



Empowering People to Change the World

**The Blessings of Humility
Psalm 34
Steve Holt**

How to Teach the Bible...this Saturday

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Let's take a moment right now to pray and commission all our teachers and school board members...

Deputy Andrew Perry was killed in the line of duty last Sunday.

The Road Declaration...

Psalm 34 - The Blessings of Humility

As I have now walked with God for over 45 years, the one mark I look for in my fellow believers is not talent, intelligence, gifting, or skill, but rather, humility. When I sense pride, arrogance, boasting, and posing, I distance myself. It's only a matter of time before one's pride will bring him or her down; and like the Titanic, I don't want to be on board the same ship.

Humility is in short supply these days. It is not applauded in the marketplace or the Church. But Jesus marked His own life as one being humble in heart, and the Bible is clear that God works most powerfully among men and women who are humble of heart.

In Psalm 34, David is writing about "The Blessings of Humility." He is opening his heart and sharing some of the great keys to a joyful, fearless life...

Verses 1-2

Bless the Lord at all times?

- This may be the most difficult aspect of our Psalm this morning. To bless the Lord at ALL TIMES and PRAISE CONTINUALLY.
- We have battles that we win and lose. It seems that one of the signs of humility is to take the losses with praise!

Ex. We had just begun our sabbatical last year and were excited to just get away; then we blow out our back right tire...but then, I had the privilege to be helped by a gentleman that I led to the Lord.

- Sometimes we face insurmountable situations through circumstances we can't do anything about; for example, my acne in college that I shared last week.

In the setbacks, boast in the Lord. Then setbacks can be setups for comebacks!

- The humble in heart, the tender of soul hear things that the prideful cannot hear.
- The humble in heart, the tender of spirit have ears to hear what the hardened of heart cannot hear.
- In our passage, we see that the humble hear:
 - The blessing of the Lord...
 - The praise of the Lord...
 - Those who boast in God...
- The humble in spirit can hear God's voice through praise and blessing.
- Jesus went after the humble, those who "have ears to hear."

A Biblical Definition of Humility: James 4:6-10

Verses 6 and 10 - comparison of pride and humility: He gives more grace (help, wisdom, favor) to the humble, but He resists (takes away) from the prideful.

Four Aspects of Biblical Humility (James 4:6-10)

Aspect 1: The humble submit to God and resist the devil (verse 7).

Aspect 2: The humble draw near to God (verse 8).

Aspect 3: The humble cleanse their hands and purify their hearts (verse 8).

Aspect 4: The humble have a lifestyle of repentance (verse 9).

Repentance is a lifestyle. We should always be the first to ask for forgiveness for our attitudes and our actions...

God lifts up the humble and takes down the prideful.

Humility has a divine flow.

Verse 3

- “Magnify the Lord”—make Jesus big in your life. Prideful people can’t make Jesus big; they make themselves big.
- The humble recognize God’s presence with certain people who have a similar “divine flow.”
- Humble people sense the Holy Spirit on other seekers of God.
- There is this “understanding” and mutual love based on praise and worship to the same Lord.

The humble make seeking God the highest priority.

Verses 4-7

- Who seeks God? Humble people seek God! That’s all there is to it. Prideful people don’t need God, and, thus, they don’t seek God. This is how you can tell a prideful Christian from a humble Christian.
- So, what is the result of the true seeker? He is being delivered of fears in his/her life. Yes, that’s what it says. If you have fears in your life, seek the Lord. He will rescue you from your fears.
- What else? The God seeker is radiant because he/she is also being delivered of shame. Shame from the past is being dealt with. There is no shame when we become vulnerable with God and some bloodstained allies.
- What else? The humble person who seeks God gets delivered from all his troubles. Isn’t that interesting. When we seek God, we receive deliverance! Even angels come to our rescue.

The Path to True Humility

Verses 8-10

- Taste the presence of God; experience God in your life.
- This is not “religion;” this is a personal relationship...
- Taste - *ta'am*, perceive
- “See” - you cannot see God without perceiving and tasting him first.
 - When we learn to perceive His power, His love, His presence, we begin to “see” Him.
 - We must have both! “Taste and see” what?
 - Taste and see “that the Lord is good.”
- This is the beginning! When we can really believe that God is good, that He is loving and caring, we will learn to trust Him and walk with Him.
- But all of this takes humility: we must stay bowed down to our plans and desires and hand all of this over to Christ.
- The “young lions” are the ambitious, the self-seeking, the glory hogs, the men and women who are going to do whatever it takes to reach their goals.
- But, if we will humble our hearts and wait on the Lord; if we will surrender our dreams and hopes to Him, God promises that we will not lack anything! Wow, what a promise!

Verses 11-12

- The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; the fear of the Lord is the path to true success.

The fear of God is mentioned over 100 times in the Old Testament and over 20 times in the New Testament.

- Paul tells us “work out our salvation with fear and trembling.”
- It was said of one godly man in the Bible (Cornelius in Acts 10:2): “*A devout man, and one who feared God with all his household, and gave many alms to the...people, and prayed to God continually.*”

The fear of God and love of God are the boundaries to intimacy with God.

- You have to have boundaries to truly experience intimacy with Jesus!

Ex. As a kid growing up I loved my father and knew that he loved me. But there was also this fear component. I feared my dad’s wrath when I disobeyed him. My father is one of the most gracious men you could ever meet, but there were times when I tested his patience and grace. I felt this dread about “when your father comes home.” Remember those words?

The fear of God is dread/discipline on one side and delight/desire on the other. You must have both!

Verses 13-14

Guard your tongue.

- We must guard our tongues and be careful that no deceit is coming forth.
- Our tongues should “seek peace” in our conversations.
- Our tongues speak what is in our hearts.

Verses 15-18

God sees righteousness.

- God’s heart and God’s ears are tuned-in to:

- The cry of the righteous
 - The brokenhearted
 - The contrite of heart: contrite - *dakka*, crushed...literally powder!
- God's ears are attuned to the those who are beaten down, crushed, and brokenhearted.
 - Jesus went to the outcast and rejected because they knew their condition.
 - **Matthew 11:28-30**
"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."
 - The only character qualities that Jesus ever gave Himself: gentle and lowly in heart.
 - Gentle - *praus* - KJV, meek...humble
 - Christ is saying that His heart and mind are lowly and humble...
 - He says, "learn from Me."
 - Jesus looks for such qualities in those whom He strengthens.
 - These are the humble whom Christ goes to...

Verses 19-22

Life is full of afflictions.

- Life will have afflictions and hardships.
- Life is full of disappointments and "afflictions."
- But if we will trust the Lord and lean on His power in our lives, He will deliver us.

- He will redeem our soul.
- Redeem - *padah*, release/rescue by any means

Conclusion:

- In verses 1-2, David makes a decision to praise God; he makes a choice to rejoice. He recognizes that being humble, fearing God, and seeking God, all lead to the abundant life.
- The Psalm concludes that God has been faithful and has guarded his life.
- The justification is that he has been humble; he has stayed affixed on God through many difficulties.

Ministry Time:

Will you choose the humble way? In your affliction, will you fear God?