



# Countryside Bible Church

## Discipleship Counseling Notes – Level 1, Class 8 Qualifications of a Biblical Counselor

### INTRODUCTION:

### WHY QUALIFICATIONS?

#### The Qualified Biblical Counselor

Counselors are leaders who disciple others to follow them as they follow Christ, who can only take another person as far as they are at in their own personal maturity (1 Cor 11:1). People who are unqualified will likely fail to lead others in the way they should typically because they lack either the knowledge, character, or ability to disciple effectively (Rom 15:14).

### I. The Key Attitude<sup>1</sup>

#### A. The Epidemic Vice: **PRIDE**

##### 1. Biblical Terms

- a) Old Testament
- b) New Testament

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<sup>1</sup> Stuart Scott, *From Pride to Humility*, 2002.

“Throughout the Scriptures, in both the Greek and Hebrew languages, we find proud people portrayed as having a high view of themselves. While they are "up there" on high in their own thinking, they are blind! They are blinded to their pride, they are blinded to God's truth and, sometimes, even blinded to simple reality. The great Puritan Richard Baxter said, "... Pride is so undiscerned by the most, that it is commonly cherished while it is commonly spoke against." Biblical synonyms for pride are: vainglory, conceit, boasting, arrogance, loftiness, presumption, haughtiness, being puffed up, high-mindedness, scoffing, and self-seeking.” – Stuart Scott

## 2. Biblical Examples

- a) Satan (Genesis 3:1-5)
- b) Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:16)
- c) Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3)
- d) Belshazzar (Daniel 4:37)
- e) King Saul (1 Samuel 18:7-9; 1 Samuel 13:7-9)
- f) King Herod (Acts 12:20-23)
- g) Diotrephes (3 John 9)

## 3. Biblical Warnings

- a) Deuteronomy 8:11-18
- b) Proverbs 16:18
- c) Proverbs 21:4
- d) Philippians 2:3-4
- e) Psalm 5:5
- f) Psalm 138:6
- g) Proverbs 6:16-17; 16:5
- h) Proverbs 15:25

#### 4. Pride Defined

- a) Self-Worship
  - 1) I am the Source
  - 2) I am the Accomplisher
  - 3) I am the Benefactor
- b) The Flip Side – Self-Pity
- c) The Definition:

The mindset of self (a master's mindset rather than that of a servant): a focus on self and the service of self, a portrait of self-recognition and self-exaltation, and a desire to control and use all things for self.

#### 5. Manifestations of Pride

- a) Complaining against or passing judgment on God (Numbers 14:1-4,9,11; Romans 9:20)
- b) A lack of gratitude (2 Chronicles 32:25)
- c) Anger (Proverbs 28:25; Matthew 20:1-16)
- d) Seeing yourself as better than others (Luke 7:36-50)
- e) Having an inflated view of your importance, gifts and abilities (Acts 12:21-23)
- f) Being focused on the lack of your gifts and abilities (1 Corinthians 12:14-25)
- g) Perfectionism (Matthew 23:24-28)
- h) Talking too much (Proverbs 10:19)
- i) Talking too much about yourself (Proverbs 27:2; Galatians 6:3)
- j) Seeking independence or control (1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Ephesians 5:21)
- k) Being consumed with what others think (Galatians 1:10)
- l) Being devastated or angered by criticism (Proverbs 13:1)
- m) Being unteachable (Proverbs 19:20; John 9:13-34)
- n) Being sarcastic, hurtful, or degrading (Proverbs 12:18, 24)
- o) A lack of service (Galatians 5:13, Ephesians 2:10)
- p) A lack of compassion (Matthew 5:7, 18:23-35)
- q) Being defensive or blame-shifting (Genesis 3:12-13; Proverbs 12:1)
- r) A lack of admitting when you are wrong (Proverbs 10:17)

- s) A lack of asking forgiveness (Matthew 5:23-24)
- t) A lack of biblical prayer (Luke 18:10-14)
- u) Resisting authority or being disrespectful (1 Peter 2:13-17)
- v) Voicing preferences or opinions when not asked (Philippians 2:1-4)
- w) Minimizing your own sin and shortcomings (Matthew 7:3-5)
- x) Maximizing others' sin and shortcomings (Matthew 7:3-5; Luke 18:9-14)
- y) Being impatient or irritable with others (Ephesians 4:31-32)
- z) Being jealous or envious (1 Corinthians 13:4)
- aa) Using others (Matthew 7:12; Philippians 2:3-4)
- bb) Being deceitful by covering up sins, faults, and mistakes (Proverbs 11:3; 28:13)
- cc) Using attention-getting tactics (1 Peter 3:3,4)
- dd) Not having close relationships (Proverbs 18:1-2; Hebrews 10:24-25)

#### 6. Promoters of Pride

- a) Self-esteem
- b) Self-love
- c) Self-actualization/ self-confidence
- d) Self-abasement/asceticism
- e) Self "rights"
- f) Legalism
- g) Pharisaism

#### 7. The Proper Response

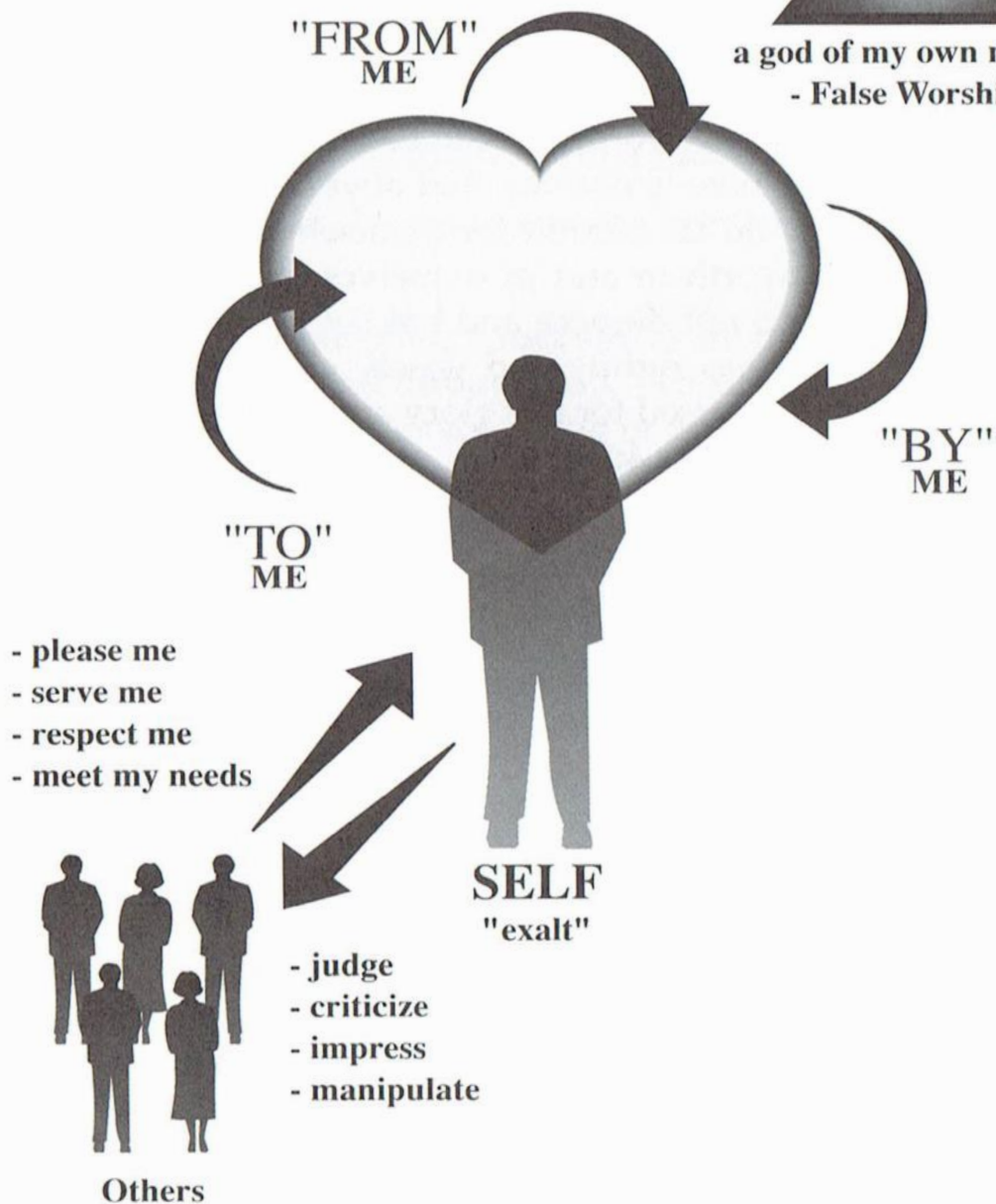
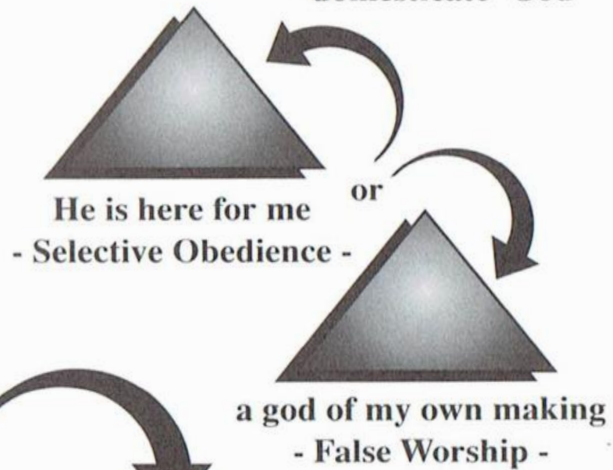
- a) Confess
- b) Repent
- c) Put on humility



# ANTHROPOCENTRIC

"THE MASTER'S MINDSET" = High & Blinded

seeking to  
'domesticate' God



## B. The Endangered Virtue: **HUMILITY**

### 1. Biblical Terms

- a) Old Testament
- b) New Testament

### 2. Biblical Examples

- a) Abraham (Genesis 13)
- b) Moses (Numbers 12:3)
- c) John the Baptist (Luke 3:16)
- d) Mary, the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:38; 46, 48)
- e) The tax collector (Luke 18:13)
- f) Paul (Acts 20:18-19; Romans 11:33-36; Ephesians 3:8; 1 Timothy 1:15)
- g) Our Greatest Example – Jesus Christ
  - 1) Condescended from heaven to earth (Philippians 2:6-8)
  - 2) Submitted to God (John 4:34, 8:28-29)
  - 3) Became the servant of men (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:25-27; John 13:3-17)
  - 4) Possessed a unique perspective (Philippians 1:27, 2:3-5)

### 3. Humility Defined

- a) God-Worship
  - 1) HE is the Source
  - 2) HE is the Accomplisher
  - 3) HE is the Benefactor
- b) The Definition:

The mindset of Christ (a servant's mindset): a focus on God and others, a pursuit of the recognition and the exaltation of God, and a desire to glorify and please God in all things and by all things He has given.

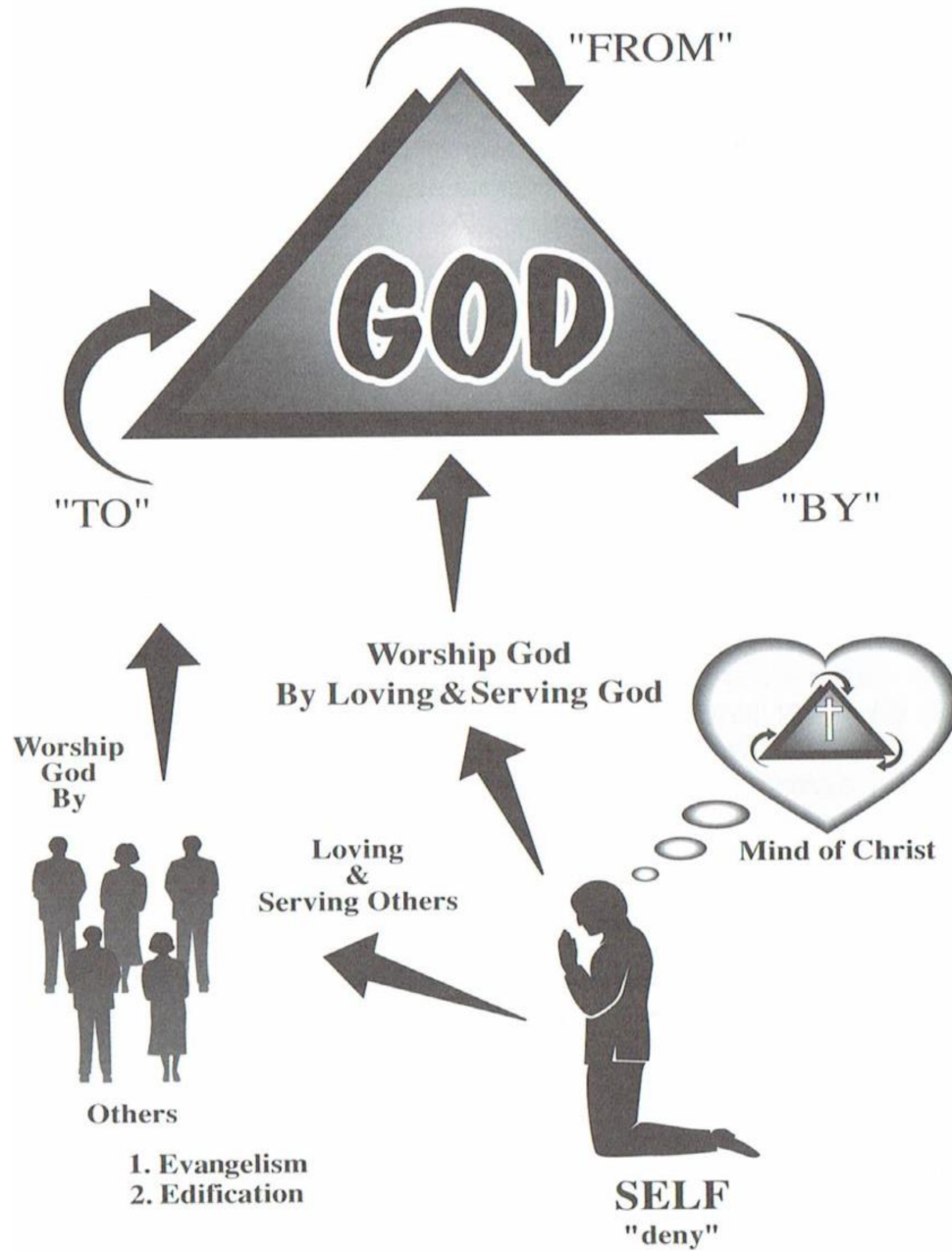
#### 4. Manifestations of Humility

- a) Recognizing and trusting God's character (Psalm 119:66)
- b) Seeing yourself as having no right to question or judge an Almighty and Perfect God (Psalm 145:17; Romans 9:19-23)
- c) Focusing on Christ (Philippians 1:21; Hebrews 12:1-2)
- d) Biblical praying and a great deal of it (1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-2)
- e) Being overwhelmed with God's undeserved grace and goodness (Ps 116:12-19)
- f) Thankfulness and gratitude in general towards others (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- g) Being gentle and patient (Colossians 3:12-14)
- h) Seeing yourself as no better than others (Romans 12:16; Ephesians 3:8)
- i) Having an accurate view of your gifts and abilities (Romans 12:3)
- j) Being a good listener (James 1:19; Philippians 2:3-4)
- k) Talking about others only if it is good or for their good (Proverbs 11:13)
- l) Being gladly submissive and obedient to those in authority (Rom 12:1-2, 13:1-2)
- m) Preferring others over yourself (Romans 12:10)
- n) Being thankful for criticism or reproof (Proverbs 9:8, 27:5-6)
- o) Having a teachable spirit (Proverbs 9:9)
- p) Seeking always to build up others (Ephesians 4:29)
- q) Serving (Galatians 5:13)
- r) A quickness in admitting when you are wrong (Proverbs 29:23)
- s) A quickness in granting and asking for forgiveness (Colossians 3:12-14)
- t) Repenting of sin as a way of life (Colossians 3:1-14; 1 Timothy 4:7-9)
- u) Minimizing others' sins or shortcomings in comparison to one's own (Matthew 7:3-4)
- v) Being genuinely glad for others (Romans 12:15)
- w) Being honest and open about who you are and the areas in which you need growth (Philippians 3:12-14; Galatians 6:2)
- x) Possessing close relationships (Acts 20:31-38)

# PICTURE OF HUMILITY

## **THEOCENTRIC**

"the SERVANT'S MINDSET" = Low & Sober-Minded



<b>ATTITUDE</b>	<b>PRIDE</b>	<b>HUMILITY</b>
Outlook:	Epidemic	Endangered
Terms:	High, Lifted Up, Blind	Low, Bowed Down, Sober
Mindset: (attitude of)	Self: The Master	Jesus Christ: The Servant
Source of Good:	From Me	From God
Means of Good:	By /Through Me	By/Through God
Goal of Good:	To Me	To God
Honor:	Self-Imposed	God-Bestowed
Confidence:	Self-Sufficient	Christ-Sufficient
Others:	Conditional/Trading Affection (looked down upon)	Unconditional/Sacrificial (preferred) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salvation</li> <li>• Sanctification</li> </ul>

### C. From Pride to Humility

1. Humble yourself (James 4:7-10) “in the presence of the Lord.” You can begin with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The most logical outcome of dwelling on Jesus (instead of yourself/your own desires, James 4:1-2) is humility.
2. Walk in Humbleness - Practical Steps for the Individual
  - a) Pray for God to search your heart (by His Spirit with His Word) and help you repent of pride and to grow in humility (Psalm 139).
  - b) Read the Law, Psalms, and the Prophets often to gain a high view of God and a proper view of yourself.
  - c) Study Jesus (His earthly example; especially in the Gospels – Matthew 11:28-30, focus on His humility).
  - d) Ask others if you come across proud in any way.

- e) Spend focused time worshipping God (e.g., praising, prayer, reading and meditating).
  - f) Practice the “one-another” commands (35+).
  - g) Work with the Holy Spirit to put off pride and put on humility at the level of your motives, thoughts, communication, and actions.
    - 1) Go back through the 30+ manifestations of pride and evaluate how and when you might evidence them.
    - 2) Go back through the 24+ manifestations of humility and plan how you can be more humble in the typical situations you are in.
3. Have the mindset that humility must be a way of life (Philippians 2:1-11; Colossians 3:12-13).<sup>2</sup>
4. Biblical Homework on Attitudes
- a) Read Stuart Scott’s pamphlet “From Pride to Humility”
  - b) Complete the study on Pride/Humility - HM Vol. I - Wayne Mack
  - c) Clothe yourself with humility (Col. 3:12) = obedient acts
  - d) By God's grace, read the Scriptures, think through humility ("Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus...." Phil.2:5) and practice humility by focusing upon Jesus Christ, who “...did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:28

## II. The Key Characteristics

### A. Mature Believer

1. Fear God (Prov 1:7) – High/Right View of God  
 “The fear of God is the soul of godliness.” John Murray

#### Why Is the Fear of God Important?

The fear of God and the knowledge of God are directly connected (Proverbs 2:5) since you cannot fear someone or something you do not know. God, therefore, is the object of our emotion or attitude of fear. The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge, because fear on a heart level is the proper worshipful response to God (His holiness, perfections, wisdom, justice, etc.) that will lead to a listening and obedient heart to God (Proverbs 3:5-8).

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<sup>2</sup> Humility, “It is the recognizing of one’s own weakness, but also the recognition of the power of God.” The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament. Rogers and Rogers, 467.

The book of Proverbs provides us with the most comprehensive description of what true “fear of God” looks like. We can summarize this material into eight principles.<sup>3</sup>

- a) The fear of the LORD is the foundation for all true knowledge (1:7; 9:10; 15:33)
- b) The fear of the LORD is the opposite of pride and self-sufficiency (3:7)
- c) The fear of the LORD necessitates a hatred for the things God hates (8:13)
- d) The fear of the LORD cultivates a love for the things God himself loves (14:2)
- e) The fear of the LORD brings reward (10:27; 14:26-27; 19:23; 22:4)
- f) The fear of the LORD is more valuable than great wealth (15:16)
- g) The fear of the LORD is the best defense against sin (16:6)
- h) The fear of the LORD casts out all other fears (3:25-26; 29:25)

C. S. Lewis: “In God you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. Unless you know God as that—and therefore, know yourself as nothing in comparison—you do not know God at all. As long as you are proud, you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.”<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Result of Fearing God: Christ will be preeminent in your life<sup>5</sup>

- a) Biblical commands and principles
  - 1) Colossians 1:18—In all things Christ has the preeminence.
  - 2) Philippians 1:20-21; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15—In all things, we are to strive to see Christ exalted in our lives. We are to live for Him.
- b) Ways (in humility) to make God preeminent
  - 1) Look exclusively to God (in faith) for direction.
    - God’s Word (Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 3:5)
    - God’s People (Proverbs 11:14. 15:22)
  - 2) Walk in (be dominated by) God’s revealed will (Galatians 5:16; Colossians 1:9-12).
    - Dwell/Be filled (Ephesians 5:18; Colossians 3:16)
    - Put off/amputate sin and hinderances (Ephesians 4:22-24; Matthew 5:27-30; Hebrews 12:1-2).
    - Put on Christ (Eph 4:24)

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<sup>3</sup> Brad Klassen, *The Book of Proverbs – Fearing God*, Men of the Word Men’s Ministry, 2015

<sup>4</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 96.

<sup>5</sup> The Preeminence of Christ continues on throughout all the rest of these elements. This section was adapted from “Sweethearts for a Lifetime” by Wayne and Carol Mack.

- 3) View God as your audience.
    - Greatest ambition to please Him (2 Corinthians 5:9)
    - Fear God, not man (Isaiah 2:22; Romans 2:29; Galatians 1:10) (fear displeasing Him, fear = care for His opinion)
    - Love God, Love man (Matthew 22:37-39)
  - 4) Rely on God as your enabler (Psalm 121:1; John 15:5; Philippians 1:11).
    - "...when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:9-11)
    - If Jonathan Edwards believed this...so should we. (2 Corinthians 3:18)
  - 5) Love/treasure God and the things of God before all else (Matthew 22:37-39).
    - His person/work
    - His Word
    - His Church
    - His people
    - His Commands
  - 6) Seek God's glory above all else (Philippians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 10:31).
3. Love Others (1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Ephesians 4:15, Matthew 22:37-39) (Is a result of the fear of God)
- a) God
  - b) People
    - 1) Patient
    - 2) Kind
    - 3) Not rude
    - 4) Not self-seeking
    - 5) Not provoked
    - 6) Does not take into account a wrong suffered
    - 7) Bears all things
    - 8) Believes all things
    - 9) Hopes all things
    - 10) Endures all things

"What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself? It is not a command to love yourself. You are not commanded to love yourself; you already do that. That's built into your fallenness. That's part of your depravity—is an inordinate love for yourself. You need to be cured of that. Now I'm not talking about self-preservation, and I'm not talking about failing to comb your hair. I'm not talking about failing to feed yourself. What I am talking about is that it is part of being human to care for yourself. It is part of being sinful



to overcome that preoccupation with yourself. We love ourselves in an unfeigned, fervent, habitual way. We love ourselves, we meet our needs, we meet our wants, we attend to our interests, we fulfil our desires, our hopes, and our ambitions occupy us. We are more interested in what we say in a conversation than what someone else is saying. That's why it is so hard to be a good listener. We do everything we possibly can to secure our own happiness, our own well-being, our own satisfaction, to make ourselves welcome and comfortable, to fulfill our own interests, to seek our own pleasure and fulfillment. And we are really good at forgiving ourselves. For all our failures and all our weaknesses... Well, that's exactly how you should love your neighbor."<sup>6</sup> – John MacArthur

4. Example to Believers (1 Corinthians 11:1) in Knowledge, Character, and Competency (1 Corinthians 11:1; Romans 15:14; Philippians 4:9)

- a) Knowledge
- b) Character
- c) Competency

B. Striving in Godliness – Spiritual Disciples (1 Timothy 4:7)

1. Bible Intake

- a) Hearing (2 Timothy 4:2)
- b) Reading (1 Timothy 4:7, 13)
- c) Studying (1 Timothy 4:7; 2 Timothy 2:15)
- d) Memorization (Psalm 119:11)
- e) Meditation (Psalm 1:2)
- f) Application (James 1:22-25)

2. Prayer (Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; James 1:5; 4:2-3)

3. Involvement in the Body of Christ (Hebrews 10:25)

- a) Fellowship (Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:7)
- b) Service (1 Peter 4:10)
- c) Corporate Worship (Hebrews 10:25; Psalms)
- d) Practicing One Another's

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www2.masters.edu/pulpit/files/2013/Spring-'13/20130322-JohnMacArthur-mp3> (MacArthur, "Love Your Enemies" The Master's College Pulpit, 2013).

C. Servant of God (fears God), not Man (Galatians 1:10; John 5:41, 44)

D. Demonstrates Biblical Fidelity– (2 Peter 1:3; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

1. Right relationship to/understanding of Scripture
2. Not providing their own counsel/wisdom

E. Accurately Handles the Word (2 Timothy 2:15)

F. Gifting Helpful<sup>7</sup>

1. Teaching – An ability to grasp, arrange, and present revealed truth effectively and in an organized manner, so those who hear gain an enhanced understanding of Scripture, either publicly (Acts 18:11) or privately (Acts 18:26).
2. Exhortation – An ability to explain and apply the truth to believers and persuade them to believe and obey it. Exhortation is persuading someone to...
  - a) Think biblically about an issue (Titus 1:9)
  - b) Be strengthened in the faith (1 Thessalonians 3:2)
  - c) Make a biblically wise or morally right choice (Philippians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 1 Peter 2:11)
  - d) Find comfort and assurance in God and the Scripture (2 Corinthians 1:4)
3. Mercy – An ability to help, assist, and relieve those experiencing distress, misery, or pain.
4. Service/Helps – An ability to know how best to meet people's temporal needs and an unusual skill in meeting those needs.

G. Summary

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<sup>7</sup> Tom Pennington, *Gifted to Serve (Pt. 5)*, Romans 12:3-8, 3/1/2020

## APPENDIX 1

### CHARACTERISTICS OF PRIDE AND HUMILITY

#### PRIDE

##### Characteristics

(need to be confessed & put off)

#### 1. SELF

- a. self focus, my needs, my pain
- b. my career, my reputation
- c. seeks recognition and praise
- d. blind to own faults
- e. easily offended

#### 2. OTHERS

- a. rarely seeks help due to arrogance
- b. refuses to admit wrongs or ask to be forgiven
- c. refuses to submit to authority, disrespectful, blows up, slanders
- d. doesn't like being told what to do
- e. blames other, justifies self
- f. rejects correction or instruction
- g. does not listen well, instead his mind is composing what he wants to say, a self-serving focus rather than on serving others
- h. twists truth, has a distorted view of reality
- i. deludes himself by believing he has superior understanding, knows others thoughts and motives
- j. trivializes what he has done to others' and exaggerates what others have done to him

#### 3. RESULTS

- a. uncontrolled tongue, lashes out, says hurtful words, slanders, gossips, quarrelsome, divisive
- b. alienates people, destroys relationships
- c. dwells on what is destructive, violates Phil. 4:8
- d. rigid, unteachable, stubborn, jealous
- e. remains immature and un-Christlike
- f. life characterized by strife, conflict, instability, dishonesty, and inconsistency
- g. robbed of joy, peace and effectiveness
- h. useless

#### HUMILITY

##### Characteristics

(need to be put on)

#### 1. SELF

- a. focuses on pleasing God
- b. God's will, not mine
- c. willing to be attacked
- d. overcomes evil with good
- e. decreases self so Jesus can increase

#### 2. OTHERS

- a. seeks godly counsel
- b. quick to admit it when wrong and asks forgiveness
- c. submits graciously to authority
- d. resolves conflicts
- e. listens carefully
- f. grateful for correction and instruction
- g. seeks to help others be more Christ-like
- h. seeks to serve, to encourage, to build-up
- i. speaks softly and uses helpful words
- j. views others better than self

#### 3. RESULTS

- a. grows in grace
- b. fruitful
- c. close relationships
- d. honored
- e. transformed more and more into Christ's image
- f. available
- g. approachable
- h. sought out by people in need of help & guidance
- i. steadfast, not easily discouraged
- j. does not have to have recognition or praise

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **FEARING GOD**

#### **The Book of Proverbs – Fearing God “Men of the Word”**

The foundational theme of Proverbs: the fear of the LORD

The book of Proverbs provides us with the most comprehensive description of what true “fear of God” looks like. We can summarize this material into eight principles.

#### **1. The fear of the LORD is the foundation for all true knowledge.**

- 1:7 – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”
- 9:10 – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”
- 15:33 – “The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, and before honor comes humility.”

The fear of God must be our “starting point” in the pursuit of all knowledge and wisdom. If this fear does not exist, genuine knowledge and wisdom is unattainable.

#### **2. The fear of the LORD is the opposite of pride and self-sufficiency.**

- 3:7 – “Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and turn away from evil.”

C. S. Lewis: “In God you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. Unless you know God as that—and therefore, know yourself as nothing in comparison—you do not know God at all. As long as you are proud, you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.”<sup>8</sup>

Fear of God puts the subject and the object of fear in its proper place.

#### **3. The fear of the LORD necessitates a hatred for the things God hates.**

- 8:13 – “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate.”

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<sup>8</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 96.

The word “hate” is strong. It describes more than just intellectual disagreement. We find it used in the Old Testament to describe God’s personal repulsion at the very thought of sin (Pss 11:5; 45:7; Prov 6:16-19).

□ 23:17 – “Do not let your heart envy sinners, but live in the fear of the LORD always.”

The fear of God and the envy of sinners cannot co-exist in the same worldview. In the words of Jesus: “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other” (Matt 6:24).

#### **4. The fear of the LORD cultivates a love for the things God himself loves.**

□ 14:2 – “He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, but he who is devious in his ways despises Him.”

John Murray stated, “The fear of God is the soul of godliness.” The Puritans called the fear of God a filial or child-like fear. It is the kind of fear which attracts—not the kind of fear which inspires “fight-or-flight.” As such, the one who fears the LORD is the one who hates what he hates, and loves what he loves.

□ 1 John 4:17-19

#### **5. The fear of the LORD brings reward.**

There is an important logic in Proverbs which is important to grasp: the logic of cause and effect. Decisions have consequences. In the same way, a genuine “fear of the LORD” will be the cause of various “effects.”

- 1) Confidence: 14:26 – “In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and his children will have refuge.”
- 2) A full life: 10:27 – “The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be shortened”; 14:27 – “The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death.”
- 3) Security: 19:23 – “The fear of the LORD leads to life, so that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil.”
- 4) Rewards: 22:4 – “The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, honor and life.”

Remember, proverbs are not intended as guarantees without exceptions. There are God-fearing people who are persecuted, poor, and die young. Instead, Solomon’s point is that there are implications which the fear of the LORD has for life. The fear of God will lead to wisdom,

which in turn will bring choices which lead away from the devastating effects of sin and its consequences.

## **6. The fear of the LORD is more valuable than great wealth.**

But notice that prosperity is not to be understood as the sign that fear of the LORD exists.

15:16 – “Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and turmoil with it.”

The two things—fear of God and great treasure—are not synonymous; they are separate things which cannot be equated.

Moreover, when faced with the decision between (1) poverty and the fear of the LORD, and (2) prosperity and no fear of the LORD, the answer of Solomon is clear: choose poverty.

Do our lives reflect that? What are we striving for? Are we willing to put up with a lot of turmoil in life for the sake of great riches? Are we content with little if we can enjoy the fear of God?

## **7. The fear of the LORD is the best defense against sin.**

Any reoccurring attraction to sin is always symptomatic of an inadequately developed fear of God.

□ 16:6 – “By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.”

In battling sin, the first step is not to hate sin more, but to fear God more sincerely.

## **8. The fear of the LORD casts out all other fears.**

For the person who lives in constant fear or worry, the solution is not the eradication of all fear, but the directing of fear in the right direction, onto the right object: God alone.

□ 3:25-26 – “Do not be afraid of sudden fear nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes; for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.”

□ 29:25 – “The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.”

Ultimately, the fear of the LORD is more easily described than it is lived. How are you living it?

“Do you desire to be a godly person? Then you must understand and grow in the fear of God.” ~ Jerry Bridges