"Walking with the Humble"

Humility is not a very popular concept in today's society. We are taught to pursue honor and recognition from a young age. I was watching an NFL football game the other day and some linebacker just leveled a running back. Before the poor guy could get his bearings to get up, the cocky defender straddled him like roadkill with the infamous "death stare". He began beating his chest as if to say, "Now you know who just hit you chump!" Our society rewards such behavior. Children stack up their trophies and award shows, like the ESPYS, abound. There are prizes for everything. In all of it, humility is an elusive quality. The very moment you think you are humble is the very moment you are not. No matter how elusive it is, we must seek it in our walk with God.

The Greek word for humility is a compound word. The first part means "low" and it has the sense of being poor or unimportant. The second part of the word means "to think" or "to judge". So these combined words mean that we are to think of ourselves as lowly or unimportant. This is not easy to do!

Jesus was our greatest example of this virtue. The exalted Savior of mankind was born in a stable. During His ministry among us, He never had a place to lay His head. He owned nothing but the garments on His body. In John 13:3-11, He washed His disciples' feet like a slave in a home. When He died, He was buried in a borrowed tomb. Most of all, He humbled Himself by becoming a man so we could enjoy salvation. *"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."* Philippians 2:5-9

Ephesians 4:1-2 says that we are *"to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness . . ."* Ok! So how do we do that? I want to suggest the awareness of three things. I will discuss one in this article and the other two in the November newsletter.

UNDERSTANDING WHO WE ARE - The first step to achieving humility in our daily walk with Christ is understanding our sinfulness. Overcoming pride in just one area of our life is difficult, but according to the standards of Ephesians 4:1-2, it is not enough. Didn't Paul say, "with all humility"? We must have total and complete humility in every area of our life. Like I said earlier, "Where do we start?" It starts with self-awareness. We can mask who we really are all day and convince ourselves how great we are, but that's not going to do it. We need to look at ourselves honestly and say, "I am a sinful wretch!" A good friend of mine has this same caption on his license plate because it reminds him every day who he really is. I also remind him. ☺ I like how the Message Bible describes Paul's self-proclamation in 1 Timothy 1:15, *"Here's a word you can take to heart and depend on: Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I'm proof — Public Sinner Number One . . ."* It is to say that in our sinfulness, we have not reached our goal of Christlikeness according to Philippians 3:12-14.

This evaluation is not to be done through the trap of comparing ourselves with others, but by God's standard alone. It is God and His Word. Our rose-colored glasses that are tainted with our self-love and sin is not going to cut it. Ralph Waldo Emmerson once said, *"A great man is always willing to be little."*

What do you see when you take time to look at the person inside?

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