fulfill some aspect of God's will.

In 1 Peter 5:5 quoted above, we are to CLOTHE ourselves in humility. The phrase 'be clothed with' is explained below:

**Be clothed with = egkombóomai;** derived from 'kombóo' = to gather or tie in a knot, hence to fasten a garment, to clothe; Hence, to clothe or girdle oneself. Egkómbōma is a long white apron or outer garment with strings worn by slaves<sup>10</sup>.

Hence we are to BIND or FASTEN our flesh over with a servant mentality. This implies a proud person is uncovered or unclothed – too much flesh (carnality) is seen and persists. Jesus demonstrated this disposition of being clothed with humility by His actual divesting Himself of garments to robe Himself with a towel in order to wash the feet of His disciples (John 13).

Our humility must not just be to those to whom we require to be submitted to, but TO ALL MEN, even those we are called upon to lead.

**Titus 3:1,2** Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, **showing all humility to all men. (NKJV)**

Sons serve fathers and must be submitted to them in humility, but also fathers serve sons. This selfless service to sons by fathers must be borne out from a heart of submission to sons. Fathers and sons must honour and esteem each other.

**Col. 3:12,13** So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, **PUT ON** a heart of compassion, kindness, **HUMILITY**, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

- Humility in Behaviour and Good Deeds is Wisdom:

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

The word, 'gentleness' ('prautes' in the Greek) here and the text below is 'meekness' or 'humility'.

**James 3:13 (AMP)** Who is there among you who is wise and intelligent? Then let him by his noble living show forth his [good] works with the [unobtrusive] humility [which is the proper attribute] of true wisdom.

Your good deeds must never be done in pride to attract attention to yourself. Doing good towards others should be an expression of humility, and should never be used as occasions to foster a good image of yourself in the minds of observers. One of the ways to do this is to not bring attention to your good deeds.

- Humility in How we Contend for the Faith:

**1 Pet. 3:15** But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, (ESV)

In defending truth to others, do not adopt a proud and arrogant stance. It should be done courteously and with gentleness. Knowledge puffs up and has an uncanny capacity to install pride within the heart.

**1 Cor. 8:1b** Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies (NASB)

Even if you have the truth and are in discussion with someone who is in error or believes a lie, either doctrinally or in reference to some circumstance/issue, be gentle and respectful in the manner in which you contend for the truth. Do not be unnecessarily offensive by your arrogant manner. It is difficult to convince someone as to the truth by arrogantly arguing for truth, whilst simultaneously disrespecting their person.

**1 Cor. 8:1b** This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up (ESV)

Sometimes, love will win them over to accepting truth because you, the one who claims to have the truth, demonstrated to them your embodiment of love, the ultimate expression of truth.

**1 Tim 1:5a** Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart (NKJV)

**1 Cor. 13:2** If I ... know all mysteries and all knowledge ... but do not have love, I am nothing.

## ❖ THE PROMISE OF 'A' 'GREATER' GRACE TO THE HUMBLE!

**James 4:6** But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

**Greater = megas =** Large, numerous, abundant; used of intensity and its degrees; splendid, prepared on a grand scale, stately<sup>11</sup>

Note: 'megas' is a comparative of 'meízōn', meaning, 'greater, more, older'<sup>12</sup>

God does not just give grace to the humble, but He gives 'A GREATER GRACE' to the humble. This denotes both MORE grace and a greater QUALITY of grace. He does not give 'greater grace', but rather 'A greater grace'. This is simply not a reference to more grace being given, but a specific type or characteristic of grace, that is called 'greater'. The Greek word translated 'great' here, 'megas', does not only have reference to ABUNDANCE but also to the 'degree of intensity or force of a thing' (e.g. 'great fear' Mark 4:14). Not simply 'more grace' is given, but a more intense degree of grace, i.e. a greater quality. This relates to more profound aspects of the nature and character of the person of God imparted to you. An increased quantum and quality of grace is given to the humble man.

### WHY IS GRACE SO ATTRACTED TO HUMILITY?

God at His core is humble. He above any other being is the epitome of humility. Just the single fact alone that He, the invisible God, chose to create man as His son, and commit to this man the honour and responsibility of accurately representing Him physically in visible form to the entire creative order, in itself is one of the most profound expressions of humility. "The greatest expression of humility is when you can entrust the representation of yourself to another" (Sam Soleyn). This humble God is most attracted to anything like Himself in the earth. He is Spirit. Grace is that immaterial, invisible, compositional, constituent element that makes Him up as spirit. Think about it. A God full of grace as Spirit, made man as three parts, spirit, soul and body. To man he committed the task of displaying Him in creation. To do this the man must be full of grace in his spirit. The very act of granting spirit to this man was a divesture on the part of God out from Himself as Spirit, giving to man spirit. The divesture of God became an investiture within man. Now, man, as a spirit being, must adopt the same humble position, if anything of the Divine nature, foundationed upon grace, is to flow out from himself to others. That is why GRACE attends the humble heart.

Also, the man, who becomes a receiver of grace because of his humility, is meant to be a dispenser of that grace, something which without humility in him would be impossible. Humility is both necessary to receive grace from God as it is to give grace to others.

Further, consider this. God as Spirit, in whom an abiding 'form' of servanthood persists as core to His eternal being, GAVE from Himself 'spirit' to man, and HE (GOD) is not diminished by the quantum of spirit He gave. He is not impoverished by the measure of 'spirit' given from Himself to man. God has no fear of loss in His disposition and desire to give. Humility in God allows Him to give of Himself to another. When you and I adopt this God-like position, we will have no fear in giving anything, including finances, for we know that when we give natural things as 'spirit' beings from our position in the spirit realm in Christ, what we give will exponentialise as it passes through the realm of the natural – just like the five loaves and two fish were able to feed five thousand men. Pride prevents generous giving; humility freely offers her most treasured assets because humility is an expression of the realm of spirit.

**Humility Demands Servanthood**. Humility requires a servant's heart, intent upon willingly and voluntarily emptying itself of its own will and desire, in order to be of benefit to others by the will of God.

**Phil.2:5-7**

- 5 Have this **attitude** in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,
- 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,
- 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.
- 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

**Form** = **morphe** = shape; figuratively – 'nature'<sup>13</sup>

**Appearance** = **schema** = 'fashion'; a figure, external condition; outward appearance<sup>14</sup>

*"The word '**form**' (**morphe**) refers to the essence or reality – the substance of a being, the primary form of something; **nothing in this form can appear without it being an objective reality**; this has to be concrete and complete; it is the opposite of being a shadow. It is the life-quality that describes the very existence of God. You cannot parade servanthood without it being the substance of what you are made up of - this is the ontological nature. For example, do not confuse 'hospitality' with 'servanthood' - you can be hospitable without having the spirit of servanthood. Christ essentially, in His substantial make-up, had a '**form**' and it was '**God**' – '**in the Form of GOD**'".* (Thamo Naidoo at the March 2010 Apostolic School of Ministry)<sup>15</sup>

Christ Jesus existed in 'form' of God, i.e. he was eternally God in substance and nature. But then the text says, He took on the 'form' of a servant, still a reference to what is internally within Him as a core facet of His being. He then 'appeared' as man, i.e. the 'schema' - external outward form He assumed was that of a human being. As man he was the SON of God, the internal essence of whom was still the resident form ('morphe') of God as Servant. So within every son of God, there must be a permanently resident disposition and expression of the eternal nature of God as a servant.

Submission, humility and servitude are inherent qualities within Deity, e.g. the Son serves the Father; the Spirit serves the Son; The Father enables the Son by the Spirit; The Father gives all things to the Son; the Son, at the end of the age gives the Kingdom back to the Father. In the Body of Christ today, we as sons of God must possess a humility that grace attends so profoundly, that to serve another would be the most effortless and non-threatening thing.

Thamo Naidoo, in his teaching on Servanthood<sup>16</sup>, offers the following exhortation:

*“Servanthood is part of who God is. If you are a partaker of His divine nature – then this aspect of Christ has to be formed in each one of us. All sacraments communicate grace, e.g. husband and wife in marriage communicate grace for God’s purposes. The Table of the Lord communicates great grace. But there is another sacrament – the washing of each other’s feet – not physically but symbolically. If you want to be the greatest, learn to be the servant of all. To go up in the kingdom, you have to choose to become nothing.*

*Every citizen of the Kingdom should be a servant. Sonship is key today. Sons perpetuate the will of the father. If you are going to be a true son of the king, the fundamental principle of servanthood needs to be installed. Read all the parables again – they emphasize servanthood. God will one day say to those who were faithful, “Well done my good and faithful SERVANT (not son)”. Learn to labour in the dust. Deaconship (diakonos) is key to effective apostolic function. In true sonship, there is a resident desire to SERVE. Servitude would be a strong indication of humility. Serve one another; serve your spouse; serve the purposes of God vested in your spiritual father; do not be too proud to do the most menial of tasks. Mary called herself a ‘maid-servant’ in bearing the Christ child. God never created any of us to be famous. We were not created to be glorious, but rather to reflect the glory of God. We were not called to own anything – we were called to manage or steward things on HIS behalf. Barnabas taught us, to enter the apostolic season you have to dispossess yourself of the things you are possessed by. We will manage large volumes of money, not in our church bank accounts, but our people/sons who will know how to steward it and place it at apostles’ feet. We learn how to possess all things but not to be possessed by them.*

*The administration of the kingdom is diverse and complex and it demands that service be rendered on many levels of functionality. We are not equal when it comes to function, yet at whatever level we operate, we are all servants. Servanthood demands voluntary work. Surrender your time solely to your Master.”*



## ❖ Examples of Grace-Filled men known for their Deep Humility:

- ✓ JESUS was full of GRACE and truth, but was also humble in heart and gentle:

**Matt. 11:28,29** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am **gentle and humble** in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

What Jesus set forth as the basis for an appeal to others to 'learn' from Him is His gentle and humble nature. Those from whom you choose to 'learn' must be gentle and humble. Possessing deep insights and great revelation, whilst simultaneously being pompous and proud, disqualifies your eligibility and capacity to 'teach'.

- ✓ PAUL was the recipient and carrier of grace, yet deeply humble in disposition:

**Acts 20:18,19** And when they had come to him, 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, **serving the Lord with all humility** and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews

**Eph. 3:8** To me, the **very least of all saints**, this **grace was given**, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ.

Paul regarded himself as the 'least all of the saints', indicating his humility of heart and mind in reference to others in the Body of Christ. In saying this, he simultaneously references the fact grace was given to him. Grace comes to the one, who by all accounts is better than most, but who in his own estimation places everyone above himself.

Paul also had a view of his apostleship as lower than any other apostle in his time.

**1 Cor. 15:9,10** For I am the **least of the apostles**, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the **grace of God I am what I am**, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

- ✓ MOSES in his time was considered by God as the most humble man on planet earth and therefore functioned in great grace to lead millions of people out of slavery toward their inheritance. He was convinced he had been the recipient of FAVOUR – the Old Testament equivalent of 'grace'.

**Numbers 12:3** Now the man **Moses was very humble**, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.

**Exod. 33:12b** ... Moreover, You have said, 'I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight ...

**Challenge:** Study the three examples above and isolate expressions of humility in each of their lives. What characteristics did they exhibit as evidence of their humility?

❖ God Honours the Humble

**Psalms 138:6** For though the Lord is exalted, Yet He REGARDS the lowly, But the haughty He knows from afar. (Ntab)

**Psalms 138:6** Though the Lord is great, he CARES for the humble, but he keeps his distance from the proud. (NLT)

**Prov.15:33** The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, And before HONOUR comes humility.

Pride leads to DISGRACE. Humility leads to GREATER GRACE!

❖ Seek Humility

**Zeph. 2:3** Seek the Lord, All you humble of the earth Who have carried out His ordinances; Seek righteousness, seek humility. Perhaps you will be hidden in the day of the Lord's anger.

May we all pursue humility as one of our primary objectives.

In our next session we will do a brief overview of biblical case studies where obedience to God's Word required humility and those who did obey in this fashion accessed significant grace. In the session thereafter we will set out indicators of pride – things we need to avoid – since pride is a grace-repellant and recruits direct opposition from God.

Stay humble brethren.

May all grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Randolph Barnwell

See ENDNOTES Overleaf

### Stay in Touch via my Website and Social Networks

'Follow' Randolph Barnwell personally via Facebook or Twitter to receive regular inspirational and encouraging short posts and tweets highlighting key life principles from God's Word. You may also freely download notes and audio files of each session from [www.randolphbarnwell.com](http://www.randolphbarnwell.com). Additional materials on various topics are also available for download here. Enquiries: [randolph@gatedc.co.za](mailto:randolph@gatedc.co.za) Visit and 'like' the 'GATE MINISTRIES Durban Central' Facebook page OR 'follow' Gate Ministries Durban Central on Twitter and keep informed as to themes that will be taught each week. To regularly receive our free bible study notes, ensure you are on our email distribution list – send a request to [info@gatedc.co.za](mailto:info@gatedc.co.za).

### Other excellent and empowering resources are available from:

[thamonaiddoo.com](http://thamonaiddoo.com) ; [apostolicleader.co.za](http://apostolicleader.co.za); [soleyn.com](http://soleyn.com); [josephmaterra.org](http://josephmaterra.org); [touchthenations.co.za](http://touchthenations.co.za); [lifeenterprise.co.za](http://lifeenterprise.co.za); [elijahmorgan.eu](http://elijahmorgan.eu); [gmh.co.za](http://gmh.co.za); [godihear.com](http://godihear.com); [egen.co](http://egen.co); [peace.org.au](http://peace.org.au)

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## ENDNOTES

1. Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). The Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament (electronic ed.), Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, #H5027
2. False Humility:  
**Col. 2:18-23** : Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God. Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self- imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.
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5. Strong, J. (1890) Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, S.T.D., LL.D., e-Sword X, Version 3.2 (11), Dictionary, #H8217
6. Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). The Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament (electronic ed.), Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, #G5011
7. Refer to my two teaching series, viz. “The Spiritual Man” and the “The Prosperity of the Soul” for a comprehensive explanation of this statement. These are freely downloadable from my website in pdf note and audio formats. [www.randolphbarnwell.com](http://www.randolphbarnwell.com)
8. Note: 'prautes' is only found in James 1:21; 3:1 and 1 Pet. 3:15; often translated as 'gentleness'
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11. Thayer, J.H. (1996), Thayer's Greek Definitions, Hendrickson Publishers, e-Sword X, Version 3.2. (11), Dictionary, #G3173
12. Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). The Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament (electronic ed.), Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, #G3187; Note: In James 4:6, in the KJV, the word 'more' is 'meizon' whereas in the Nasb, 'greater' is 'megas'. The two words are comparatives, each one of the other.
13. Strong, J. (1890) Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, S.T.D., LL.D., e-Sword X, Version 3.2 (11), Dictionary, #G3444
14. Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). The Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament (electronic ed.), Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, #G4976
15. Refer to the March 2010 Apostolic School of Ministry. On Thamo Naidoo's website you can listen to the audio of these teachings: [www.thamonaiddoo.com](http://www.thamonaiddoo.com); On my website, you download the pdf notes of the these teachings: [www.randolphbarnwell.com](http://www.randolphbarnwell.com). Here are direct links to the respective web pages : <http://thamonaiddoo.com/march-2010-asom-sessions/> ; <http://randolphbarnwell.com/PDF's/ASOM%20Pdf's/5.%20ASOM%20March%202010.pdf>
16. Ibid.