

Humility, Chapter 7: For Special Focus

Memory Verse: 1 Chronicles 29:11, “Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all.”

Study the Attributes of God

1. How does CJ define the *incommunicable* attributes of God? (pg 88)

2. What are some of the examples that CJ lists of God’s incommunicable attributes? List some verses & the incommunicable attributes of God of which they speak. For help in finding sample lists, see Wayne Grudem’s *Systematic Theology* and/or J. I. Packer’s *Knowing God*, if you have access to them.

3. Why should we study the incommunicable attributes of God? How will this weaken pride? (pg 89)

4. Read the following verses: Isaiah 48:8-11; Amos 3:7; Daniel 2:29, 45b.
 - a. Which incommunicable attribute of God do these verses highlight?

5. Read Isaiah 13:1, 17-20; 21:2-5; 45:1-7 and Daniel 1:2, 5:1-6, 24-28, 30-31
 - a. How many years are between Isaiah and Daniel? What specific historical event does God prophesy in Isaiah that comes to pass in Daniel’s day? What does this prove about our God?

 - b. How does knowing this attribute (from question 4a & 5a) give you a better understanding of who God is? How does knowing this attribute make you more aware of the great distance between yourself and God?

 - c. How does reflection on this attribute cause you to praise God? Write down your prayer & praise of our awesome God 😊

Study the Doctrines of Grace

6. Mahaney lists four doctrines of grace. How does Mahaney say that focusing on each of these doctrines will specifically cultivate humility and destroy pride? What other verses can you find other verses (besides the ones listed) that speak of these doctrines?
 - a. Election (Rom 8:28-30)
 - b. Calling (Heb 9:15)
 - c. Justification (Rom 3:21-26)
 - d. Perseverance (1 Thess 5:23-24)
7. Why should we study the doctrines of grace? How will this weaken pride? (pg 90)
8. What do the following verses have to say about our boasting? What should we boast in, and what should we not boast in?
 - a. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
 - b. Ephesians 2:1-10
 - c. Galatians 6:14
 - d. Romans 5:1-5, 11. **Hint—the word translated “boast” in Rom 2:23 is the same word used in Romans 5:2, 3, 11!*

Study the Doctrine of Sin

9. What are the two things, according to John Owen, that “humble the souls of men” (pg 92)? Does this sound familiar? (See the top of page 22.)
10. Although we are new creations, the fact is that sin still wages war in our flesh. What do the following verses have to say about the presence of sin in our hearts? Note especially how despicable these sins are, and what our responsibility towards them is.
 - a. Psalm 51:5
 - b. Jeremiah 17:9
 - c. Ecclesiastes 9:3
 - d. Hebrews 3:13
 - e. Romans 6:1-14

f. Matthew 15:19

g. James 1:14-15

On the Lighter Side...

11. Mahaney states that he plays golf to cultivate his humility. Do you shy away from activities that are difficult for you, and only participate in activities that you are good at? Why? What are some activities that you can engage in that will cultivate your humility?

12. What are some ways that humor can help you cultivate humility? In his sermon on the life of William Wilberforce, John Piper noted that *"His sense of humor and delight in all that was good was vigorous and unmistakable. In 1824 John Russell gave a speech in the Commons with such wit that Wilberforce 'collapsed in helpless laughter.'"*¹ Are you like Wilberforce, who would collapse laughing in the House of Commons, or are you like the proud man mentioned (pg 94-95) who must hold his dignity rather than laugh?

One Final Note...

13. Do you find yourself more on the "knowledge" or "application" side of the pendulum? Why are both these aspects of the Christian life vital to having a healthy relationship with God? Read James 1:19-27. Can you find other passages that emphasize this same truth?

14. Look back at questions 3, 7, and 9. What areas of pride are you struggling with right now? (See *Respectable Sins* to review manifestations of pride.) How can you specifically use either the attributes of God, the doctrines of grace, or the doctrine of sin to weaken this manifestation of pride in your life and cultivate humility?

¹ from John Piper's sermon, [Peculiar Doctrines, Public Morals, and the Political Welfare: Reflections on the Life and Labor of William Wilberforce](http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Biographies/1492_Peculiar_Doctrines_Public_Morals_and_the_Political_Welfare/). <http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Biographies/1492_Peculiar_Doctrines_Public_Morals_and_the_Political_Welfare/>

More examples from the life of William Wilberforce

(taken from John Piper's sermon, Peculiar Doctrines, Public Morals, and the Political Welfare: Reflections on the Life and Labor of William Wilberforce)

The poet Robert Southey said, "I never saw any other man who seemed to enjoy such a perpetual serenity and sunshine of spirit. In conversing with him, you feel assured that there is no guile in him; that if ever there was a good man and happy man on earth, he was one." In 1881 Dorothy Wordsworth wrote, "Though shattered in constitution and feeble in body he is as lively and animated as in the days of his youth." ***His sense of humor and delight in all that was good was vigorous and unmistakable.*** In 1824 John Russell gave a speech in the Commons with such wit that ***Wilberforce "collapsed in helpless laughter."***

"Being himself amused and interested by everything, whatever he said became amusing or interesting. . . ***His presence was as fatal to dullness as to immorality.*** His mirth was as irresistible as the first laughter of childhood." –James Stephen, speaking of Wilberforce after his death.