

Humility In Wisdom

Teaching given by Peter Warren at FGPC, June – October 2016

1. The First Step Up Is Down

Proverbs 4.7-12

“Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she will promote you; She will bring you honor, when you embrace her. She will place on your head an ornament of grace; A crown of glory she will deliver to you. Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, And the years of your life will be many. I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, And when you run, you will not stumble.”

Since the beginning of this year we have been looking at the theme of walking in wisdom, more recently we have seen that one of the benefits or results of walking in wisdom is entering the place of rest. In this teaching we are going to examine yet another aspect of walking in wisdom – that of humility so that we might be elevated or exalted.

In these verse from Proverbs we read that if we deal rightly in wisdom we will be exalted and promoted, wisdom will honour us, our steps will not be hindered or made to stumble. We are told in verse 8 that we are to exalt wisdom and she will promote us. In this teaching we are going to see how we can exalt her, how individuals in the Bible applied this principle and some of the teaching that goes along with it.

Let me start with a short illustration - a few years ago I was in a hotel and noticed something strange. In order to get to the upper floors you first had to go down a few stairs to get to the where the lifts and staircases were. In order to ascend you had to first descend – the first step up, is down! All too often we want to promote ourselves, give ourselves the credit because we think that will get us noticed and give us a name. Wrong! If we lift up wisdom, lift up Jesus (who is our wisdom) we will be promoted. If we humble ourselves we will be exalted.

Luke 14.7-11

In this parable Jesus told about a man who was invited to a feast and presented the scenario where he occupied the best seat. Then a man came in who was an important guest and the first man was sitting in the seat reserved for the important guest. He was shamed as he was made to take a lower seat. Jesus taught that we should occupy the lower seats in order that we may be exalted.

If we want to come up higher we need to first go down or humble ourselves – this is the teaching throughout the New Testament and not just an isolated case.

John the Baptist said of himself “Jesus must increase and I must decrease” (John 3.30)

To be exalted we must become less and less. All that's of me must become less and all that's of Him must become greater.

1 Peter 5.5-6

“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." .Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time”

Humility (or to be humble) is to submit yourself to someone higher or greater, submission, make low.

Humility is not to make ourselves so great or build ourselves up. Humility is to submit ourselves to God. Pride will bring us down, Humility will exalt us.

The first step up is down – to submit to God.

James 4.6-7,10

James quotes the same Old Testament scripture – God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble

To be humble is also not making ourselves to feel so unworthy, or so poor, so debased – this is not humility, this is a type of pride, an inverted-pride and God resists that too. To be humble is to submit yourself to God and what He says about you.

Luke 18.9-14

Here's another parable Jesus taught, this time about two men.

Trusting in yourself is pride – God resists the proud. The Pharisee was full of pride, His prayer was based on himself and his achievements.

The tax collector could hardly lift his eyes as he focused on God and not himself – be merciful to me. He submitted to God and he went home justified

Verse 14 reminds us that those who exalt themselves will be brought down, those who humble themselves will be exalted.

2. The Example of Jesus

Proverbs 4.7-12

“Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *Therefore* get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she will promote you; She will bring you honor, when you embrace her. She will place on your head an ornament of grace; A crown of glory she will deliver to you. Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, And the years of your life will

be many. I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, And when you run, you will not stumble.”

For the Christian wisdom is the most important thing, Solomon calls it the principal thing.

My own definition of wisdom is this: “Wisdom is the ability to hear, accurately judge and act upon God’s principles for righteous living”.

If we exalt wisdom, wisdom will promote us and lift us up. So if we want to be exalted or raised up we need to exalt wisdom and learn the secret of humility.

Philippians 2.5-11

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Jesus humbled Himself.

- He made Himself of no reputation – a step down.
- He came in the likeness of man – a step down
- He became obedient to death on a cross, even though he did nothing to deserve death – a step down

Because he humbled Himself, God has highly exalted Him

He was obedient to His Father's will. Even in the garden of Gethsemane as He was facing the cross, He prayed and surrendered to His Father's will – not my will but thine be done

John 5.30

“I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.”

Jesus did not seek His own will, only that of His Father.

Even as a young man He was about surrendering to His Father's will and was about His business.

Jesus could do nothing of Himself only that which His Father told Him.

John 8.28

“Then Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and *that* I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.”

He spoke only what the Father taught Him.

He only did those things that pleased the Father – He didn't seek to please the Pharisees, nor His disciples

He submitted to His Father – He only did and said what He heard from His Father – that's humility

Jesus, living totally surrendered and submitted to the Father, overcame as a man. This should encourage us because since Jesus did it, so can we.

Matthew 3.13-17

“(13) Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. (14) And John *tried to* prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" (15) But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit *it to be* so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. (16) When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. (17) And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.””

(1) John's baptism was a baptism of repentance.

Jesus did not need to be baptised by John. Jesus was sinless and had no need to repent, therefore no need of baptism. There was no old man in the life of Jesus.

(2) John tries to prevent Jesus from being baptised.

– other translations say He “protested strenuously” (Amp) “He objected” (CEV); “He forbade Him” (AV); “He tried to make Him change His mind” (TEV)

What is John's reasoning behind this statement?

- “I'm not worthy to do this”. We can gather this from his statement: “I need to be baptised by You, and are You coming to me”

This thought is an overflow of what is in his heart – he testified himself that “I am not worthy to even carry His sandals” (see verse 11). This is what we were talking about earlier, inverted-pride, John is making himself out to be so unworthy.

He had status – He was chosen by God and had been given the highest of callings – to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah.

(3) Jesus answers John's outburst, “Permit it to be so now” - what is He telling John to do? - Take a step down, humble yourself and submit to this request without any objections

Jesus continues “for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness” - it is the right and proper way to fulfill righteousness

They both had to do something to do for the kingdom of God in order to fulfill righteousness – submission or humility.

- Jesus submitted Himself to be baptised

- John had to submit himself and baptise Jesus.

3. John The Baptist Steps Down

In introducing these teaching series I gave you an illustration from a few years ago - I was in a hotel and noticed that in order to get to the upper floors you first had to go down a few stairs to get to the where the lifts and staircases were. So in order to go up a level you had to first take a step down.

This forms the essence of this teaching series – if we want to truly walk in wisdom, we must first learn to take a step down in humility.

Last time we looked at a several Scriptures that teach us to humble ourselves. To be humble is to be submissive to someone higher or greater. It is not as many believe, to debase yourself or make yourself to be so unworthy, so poor, so insignificant. That is a form of inverted-pride which God resists. Humility is measured not in what you say about yourself, but whether you submit yourself to what God says about you.

We have seen that the Scripture says, wisdom will exalt and promote us (**Proverbs 4.8**). When we humble ourselves we are exalted, lifted and raised up. That raising up can only come by taking a step down and submitting to God and surrendering to Him.

While we can take illustration from various Biblical characters – we are going to see some of these – Jesus is our ultimate example. Last time we saw from Philippians that Jesus humbled Himself and surrendered to the Fathers will, His own testimony was that He only did and said what He heard from the Father – because of that God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name which is above all others (**Philippians 2.5-11; John 5.30; John 8.28-29**)

Matthew 3.13-17

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(1) Jesus did not need to be baptised by John. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. Jesus was sinless and had no need to repent, therefore no need of baptism.

(2) John tries to prevent Jesus from being baptised. He “protested strenuously” (Amp) – other translations say “He objected” (CEV); “He forbade Him” (AV); “He tried to make Him change His mind” (TEV)

What is John's reasoning behind this statement - "I'm not worthy to do this". We can gather this from his statement: "I need to be baptised by You, and are You coming to me"

This thought is an overflow of what is in his heart – he testified himself that "I am not worthy to even carry His shoes" (see verse 11). This is what we were talking about earlier, inverted-pride, John is making himself out to be so unworthy.

(3) Jesus answers John's outburst, "Permit it to be so now" - what is He telling John to do? - Take a step down, humble yourself and submit to this request without any objections

Jesus continues "for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" - it is the right and proper way to fulfill righteousness

I want us to closely look at this verse and two words in particular - "for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" - IT & US

Us – Jesus & John

"..for this is the fitting way for [*both of*] us to fulfill all righteousness [*that is, to perform completely whatever is right*]..." (Amp)

Jesus was saying to John that this was necessary for them both to fulfill righteousness, their duty to God.

"this is how we should fulfill all our duty to God" (Moffatt)

"for this is the fitting way for both of us to do our full duty to God" (Williams)

"for it is right for us to do everything that God requires" (Goodspeed)

It – what is that duty? What is it that we must do to fulfill our duty to God? Baptism? If so, why then didn't Jesus baptise John.

"we do well to conform in this way with all that God requires" (NEB)

"It is right for us to meet meet all the Law's demands" - (JB Philips)

I suggest that Jesus is talking about submitting to God so that we fulfill righteousness. He had to submit to God and be baptised, even though He did not need baptism of repentance.

John had to submit to Jesus and baptise Him, when it really should have been the other way round.

Romans 12.1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.*"

Our reasonable service (duty) is to present ourselves as a living sacrifice – a life surrendered to God, submitted to Him.

(4) John took a step down and submitted to Jesus and baptised Him

As Jesus came up out of the water, John saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove and coming upon Him and heard the voice of the Father speaking.

This was the moment that God exalted John and raised Him up. He had seen with his eyes what God had revealed to him some time earlier.

John 1. 29-37

In this passage John testifies that God had shown Him that the one on whom he saw the Holy Spirit descending was the Coming One.

"I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'" (v33)

God elevated him and his ministry. From then on (the baptism of Jesus) he began to point men and women to Jesus.

"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1.29

"And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" " John 1.36

"He must increase, I must decrease" (John 3.30). John had learnt the lesson to be submitted to God

Matthew 11.2-15; (Matthew 17.11-13); Luke 7.18-28;

Jesus makes some remarkable statements about John.

- More than a prophet (v9)
- My Messenger (v10)
- greatest prophet (v11)
- Elijah who is to come (v14) – fulfilment of Malachi 4.5-6

Jesus elevated him, raised him up – and it all began with John taking that step down.

Have you noticed Jesus said these things to the crowd and not to the 2 messengers sent by John, they had already departed (v7). **Why?**

If you exalt wisdom, wisdom will promote you.

- The messengers saw the miracles Jesus did
- They were told to tell John the things they had seen
- The things they saw (and told John) were the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 29.18-19; Isaiah 35.3-6; Isaiah 61.1)
- John knew these prophecies – In his own testimony he cited [Isaiah 40.3](#)
- Jesus was telling him to go back to the word – embrace wisdom, she will exalt you.

John was exalted, not because of what Jesus said, but because of the word

4. James & John Learn The Secret of Humility

Mark 10.35-45; Matthew 20.20-28

In continuing this teaching on humility as an aspect of wisdom let me remind you of the inspiration for the topic by giving you an illustration.

A few years ago I was in a hotel and noticed something strange. In order to get to the upper floors you first had to go down a few stairs to get to the where the lifts and staircases were. In order to ascend you had to first descend – the first step up, is down!

So far we have seen that

- Jesus, our chief example, humbled Himself and submitted to His Father's will even when that meant the death of the cross.
- John the Baptist had to submit to Jesus. Jesus pointed him to the written word when he was facing doubts and uncertainty – submitting to the word raised him up.

Now we are going to see two more characters that had to learn this secret of submission – these are the two brothers that Jesus called the “Sons of Thunder” – **James and John**.

- James and John both worked with their father Zebedee in the fishing business – when Jesus called them they left the business and the boats to follow Him

“When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.” Mark 1.19-20

- They were business partners with Simon Peter and Andrew (in the fishing business)

“and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.”” Luke 5.10

- It was these same two disciples, who in an angry outrage, wanted to call fire down from heaven to consume the Samaritans because they would not welcome Jesus.

“And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did? But He turned and rebuked them, and said, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.”” Luke 9.52-55

You do not know **what manner of spirit** you are of – this is not the spirit of humility.

- James & John had the spirit of revenge, intolerance and injustice over this village of Samaria.

- This was one of those “Get behind Me, satan” moments that Jesus encountered – they, like Peter, were not mindful of the things of God, even though perhaps they thought this was a holy anger.
- They needed to learn that their first step was a step down – instead of commanding fire to fall and consume the village they should rather submit themselves to the love and compassion of Christ. Jesus did not come to destroy lives but to save them.

On an earlier occasion (a few verses before) Jesus had to speak to John about his less than humble attitude toward another brother working for the kingdom – who was not part of ‘their congregation’

“Now John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.” But Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid *him*, for he who is not against us is on our side.”” Luke 9.49-50

Mark 9.33-42

Here is another rendering of this occasion .

- These disciples have something on their mind – who is the greatest among them.
- This warrants a lesson from Jesus on the subject of humility.
- If you want to be first then be the servant of all – take a step down.

One thing that is evident on both occasions is the way James and John (and others in other Scriptures!) spoke out.

- shall we command fire from heaven and consume them
- we forbade him because he’s not one of us

Jesus went on to warn the disciples about the dangers of causing little ones to stumble (vs42) – it would be more preferable for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone around their neck.

(The dangers of minor doctrines)

We all have our own individual beliefs on what we call the minor doctrines, depending on how we understand and interpret the Scripture. However some Christians spend too much time focused on these minor issues treating them as though they are major.

- the timing of the Lord’s return
- the issue of tongues as the initial evidence of Holy Spirit infilling
- the issue of prosperity
- ministers who interpret Scripture in a certain way labelled as false prophets
- consumption of alcohol
- wearing of hats/headcoverings for women

It is this attitude of I’m right, you’re wrong (that of James and John) which is dangerous. This can cause young Christians to be confused and stumble. This is not the spirit of humility, nor is it wisdom.

The spirit of humility is not quick to speak words or act – this was a mistake for James and John. We should be humble and wise even if that means we refrain from saying or doing something which may cause misunderstanding and another person to stumble.

“In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips *is* wise. ”
Proverbs 10.19

Mark 10.35-45; Matthew 20.20-28

In this passage we see James and John coming to Jesus with a request – We want to sit at your right and left sides. They are still dreaming of greatness and position (*Matthew tells us it was their mother that asked the request on their behalf*)

Jesus' reply to them was similar to His previous response "You don't know what you are asking" - You don't know what manner of spirit you are of

Jesus taught them again that if they want to be first then they must learn the lesson of submission and become the servant of all. Take a step down in submission and humility and you will be exalted.

This was the example of Jesus, and we should follow His example:

["For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"](#) Mark 10.45

5. The Outworking of Grace

1 Peter 5; James 4

In these studies we have said that God always intends us to come up to a new level, He always has something better for us – we may not necessarily know what that is until we come up to a newer higher level and it begins to open up in front of us.

In presenting this series of teaching, I recalled a visit I made to a hotel where in order to go up to the upper levels from the ground floor you had to first go down a set of stairs to where the lifts and staircases were – in effect the first step up was down. This is the essence of this series – so that we can come up higher, we must first learn to take a step down, that down step is an act of humility and submission.

The Bible says that if we humble ourselves then God will exalt, lift and raise us up.

Let us turn up the two Scriptures we read in a previous study – **1 Peter 5.5-6** and **James 4.10**

["Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time"](#) 1 Peter 5.5-6

["Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."](#) James 4.10

Both these verses tell us to humble ourselves under God and He will exalt us and lift us up.

Tonight we are going to take this a step further and see what it is that's at work to lift us up.

We have already read in 1 Peter 5.5 and we see it again in **James 4.6** that “**God gives grace to the humble**” - It is the *grace of God* that exalts us and takes us to the next level.

What is grace?

Grace (Gk *charis*.) - “endue with favour, kindness, goodness and blessing”.

- It is an attribute of God;
- It is the gift of God - free and unmerited.
- It is the blessing of God
- An outworking of God's love toward us

Let us look at **1 Peter 5.8-12**

“(8) Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (9) Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. (10) But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. (11) To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (12) By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.”

Here the apostle exhorts us to not only to be humble under God, but that we should be aware and alert of the schemes of the devil and resist him (v8-9).

(10) He goes on to say that God is the God of all grace and by that outworking of grace in our lives He will perfect, establish, strengthen and settle you.

In verse 12, “*..in which you stand*” Peter confirms that what he had just declared to them was the same message of grace which Paul had preached to them (Silvanus, aka Silas, was Paul's companion and apostle in his own right. He was the bearer of this letter to the church)

So, let us briefly look at some of Paul's teachings on this message of grace

Ephesians 2.4-6

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...”

- We are saved by the grace of God
- The grace of God has quickened us even though we were dead in trespasses and sins
- The grace of God has raised us up and made us sit together in the heavenly places
- The grace of God has lifted us from one level to another – as the Psalmist could say “*He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps*” (Psalm 40.2)

2 Corinthians 12.7-10

“(7) And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. (8) Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. (9) And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (10) Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

- “Lest I be exalted above measure..” - become haughty, self exaltation brings us low but being humble exalts us. Paul was receiving many revelations, which we now have as the NT, these revelations could have made him proud with feelings of grandeur and importance.
- This 'thorn in the flesh' was not an affliction to keep Paul humble, as some believe – the Bible clearly identifies this *thorn* as a 'messenger of satan to buffet' him, and I believe it was to get him to focus on himself and not in the Lord.
- The word buffet means to 'strike with the fist, maltreat and violently abuse'
- God's reply to Paul's pleadings were “My grace is sufficient for you” - grace was all he needed to lift him up. Because of the grace of God, Paul could declare “when I am weak, then I am strong”. Grace lifted him from a time of weakness to a time of strength.

2 Corinthians 8.9

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich”

- He became poor so that we might become rich
- This verse tells us that Jesus humbled himself so that we could be exalted by the grace of God.
- Jesus laid aside everything (*became poor*), His Deity, his reputation, his stately form and became as a man, so that we could be beneficiaries (*become rich*) of grace – favour, kindness, goodness and the blessing of God

2 Corinthians 9.7-11

“(7) So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. (8) And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. (9) As it is written: "HE HAS DISPERSED ABROAD, HE HAS GIVEN TO THE POOR; HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURES FOREVER." (10) Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, (11) while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.”

- Purposeful & bountiful giving is honouring God with your substance – act of worship, also humbling yourself to God.
- God is able to make all grace [all favour, all kindness, all goodness, all blessing] abound toward you.
- That you might abound - to cause to overflow, exceed, excel, be pre-eminent – to cause to rise above and beyond.

- This type of giving causes the grace of God to go to work on your behalf increasing and blessing you – raising you up to a new level

As we continue in this series we are going to see how some Bible characters who humbled themselves were elevated because of the grace of God.

6. They Walked With God - Enoch

In these studies over the last few weeks we have seen that God exalts the humble, in our study last week we saw that God gives His grace to the humble and can therefore conclude that it is the outworking of grace that elevates us and raises us up.

As we take this a little further we are going to look at some examples from the Scriptures where God's grace at work raised up men and lifted them to a new level.

First let us remind ourselves what it means to be humble - it is to be submissive and obedient to God. It is not as many believe, to debase yourself or make yourself to be so unworthy, so poor, or so insignificant.

Putting it quite simply - Humility is being submissive and obedient to God, and agreeing with what He says about you.

There is a very interesting phrase in the Bible, which is used only three times in the entire Scriptures. This phrase highlights what it means to be humble - '*walked with God*'.

Enoch – Genesis 5.18-24

This phrase is used first of all (and two of three times) in connection with Enoch both in this chapter.

Not much is mentioned about this man in the Bible, but let us look at what the Bible does say.

- Enoch was the son of Jared (Genesis 5.18-19).
He is not to be confused with Enoch son of Cain (1st cousin 4 times removed) or the city that was named after him. (Genesis 4.17-18).
- Enoch was the father of Methuselah (Genesis 5.21)
- Enoch lived for 365 years (Genesis 5.23)
- Enoch *walked with God* (Genesis 5.22,24)
- Enoch did not die – God took Him (Genesis 5.24)
- Enoch is mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus – through the legal line, as recorded by Luke (Luke 3.37)

- Enoch had this testimony that he pleased God (Hebrews 11.5)
- Enoch functioned as a prophet preaching the coming of the Lord to judge the ungodly of their sinful ways. (Jude 1.14)

Enoch walked with God – what does this statement mean?

1. **Enoch was at peace with God** – The wicked are “without hope and without God” (Ephesians 2.12). Enoch walked with God, therefore he was at peace with God - the Bible declares that two cannot walk together unless they are agreed (Amos 3.3)
“Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?”
2. **Enoch enjoyed close communion and fellowship with God.** Like that He had with Adam in the garden of Eden. Enoch and God enjoyed that close fellowship and must have spent many sweet precious times together in each others presence. God was a pleasure to Enoch and Enoch pleased God. Walking with God was his habit, it was his custom. The Amplified version says “Enoch walked [in habitual fellowship] with God..” (Genesis 5.22).
3. **Enoch was a man of faith.** He had to be, Hebrews tells us “he had this testimony that he pleased God”. Faith pleases God (Hebrews 11.5-6). Enoch trusted in God, he relied upon Him, he believed God. It didn’t matter what his friends or family thought – Enoch believed God.
4. **Enoch lived a blameless life in a wicked age.** He lived a separated life in that he did not walk in the 'way of sinners' of that corrupt age. He had no fellowship with what was unclean and God received him (2 Corinthians 6.12-18). His life, character and conduct were a living testimony and rebuke to the ungodly around him. His life matched up to the message he preached.
5. **He walked progressively with the Lord** – He did not walk alone, God was with him, leading him. This was not an on/off progression, he walked steadfastly with God. Enoch walked with His eyes fixed on the Lord, Like Peter when he walked on the water. He grew in his walk from one level to another – from one degree of glory to another degree of glory (2 Corinthians 3.18)
“And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit” (Amp)
6. **Enoch was translated** – Enoch was one of only two that did not die (the other being Elijah). “He was not, for God took him”, the implication of this statement means that his friends/family searched for him, as a missing person, but could not find him. It has been suggested (by Andrew A Bonar) that God and Enoch were enjoying walking together so much that one day God said to him 'why go home, come back with me'

God's grace was upon Enoch and that grace lifted him straight into heaven. The Bible declares that 'righteousness exalts a nation..' (Proverbs 14.34)

Righteousness will raise you up! - it was Enoch's testimony of faith and righteousness that pleased God, and caused God to show him such grace and favour – that led to God literally raising him up from the earth.

7. They Walked With God - Noah

1 Peter 5.5-6

In the first few messages of this study we did at the beginning of the year we saw that God exalts the humble, as we began to develop that theme we saw that God gives grace to the humble. We can therefore conclude that it is the outworking of grace that elevates us and raises us up.

As we are taking this further we looked last week at the example of Enoch and saw how the grace of God was at work in his life and raised him up to a new level, quite literally, from the earth to heaven.

Over these two sessions we are studying the phrase in the Bible “..walked with God”., this is used only three times in the entire Scriptures. The first two times it is used is to do with Enoch, the last occurrence of this phrase is to do with Noah - and we will look at him today.

First let us remind ourselves what it means to be humble - Putting it quite simply - Humility is just being submissive and obedient to God, walking in His ways.

Noah – Genesis 6.9

We know nothing of Noah's early life, the first time he is mentioned in the Bible is in Genesis 5.28-32

“(28) Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. (29) And he called his name Noah, saying, "This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed." (30) After he begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters. (31) So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died. (32) And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.”

1. Noah was son of Lamech and great-grandson of Enoch
2. Apart from v29 which tells us that he was born, we first read of Noah when he was 500 years old (v32)
3. Noah was father to Shem, Ham and Japheth.
4. His name means 'rest, comfort and consolation'.
5. Noah is a type of Christ -
 - (a) It was said of Noah that he would bring comfort, consolation and rest – He would be the saviour of his time.

- (b) Jesus call to all men was 'come to me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest' (Matthew 11.28).
- (c) any man that trusted in the Ark [*God's means of salvation*] and got on board was saved from the judgement of God, any man that trusts in Jesus will also be saved.

Going on into chapter 6 we read concerning Noah -

- He lived in a time where the world was evil, corrupt and morally dark (vs1-7)
- **Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.** This is the first mention of grace in the Bible.
 1. The 'law of first mentioned' is important in the study of Scripture. It is a study 'technique' which simply means that the very first time any important word/subject is mentioned in the Bible [usually in Genesis, being the first book of the Bible], Scripture gives that word/subject its **most complete, and accurate, meaning** to not only serve as a "key" in understanding the Biblical concept of the word, but to also provide a foundation for its fuller development in later parts of the Bible. This chapter alone contains four key words, all of which are the first mention - grace (6.8); just (6.9), perfect (6.9), covenant (6.18)
 2. This word grace here means 'to be accepted, favoured, to bestow kindness and mercy on a person'.
 - (a) When all other men were only continually evil, God found in Noah a man that pleased Him, a man whom God could use and God accepted Him, he bestowed His mercy to him. 2 Corinthians 5.9, "*Therefore, we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him*" - the AV says "*..we may be accepted of Him*".
 - (b) God searched for a man and found one that He could use – God looks for those who have a heart for Him, those whom He can use to accomplish His purpose and plan.
 - (c) Noah was a man of faith - faith pleases God (Hebrews 11.6), Noah is found among the names mentioned in the record of faith in Hebrews 11.
- **He was a just man**, perfect in his generations – (just) righteous, (perfect) integrity and truth.
He was a man of integrity and truth; he was blameless and righteous, not in his own merit, grace was at work in his life. This perfected him and it was accounted to him as righteousness (Hebrews 11.7), he became "*heir of the righteousness which is according to faith*"
- **He walked with God** – like his great-grandfather before him he had an intimate relationship with God.
God revealed to him what He was about to do.
 - God reveals His plans to His servants the prophets, not for their sole benefit but that they might be the vessels through which the grace of God is extended and applied to others. (Amos 3.7, "*Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.*")
- **He was obedient** to the call of God (v22). Noah did what God put on his heart, even though it was a long and difficult task, and suffering ridicule. He did this out of 'godly fear', reverence for God, it was an act of his love and worship for God,

he put all he had into that work. The mark of humility – submission and obedience to God.

- **Noah was a preacher of righteousness** to his generation (2 Peter 2.5) – warning them of the impending judgement, and pleading with them to 'repent and be saved'

“and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly”

Grace Elevated Noah

Noah was a man that was submissive and obedient to God. He walked in the ways of God. He found grace in the eyes of the Lord – and that grace lifted him up.

God used this humble man Noah as a saviour to his generation.

At 600 years old, Noah and his family entered the Ark that he had prepared and God shut the door. He had preached and been faithful to the call of God for up to 100 years. The grace of God saved him and his family and **lifted** them up on the flood waters (**Genesis 7.11-17**)

After the flood had subsided, God honours Noah with an everlasting covenant – still in force today **Genesis 9.11-17**

God promises never again to destroy all flesh by the flood.

The rainbow is the sign of the covenant of grace

- Every-time the rainbow appears in the clouds, God remembers Noah. He remembers His covenant with a man that walked with Him and found grace in His eyes – will we find grace in His eyes?
- The rainbow, the sign of the covenant of grace, is around the throne of God. A reminder that God will spare the righteous from the judgement that He will bring on the earth. *“...and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.”* Revelation 4.3 Grace will elevate and raise us up.

8. The Humble Shepherd Servant – Part 1

Over this series of studies we have examined the lives of Jesus, John the Baptist and the two disciples James and John. We saw how they were exalted when they humbled themselves. We have studied and seen what Paul had to say about humility. We have also seen grace at work in the lives of Enoch and Noah. One of the greatest examples of the outworking of grace in the lives of the Old Testament characters is in the life of David. The Scriptures show us that as David humbled himself he too experienced a tremendous outpouring of God's grace which exalted him and raised him up.

Let us look at some occasions in his life:

1. The young shepherd servant is anointed king

The story of David is one of great interest. From a young age he learned the secret of submission. But before we get on to him let us look at his predecessor Saul

One of the first references to David in the Bible is found in 1 Samuel 13.13-14
“And Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him *to be* commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.””

Saul had so many chances and opportunities thrust upon him but he failed to repent and he abused the power that was entrusted to him. Samuel speaking in these verses tells him that he has done foolishly (the opposite of wisdom), he did not act justly, nor did he walk humbly before God – things that God requires of man.

“He has shown you, O man, *what is good*; And what does the LORD require of you But *to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?*” Micah 6.8

His sin that ultimately cost him the throne wasn't so much the things that he did but the spirit in which he did them. His sin was the old sin of pride and egotism, and it was this that caused his downfall.

That spirit of pride led him to make that vital error in that he exalted himself and took on a function that was not his to fulfill – he took and offered the burnt offering (v5-14)

1 Samuel 15.16-28

“So Samuel said, “When you *were* little in your own eyes, *were* you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the LORD anoint you king over Israel?” (vs17)

When you were little in your own eyes - Humility exalts us. Saul was once humble and God anointed him king. But now he was man full of pride. He exalted himself and that was his mistake.

The throne was wrenched from him and given to David – this man after God's own heart.

“So Samuel said to him, “The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, *who is better than you.*” (vs28)

Let us remind ourselves what the Scripture says about a haughty spirit of pride.

“*Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.*” Proverbs 16.18

Pride – The Spirit of satan

We must remember that pride is the spirit of satan. Satan (Lucifer) exalted himself and was brought low. In **Isaiah 14.12-15**, we read of his fall.

Ezekiel also says:

““Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you.” (v17) **Ezekiel 28.13-17**,

Jesus said to His disciples “I saw satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Luke 10.18)

Remember we read in earlier studies that if we exalt ourselves we will be brought low (Luke 18.14).

This is the tragic story of Saul – a man who was physically head and shoulders above all others yet humble, raised himself spiritually head and shoulders above all others and fell. And God removed and replaced him...

So onto David,

1 Samuel 16.1-23

David was ignored by his family (v11)

- He wasn't invited to the feast!
- He was young and insignificant in their eyes
- He was 'only good enough' to tend the sheep

He was overlooked by the prophet (v12)

- Samuel noted his physical features, as he did the other brothers
- God prompted Samuel to 'arise and anoint him'

Ignored by his family, overlooked by the prophet yet God looked deeper at the humbleness of his heart – God exalted him

The Bible gives us little indication to what his life was like.

- He was a shepherd (v11)
- He was handsome and good looking (v12)
- He was filled with the Spirit of God (v13)
- He was a skillful musician (v18)
- He wrote psalms – songs and hymns.

"Then one of the servants answered and said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, *who is* skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD *is* with him." Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who *is* with the sheep.""
(v18-19)

The Bible also describes David in this verse as :

- a mighty man of valour
- a man of war
- prudent in speech

Where did he get these qualities, being just a youth?

- We don't read that David complained about looking after the sheep – they were in his care, he loved them, he would have given his life for them. He served his father by serving the sheep. We see a little of his love for the sheep in his testimony before Saul

"But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it, and

delivered *the lamb* from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught *it* by its beard, and struck and killed it.” 1 Samuel 17.34-35

Where did he get such wisdom that he could write some of the greatest psalms recorded in Scripture. Where did he get such prudence of speech.

These came from spending time in the presence of God. What do you think he was doing while he looked after the flock? (Psalm 16.11; Psalm 21.6; Psalm 51.11)

He was humble before God and God raised him up.

9. The Humble Shepherd Servant – Part 2

Over these last few weeks we have been looking at humility from the aspect of grace. “God gives grace to the humble” One of the greatest examples of the outworking of grace in the lives of the Old Testament characters is in the life of David. The Scriptures show us that as David humbled himself he too experienced a tremendous outpouring of God’s grace which exalted him and raised him up.

Last week we were looking at how the grace of God brought him to the place where he was anointed to be king by Samuel. We saw how humbling himself before God lifted him up in the sight of those around him. A servant in the royal house said of him: “Then one of the servants answered and said, “Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, *who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD is with him.*” Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, “Send me your son David, *who is with the sheep.*”” (1 Samuel 16.18-19)

In David we now have a man who has been anointed to be king. What does he do with this?, how does he react?

Although he was anointed king, he remained humble and did not raise himself to that position. He waited for God to elevate him. The time span between his anointing and actually assuming the position of king is some years

2. Battling the giant Goliath - 1 Samuel 17.

This chapter tells of the battle between the Philistines and Israel.

- Three of David’s elder brothers are with Saul in the battle (v13)
- David is back at home for a while when Jesse asks him to go and take food supplies to his brothers (v15, 17-18)
- While David spoke with his brothers the Philistine giant presents himself with taunts, threats and verbal defiance, which David hears (v22-23; v8-11)
- David learns what reward will be given to the man who kills the giant (v25-30)
- David has an audience with Saul (v31-39)
- David goes out to fight Goliath in the name of the Lord and defeats him (v40-51)

In this chapter a great opportunity arises for David to 'get noticed' and raise himself up yet he remains humble.

His own brother thinks the purpose for his visit was to 'make a name for himself'

"Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." (v28-29)

Eliab thought:

- David was too proud to look after the sheep – *why have you deserted the sheep?*
- He was only there to advance himself in the army and to secure a position
- He was seeking out his own vanity and ambition

Eliab knows little of his brother's character – he is so far from the truth. In fact Eliab is probably comparing David to his own character.

The truth was that David was humble. Yes he had been anointed king, he did have a position in the royal house – but when he returned home he went back to the sheep. What David was proposing was not out of any impure motive but for the glory of God and the honour of the people of Israel, who were both being reproached.

Let us look at how he conducts himself in front of Saul. (v32-39)

- He knows God has chosen him to be king but he never mentions it.
- He tells Saul how God delivered him from the lion and bear and confirms his faith in God that He will deliver him again
- He talks about his covenant with God, and how the Philistines did not have that covenant
- He tells Saul how the giant is challenging God – and that would prove to be his downfall.

In all this David does not build himself up – He humbles himself and submits to God, exalting Him and giving God all the glory and credit. God gives him the victory.

In all things David behaves wisely – he is humble before God. He is elevated to a position of responsibility and is accepted in the sight of the people. So much so that they hold him in high esteem.

"So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. (6) Now it had happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. (7) So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." 1 Samuel 18.6-7

This displeased Saul and he viewed him with suspicion from that day, even to the point of hunting him to kill him.

But again the Bible tells us that David behaved wisely in all his ways, being humble before God.

“And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD was with him. Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him.” 1 Samuel 18.14-15

3. David's opportunities to kill Saul

In the years before David became king, He had many opportunities to advance and elevate himself, yet he chose to act wisely and be humble. Because Saul was wanting to kill him, David went on the run to escape but Saul continued to hunt him.

On a couple of occasions David had the opportunity to kill Saul and take his position, but let us see how he acted:

1 Samuel 24.1-22

- David and his men were hiding out in a cave in the Wilderness of En Gedi.
- Saul stopped in this cave to refresh himself
- David cut off a small piece from the corner of Saul's robe
- When Saul left the cave, David went out after him and told him everything

- (v8-11) David had no evil intention toward Saul. Even when there was opportunity, he did not raise his hand to harm Saul.

David humbled himself before God, taking heed of the Word which says “Touch not the Lord's anointed” (Psalm 105.15)

1 Samuel 26.5-25

- On another occasion David crept into Saul's camp while all his bodyguards were sleeping
- David's men wanted to kill him but David prevented them again – Do not touch the anointed of the Lord
- David took Saul's spear and a jug of water which were by him.
- David crossed over the valley to the other side and called out to Saul and Abner, his bodyguard
- David told all and then returned the king's spear (v22)

Once again, David humbled himself and did not presume to kill the king to get the position he had been anointed for – He waited on the Lord, for His timing.

The time eventually came - Saul was killed in battle but even then David did not push himself forward, he waited on the leading and direction of the Lord (**2 Samuel 5.1-4**)

10. David Humbles Himself Under God

Over these last few weeks we have been looking at some occasions in the life of David where he humbled himself 'under the mighty hand of God' (1 Peter 5.6) and we saw how grace raised him up.

We saw also how this humble man would not exalt himself and take the throne to which he had been appointed. He had many opportunities to kill Saul and become king but he did not take advantage but rather submitted himself to God and His word in 'not touching the Lord's anointed' (Psalm 105.15). His time to be king eventually came, and he was crowned.

Over the weeks our talk about David has focused a lot on his faith, zeal, valour and his intimate relationship with God. But we must remember that this man who was so fervent in his love for God, a man of faith and valour, a man that God Himself described as having a heart like His own, was not perfect. He made mistakes, he committed sins, but unlike his predecessor Saul, David knew the secret of humility and repentance.

This is clearly reflected in one of David's darkest moments during his reign.

4. David's Great Sin 2 Samuel 11 & 12

a) David's Adultery with Bathsheba

2 Samuel 11.1-5

In chapter 11 we read how his sin was conceived and grew.

- (v1) David did not go out to battle with his men but stayed at home.
 - This was the time when kings usually went out to battle – the spring of the year.
 - David sent Joab with all the army out to battle – they were victorious over the Ammonites and successfully beseiged Rabbah.
 - David remained at Jerusalem. Although in itself not necessarily a sinful act, it was the catalyst to a sequence of events that were sinful. *If only David had gone out with his men!*
 - It could be argued that this was a sinful act, as David should have been leading his army to battle – instead he chose to neglect his duty and take it easy at home.

- (v2) In the coolness of the evening David went on to the roof terrace of the palace to walk about after his siesta
 - He saw a very beautiful woman bathing – everything about his woman was beautiful: her shape, form, her complexion, even the way she conducted herself, and David's eye was attracted to her. There is no blame attached to her, she did not seduce David, she was not aware that he was on the roof (he should have been at battle with her husband!)
 - He spied on her, watching her. *He saw her* – this word means to 'watch, gaze at, give attention to, look intently at'. This was not just a passing glance, something that is noticed and then forgotten.

- Having observed this woman for a while, he desired (coveted) her – desire was conceived in his heart.

James describes the process of how sin starts with desire and progresses through to death

“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” James 1.14-15

- (v3) David enquires about the woman
 - He is so enraptured with her he starts to ask questions about her – Who is she?
 - He learns she is the daughter of Eliam. Is she married? Maybe he was thinking of taking her as wife – that wasn't unusual in those days, polygamy was common practice.
 - He learns that she is the wife of one of his men who serves in his army. At this point he should have realised and stopped – she was somebody else's wife, but desire had conceived and is beginning to give birth to sin.
- (v4) David sends men to get her and bring her to him
 - He realises that Uriah is away fighting and she has been left home alone,
 - He covets her - 'no one will know'
 - His servants bring her to the palace
 - He lays with her and commits adultery and then sends her home.
- (v5) Bathsheba conceives
 - This adulterous act results in Bathsheba conceiving a child
 - She sends news to the king
 - What does David do? He formulates a plan..

b) David Tries to Cover-Up His Sin

2 Samuel 11.6-13

David is still thinking that no one will know about his sin. So he comes up with a plan to cover up what he has done.

- He sends for Uriah under the pretense of hearing news from the battle (v6-7)
- He tells him to go home - to spend the night with his wife and rest (v8)
 - the plan was for Uriah to spend the time with his wife so that everyone thought the child was his.
- Uriah does not go home but spends the night at the king's house (v9-13)
 - David learns that he did not go home and gives him another opportunity
 - Still Uriah does not go home

c) David Has Uriah Killed

2 Samuel 11.14-25

David's anger is aroused because Uriah is more honourable than he. Uriah will not sleep in comfort with his wife while the army and his brethren are sleeping rough in tents.

- David sends Uriah back to the battlefield carrying a letter – his own death warrant.
- David writes to Joab to set Uriah in the strongest part of the battle and then to retreat so that Uriah is killed (v15)
- Joab does as David requests and Uriah is killed

When David hears the news of the death of Uriah he takes Bathsheba to be his wife and she gives birth to the child she was carrying (vs26-27)

David maybe thought that he had got away with these sins – no one ever knew.

2 Samuel 12.1-12

In chapter 12 God sends the prophet Nathan to David and challenges him about the sin

- The parable of the poor man's lamb
- You are the man!

For the first time in a long while David realised his sin was known and he repents of his sin. At last he humbles himself under God.

Psalm 51 recounts his prayer of repentance

Although he has repented and been forgiven, there were still consequences of his sin. There was still a price that had to be paid.

- The child gets sick and dies – even though David fasts and pleads with God for his healing.
- There is trouble from within David's family according to the word of Nathan the prophet, including:
 - His son Amnon rapes his step-sister Tamar
 - Absalom seeks revenge for the rape on his sister and has his brother murdered
 - Absalom commits treason

11. Humility in Wisdom

Over these last few months we have been looking at the subject of wisdom – in particular the role of humility in wisdom.

In two of the verses we looked at in the early studies we saw that God exalts the humble

“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” 1 Peter 5. 5-6

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.” James 4.10

This is not an isolated theme in the Bible because we saw that Jesus mentioned it and also the Old Testament writers spoke of it

“For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” Luke 14.11

“The LORD lifts up the humble; He casts the wicked down to the ground.” Psalm 147.6

To wrap up this teaching we are going to examine the connection between humility and wisdom.

We have seen already how when the characters mentioned in the Scriptures humbled themselves God raised them up

- John the Baptist humbled himself and baptised Jesus – this led on in his later life to being described by Jesus as the ‘greatest prophet’ that had ever lived.
- James & John had to learn the secret of humility when they were seeking status and a position at the Lord’s side. Jesus taught them that if you want to be first you must become servant of all.
- Enoch was such a humble man that God just took him home – the man was raptured/translated so that he could no longer be found. Hebrews tells us that he was translated because he had the testimony that he was pleasing to God.
- Noah, another just and humble man, was moved to prepare an ark for the saving of his family. The Scripture tells us that he found grace in the sight of the Lord and God raised him up on the waters of the great flood.
- We have recently just looked at David. He too was a man that humbled himself, not trying to exalt himself to the throne. After some time God raised him up and he became king. Even after he sinned we see how he humbled himself and went before the Lord in repentance. We have his prayer of repentance recorded in Psalm 51

There are others that we could have studied - Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Elisha, Gideon or Peter

We see all these being humble yet accomplishing different things. What is it that they had in common? What does it mean to be humble.

Humility is not building yourself up or making yourself to be so great, but then neither it is the opposite that you put yourself down so low or to make out that you are so unworthy. Humility is: **submitting yourself to God and His word, and obeying His commands.**

There is a word in the Scriptures that is often mis-interpreted: *meekness*. A lot of people think that meekness means weakness but this is a wrong interpretation. Meekness is actually a form of humility, it is being humble. Look at what the Bible says about the meek:

Psalm 147.6 (AV) “The Lord lifteth up the meek, He casteth the wicked down to the ground” how does that compare with what Jesus said in **Luke 14.11** or what Peter or James say in their letters.

Matthew 5.5, Psalm 37.11 “the meek shall inherit the earth” it is not the weak that inherit the earth but those who are humble and submissive to God. Those who are actively keeping His commands.

Zephaniah 3.12 “I will leave in your midst a meek and humble people, And they shall trust in the name of the LORD” Zephaniah actually connects meekness and humility together.

James 1.21 “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

What is James asking us to do? Lay aside all filthiness and wickedness and receive the word of God with humility.

James 3.13 “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom” In this verse we see James is connecting humility (meekness) and wisdom

Psalm 25.9-10 “The humble He guides in justice, And the humble He teaches His way. All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth, To such as keep His covenant and His testimonies”

Humility is the path to wisdom. Wisdom does not come through much study – knowledge comes through studying. Wisdom comes by being humble and submissive to what has been studied (knowledge). Wisdom knows how to apply what has been learned.

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