

FAMILY FAITH BUILDER

Character Lessons for Practical Application of Faith

Humility v. Pride



Recognizing the people and factors that have shaped my life

Humility was modeled by Jesus when he lived among us. He always gave glory to the Father for the things he accomplished on the earth. He chose to come to us as a lowly servant and not a celebrated King.

When we are prideful, we fill our lives with our wants. When we are humble we fill our lives with what God wants. Wanting to be God-like was the downfall of Adam and Eve. Wanting to be exalted above God was the downfall of Satan. Not giving God credit for the achievements in our life will be our downfall, too.

Being humble also requires us to recognize what others have done for us and to express our thanks for that support. A humble spirit will also be willing to help others to achieve as well.

This month, practice humility by recognizing and acknowledging our total dependence upon God and seek His will for every decision.

To Practice Humility I Will:

- praise my parents, teachers, teammates and coaches
- not think more highly of myself than I ought
- take responsibility for all my actions
- try again after each defeat
- give credit to those who have made me successful

Any others appropriate to your family?

God's Word on Humility

"He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way." Psalms 25:9

"Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'" 1 Peter 5:5

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:45

(John the Baptist) "And he preached, saying, 'After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.'" Mark 1:7

"Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall." Proverbs 16:18

Jesus said: "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me" John 6:38

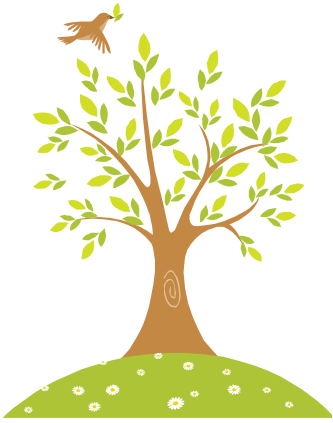
Moses Teaches Us about Humility

We first see the adult Moses in Pharaoh's court. We assume that Moses' mother, the daughter of Pharaoh, must have told him about his Jewish heritage. One day, Moses killed an Egyptian slave driver who was beating one of his Jewish brethren. Instead of earning trust from the Israelites, they feared his anger. This was not the reaction he expected. Disappointed and to avoid punishment, Moses fled to the desert where he became a shepherd.

After God called Moses from the burning bush to free the Israelites, he returned to Egypt. There, Moses grew in humility to the point where God fought his personal battles for him. As Moses humbly stayed his hand, choosing not to defend himself, again and again the hand of the Almighty would move on his behalf. And as the people saw how powerfully God worked through humble Moses, their respect for him grew and grew... quite a contrast to their reaction when he killed the Egyptian. Once Moses learned true humility, God exalted Him and worked through him to free the Israelite nation from slavery.

Unfortunately, Moses wasn't always humble. While in the desert, the people began to complain about water and food. God told Moses to speak to the rock to give water to the people. Moses struck the rock and water poured forth. The problem is Moses took credit for providing the water rather than giving God credit. This cost Moses in that he was only able to see the Promised Land but not enter it.

Affirmation Tree



Part of humility is recognizing the positive qualities of others. You can use a potted tree branch, a small indoor evergreen or simply an outline of tree branches on a poster board. Each family member is given leaves to write positive things about the others in the family. Everyone must write at least one positive thing about every family member but they can also write more than one. Let non-writing family members draw something and then you can write on it as well. Once all of the leaves are done, add them to the tree. Once the tree has the leaves on it, read all of the leaves to everyone. Ask them about the happy feeling they have now. Everyone in the room should have that happy feeling. Talk about happiness as unlimited. We can each be happy and there is still plenty of happiness to go around. We do not need to take happiness away from others in order to have enough for ourselves. Talk about the roots of the tree. What has to be present to feed these good feelings

about others? In addition to humility, you may talk about having God's love in your heart or His grace in your soul. You may mention that if we are full of ourselves and concerned about our own worth, we will miss being able to see the worth of others.

The second part of this exercise might be a little tougher. Now that we have heard good things about ourselves, we need to find ways to use these good things to give back to the family. Use the quote below from Pablo Picasso to start a discussion about the gifts we have to share. Be sure to include that recognizing that God is the source of our gifts makes it imperative that we use them to honor and glorify Him.

"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

Pablo Picasso

POSTER IDEA:

Dear Jesus,

We praise you for your goodness and mercy and thank you for the example of Humility in your life. We remember how even on the cross you did the will of the Father. Help us to embrace our roles as your servants here on Earth and be all that we can be. Remind us to praise others and rejoice in their successes. May we learn, with your help, to not think of ourselves above others and to take responsibility for all of our actions. Teach us to try again after every defeat. Guide us to give credit and gratitude to those who support us. Help us to act in all things in harmony with the will of the Father. Amen.

Humility

Recognizing the people and factors that have shaped my life



"...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

Romans 10:17

Do you seek approval from God or man?

Other ways to teach character in the home:

- Display the character quality and definition in a prominent place such as on the refrigerator or let each child decorate it for their bedroom door.
- At the dinner table ask if anyone noticed anyone (not just family members) demonstrating the character quality (or not demonstrating it).
- Point out news stories where character was or was not involved.
- During car trips, challenge the kids by describing scenarios and having them identify if it describes being the quality or being the opposite.
- Praise with character by recognizing the character quality involved rather than the achievement.
- For more ideas visit www.charactercincinnati.org/faith.php

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For more activities that can be adapted for family use, visit

www.charactercincinnati.org/quality_resource.php?q=Humility