

**TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS
CLASS NOTES, SPRING QUARTER
MARCH-MAY 2017
AUDITORIUM CLASS
CASSEL HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**

LESSON FOUR. HUMILITY VERSUS PRIDE: Proverbs 11:2, 16:18-19; 18:12, and 29:23; 25:27 and 27:2.

INTRODUCTION

When the preacher of a small-town congregation received the gift of a white suit from a friend, he was a bit reluctant to wear it. But since it was so attractive and a perfect fit, he decided to put it on one warm Sunday. Unfortunately, he got a little prideful and as he was leaving for church, he asked his wife what she thought of his attire. After giving him the once-over, she replied, "It depends. Are you going to preach or sell chicken?"

How do you define humility? The dictionary definition is lowliness of mind, lack of pride. Lets illustrate with a story: A couple was celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary. An interviewer asked the husband, "Could you please share the secret to a long marriage?" The husband answered, "Never criticize your wife for her shortcomings, or when she does something wrong. Always bear in mind that it is because of her shortcomings and weaknesses that she could not find a better husband than you."

1. **Proverbs 11:2, 16:18-19; 18:12, and 29:23.** This first set of proverbs are general in nature. They extol the virtues of being humble and not proud. Being a proud person will cause dishonor and destruction in your life.

Why does a haughty spirit or arrogance bring dishonor and destruction yet humility results in honor? (a) A proud person will not listen to counsel or advise because they are wise in their own eyes. (b) Their pride causes strife and arguments, according to **Proverbs 13:10**. This action results in disgrace and disaster, sooner or later. (c) Also, they can't see their own flaws, hence very little or no improvement takes place. (d) Additionally, no one likes to be around someone who is proud and arrogant, as they are self-absorbed. A man walked in a coffee shop on Halloween to find the woman behind the counter with a bunch of sponges pinned to her uniform. "I'm assuming this is a costume, but just what are you supposed to be?" he asked. The waitress responded proudly, "I'm self-absorbed." Finally, the proud are an abomination to the Lord, according to

Proverbs 16:5.

2. **Proverbs 25:27 and 27:2.** These proverbs address how we should not brag on ourselves. If we are due honor, others will recognize it and commend us. **Read Proverbs 25:6-7.** Do these verses sound vaguely familiar? Christ quoted it in one of his parables: **Luke 14:7-11.** A person who feels he is indispensable should put his fist in a pail of water and see just how big a hole is left behind when he pulls it out.

*Have you ever known anyone who was always trying to get recognition or be promoted above others? Why do you think that they act like that? Insecurity. Are we being humble when we try to debase or play down our talents and abilities? No. There's nothing wrong with recognizing one's gifts, as long as you don't brag about them or draw attention to them. Read **Romans 12:3.** "Humility is not thinking less of ourselves, but thinking of ourselves less." *As Christians, what are we to boast about? **I Corinthians 1:31, 2 Corinthians 10:17, Romans 5:3.** What does it mean to boast in the Lord? **Jeremiah 9:23-24.****

3. We should not perform good deeds or perform acts of service in order to be noticed by others. One of the reasons that Jesus criticized the scribes and Pharisees was that they did all their deeds to be noticed by men, according to **Matthew 23:5.** This is a form of pride.

How might one act as a Pharisee today, in the church? Teaching, taking part in worship like leading the singing or making the communion remarks, serving as an elder or deacon...doing these things, not humbly and out of service to the congregation but to be noticed and praised.

I like to discuss example of the Proverbs we talk about, so can you think of some examples of pride or humility in the Bible?

Pride: Eve in Genesis 3:6 (See 1 John 2:16), Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4 (see 4:30, 37), Satan (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19), Uzziah **2 Chronicles 26:16.**
Humility/lowliness of mind: Jesus in Matthew 11:29, Moses in Numbers 12:3.
Some translations translate this verse using the word humble (NASV, CEV, ERV, NIV) while others use the word meek (KJV, ASV, ESV, RSV), according to Bible Gateway (online). Doing a simple word study using *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, the Hebrew word can be translated either way. However, there is a difference in meaning between the two words:

humility—freedom from pride and arrogance

meekness—humility toward God and gentleness toward men

Often both words are connected with weakness. Do you agree? Weakness is due to negative circumstances, such as lack of strength or lack of courage. But meekness is due to a person's conscious choice. It is strength and courage under

control, coupled with kindness (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).

If we sense a lack of compassion for needs around us, or a drying up of our generosity, or a coldness in our concern for the unconverted, or an indifference or even reluctance in serving or sacrificing for others, we very likely have the malignant cells of pride reproducing in our souls. Do you agree?