

## SO YOU REALLY THINK YOU ARE SO HUMBLE? : PART 1

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : October 9, 1998

Last Updated : February 13, 2012

Cancer, Subtlety Of Pride, The "Pure Heart" Myth, War Of The Spirit, "Sinless Saints" Myth, Automatic Forgiveness?, The Lord's Books, The Fall Of Adam And Eve, Spiritual Disease Of Pride, Divide And Conquer Through Pride, Attack Key Pillars, Not Ignorant Of Satan's Devices, Deceived By Pride, Humbled By Our Mistakes, Fools For Christ, Strength From Weakness

Cancer. It is a subtle disease. It starts out small, and it starts out unnoticed. Sometimes it can escape our attention for weeks or months while it performs its destructive work. In quite a few cases, there are no outward physical signs that anything is even wrong. On the surface, everything appears normal. By the time we finally do discover it, sometimes it can be too late! The disease has advanced so far, that sometimes the only remedy is to entirely remove the infected organ; and sometimes, if the doctors aren't careful, if they don't remove every single diseased cell, the affliction can return in even greater force and fury. Sadly, in quite a few cases, this malignant cellular growth can wreak so much destruction upon the human body before it is actually discovered, that sometimes it results in the death of its victim! In fact, Cancer is now one of the primary killers in the United States of America!

How much like Cancer is human pride. It is always there deep within our being, but it requires a catalyst to activate it. Pride is a dormant spiritual disease which only springs to life and rears its ugly head when certain conditions are present. In my article entitled "Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement", I wrote in part: "That old pride of ours just bursts out of our chest like an over-inflated balloon which repels anyone who tries to draw close to us in order to show us the error of our ways". While outwardly, all may appear to be well in the life of the Christian, deep within, one's mind, heart and spirit might be totally infected by this loathsome disease. Just like Cancer, pride can be an invisible killer. Quite often, it is when we erroneously believe that we no longer have it, or when we foolishly convince ourselves that we have obtained a permanent victory over it, that we are in fact most overcome and deceived by our pride.

Why is this? It is because our pride and our deceptive evil heart work hand in hand in order to try to defeat the new man of the Spirit. In other words, because of our pride, we allow our hearts to deceive us. We create a false image of ourselves, and do not see ourselves as others may see us. Because of our pride and the deceitfulness of our own evil heart, we cushion ourselves with a distorted image of our true spiritual condition. It is a form of self-preservation. While some people tend to use the phrase "a pure heart" when

describing a certain person, this kind of talk is very far from Biblical truth. As shocking as this may be for some of my readers, no one has a pure heart; at least not in the sense that most people use the phrase. When the Lord was dealing with the rebellious children of ancient Israel, He said through the mouth of the Prophet Jeremiah:

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"  
Jeremiah 17:9, KJV

In other words, our heart is so wicked, so full of pride, and so deceptive, that most of the time, we don't even know when we are being deceived by it! We are in fact deceived by it time and time again. This certainly seems to destroy the myth of certain people having pure hearts. Some six hundred years later, in the New Testament, we are told that our Lord was also aware of the pride and the evil which lurks in the heart of man. In the Gospels of John and Matthew, we find the following very revelatory verses:

"Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man."  
John 2:23-25, KJV

". . . Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man."  
Matthew 15:16-20, KJV

These verses reveal the true essence of the war between the selfish carnal man, the man who looks after the temporal things of the flesh, and the new spiritual man, born through the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who looks after the eternal things of the Spirit. The Apostle Paul explained the frustrations of fighting this spiritual warfare in this way:

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."  
Romans 7:18-25, KJV

Later on, in his first Epistle to the Church at Corinth,

Paul summarized his feelings regarding this spiritual warfare between the sinful flesh and the new man of the Spirit when he wrote:

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."  
1 Corinthians 9:26-27, KJV

It should be clear then that, contrary to the "pure heart" myth, we are all lost in sin until we accept God's saving Grace through the Sacrifice of His Son, our dear Lord Jesus Christ. This idea is further clarified for us through such verses as the following:

". . . The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good."  
Psalms 14:1b, KJV

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"  
Romans 3:23, KJV

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."  
Romans 5:6-8, KJV

It is also important to note, as the Apostle Paul clearly demonstrates through the previous verses from the seventh chapter of the Book of Romans, that even after we do come to Christ, it doesn't mean that we suddenly stop sinning. It doesn't mean that we all of a sudden obtain a permanent victory and stop yielding to our pride and other sins of the flesh. In other words, when we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, we don't just all of a sudden become some kind of "sinless saints" as some forms of organized religion erroneously teach. This is a false doctrine. It is a manmade tradition. "Oh yes, I remember when I used to be a sinner!" they self-righteously claim. "Thank the Lord I haven't sinned in three years now!" they boast. I have actually heard certain people say and others write these kinds of statements. It would be funny if it wasn't so sad.

Well, I am sorry to burst their bubble, but this kind of mentality is not only born of pride and self-righteousness, but it is also totally contrary to what Paul is saying above. Bear in mind that Paul is writing to the Romans after being a dedicated Christian missionary for a number of years. He clearly states that even though he is now a Christian, he still has to battle his sins of the flesh. He plainly tells us that he is frustrated by the fact that, even though he is now trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, he still falls into sin and commits evil. In his own words, he states "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do". He knows that these things are wrong, yet he still does them. In short, Paul is admitting that even though he now knows Jesus Christ, he hasn't attained to some state of sinless perfection. That is

precisely why he writes to the brethren at Philippi:

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:12-14, KJV.

So if coming to Christ doesn't mean that we all of a sudden stop sinning and become "sinless saints" overnight as some Christian denominations erroneously teach, exactly what does it mean? Quite simply, it means that in addition to becoming heirs to Salvation like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, through our faith in God's promises concerning His Son Jesus Christ, there is now a way to find forgiveness if we do fall again into sin; which we most certainly will; after all, we are all only human. However, thank God that He remembers our frame, that we are dust:

"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

Psalms 103:11-14, KJV

Notice that a key requirement for being forgiven, and obtaining this mercy, is fearing the Lord. It is Godly reverence. As I point out in "Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement", forgiveness is not an automatic act whether we seek it or not. If this were true, then no one would end up in Hell, or in the Lake of Fire if you prefer. Everyone would end up in Heaven; but this is most certainly not the case. It is absolutely foolish to think that we can continue to disrespect the Lord, reject His Word, and live our whole lives deep in sin, and then expect to end up some day in Heaven because of the erroneous doctrine of automatic forgiveness. That simply is not what the Bible teaches. Forgiveness can only come through faith in Jesus Christ. Victory only comes through faith in Jesus Christ. It is for this reason that the Apostles Paul and John make statements such as the following in some of their Epistles:

"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

Romans 7:25, KJV

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 15:57, KJV

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

1 John 5:4, KJV

So again, Paul is basically saying that even though he now knows Christ, it hasn't stopped him from sinning in the flesh; it hasn't made him perfect. Thus, all he can continue to do until the day he dies, is to continue to trust in the victory which is by faith through the Blood of Jesus Christ. In "Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement", I share a very fitting example which I believe elegantly explains the Plan of Salvation in a graphical form. Following are several quotes taken from that article. I encourage you to read the article in its entirety when you have the time:

----- Begin Quotes -----

"Because of our faith in Jesus Christ, and because of the Special Arrangement that God has made with His Son, as I explain in the series "Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?", the Lord also gives us a clean record. He doesn't really forget our sins per se, but we are declared "clean" in His carefully-kept Books:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Isaiah 1:18, KJV

"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities."

Psalms 51:9, KJV

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

Revelation 3:5, KJV

". . . Before we come to accept the Lord, our sins are marked in bright red letters in the Books found in the Halls of Heaven. The American Heritage Desk Dictionary defines scarlet as a bright red or red-orange color; and crimson as a vivid purplish red color. In other words, our sins are very apparent to the Lord; they stare God in the Face from the pages of His Book! They show Him without a shadow of a doubt that we are all guilty! However, once we repent of our sins and accept the Salvation of the Lord through Jesus Christ, what happens? Our sins become as white as snow; they become as white as the wool of a newborn lamb. Imagine, if you will, what would happen if you were to take a pen containing white ink, and write on a white piece of paper. The words would not only be difficult to see, they would basically be invisible! So it is with the Lord. Those bright red sins of ours which are written in His Books, become "invisible" to His Eyes! He remembers them no more!"

----- End Of Quotes -----

Undoubtedly, one of the greatest sins of humankind is pride, because pride leads to other sins. As I point out in my article on Leviathan, it was pride which brought about Satan's fall; and he has used it as one of the primary weapons in his spiritual arsenal to bring about the fall of humanity ever since, beginning with the fall of Adam and

Eve:

"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Genesis 3:5-6, KJV

Because of their pride, Adam and Eve believed Satan's lies instead of God's Word, when he told them that they would become as gods. The very tactics which Satan used against Adam and Eve, are the very same ones of which the Apostle John warns us to beware in his first Epistle:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

1 John 2:15-16, KJV

Continuing with my comparison between Cancer and the sin of pride, in the Old Testament, King David even went so far as to describe sin as a loathsome disease which afflicted his body. While it is quite possible that he may have actually been referring to a physical disease which tormented him, I tend to believe that a spiritual application may be what was really intended. Although there is no clear indication in the introduction to this Psalm, it is also possible that the king wrote these lines once the Lord had begun to deal with him after he had committed second degree murder, and then committed adultery with the wife of the murdered man. I am of course referring to the story of David, Uriah the Hittite and Bathsheba his wife:

"There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me."

Psalms 38:3-10, KJV

This idea of the sins of pride and rebellion being a spiritual disease which afflicts the whole body is clearly echoed in the words of the Prophet Isaiah. Several hundred years after King David, the Lord sent Isaiah to warn a very rebellious Israel to repent of her wickedness. This occurred some seven hundred years before Christ, just prior to the Assyrian invasions which served as the Lord's tool of chastisement:

"Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of

evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."  
Isaiah 1:4-6, KJV

In the Book of Job we are told that our pride can be so strong, and that it can be so deeply rooted in our heart, that the Lord has to actually hide our pride from us through natural physical sleep, in order to seal our instructions. Sometimes, it is only then, when our walls of pride are lowered through a state of unconsciousness, that He can speak to us, and deal with us as His dearly beloved children:

"For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."  
Job 33:14-17, KJV

Thus we see that pride can be extremely dangerous for our spiritual wellbeing. Not only can it affect our walk with the Lord, but it can seriously affect our relationship with our Christian brethren as well. When pride is deeply lodged in our heart, Satan can use it as an open door to come into the midst of our fellowship, just as he used it to destroy the fellowship between the Lord and Adam and Eve. It is important to realize that Satan does not just choose his battles at random. It is my personal belief that he chooses to attack those Christian fellowships and gatherings which are bearing the most fruit for God's Kingdom. I really don't think that he bothers too much with those Christians who are spiritually dead. He is more interested in stopping those who are alive, and who are growing in Spirit, and who are actively witnessing God's message of love and Salvation to others. These are the ones who present the greatest threat to his Kingdom of Darkness.

As I state in some of my other spiritual warfare articles, the enemy usually doesn't start attacking until we come out of the foxhole and start invading his territory. However, as in worldly warfare, sometimes the enemy of our soul will use espionage in order to try to discover our battle plans in advance; or he will send a spy within our midst in order to try to sow dissension, division and mistrust amongst the brethren. At the root of these things can usually be found pride; and as the Book of Proverbs clearly points out, all of these things are an abomination to the Lord:

"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that

soweth discord among brethren."  
Proverbs 6:16-19, KJV

"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised  
is wisdom."  
Proverbs 13:10, KJV

Satan knows that if he can instigate in-fighting through such human weaknesses and sins as pride, jealousy and personal sensitivities, he will have stopped the planned attack on his kingdom even before it ever gets started. As Jesus explained to Peter in the Gospel of Luke, Satan will try to sift the Lord's children like wheat, one by one, beginning with the strongest. He knows that if he can knock out or neutralize the key pillars of the fellowship, it will be an easy matter for him to defeat the weaker brethren:

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:"  
Luke 22:31, KJV

It is because Peter was himself one of Satan's key targets, that he later tells us that our adversary the Devil will boldly come into the midst of our fellowship like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour:

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"  
1 Peter 5:8, KJV

Sadly, this is precisely what we allow Satan to do when we foolishly yield to our pride and personal sensitivities. Just as Satan spoke through the mouth of Peter so that the Lord had to actually rebuke him, we too can become the enemy's conduits because of our pride and other weaknesses and inadequacies of the flesh:

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."  
Matthew 16:21-23, KJV

In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, while discussing the sins of the Children of Israel who repeated murmured, or complained, during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness, Paul states that those things are written for our admonition, that we might learn and profit by them. In his second Epistle to the same church, he tells us that we are not ignorant of Satan's devices; so we are all without excuse. We have a solid written record which clearly exposes the tactics of the enemy; and using our pride against us is clearly one of them:

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."



1 Corinthians 10:11, KJV

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

Pride was also the downfall of Peter and the others the night of the Lord's betrayal. You will recall that it was only a few hours prior to the Lord's betrayal and trial, that Peter and the other eleven proudly claimed that they would never deny their Lord:

"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples:"  
Matthew 26:33-35, KJV

What a blow it must have been to Peter's pride to have the Lord contradict him in front of the other Eleven. By this time, the others must have begun to look up to Peter, for they immediately followed suit and likewise confirmed that they would never deny their Lord. But, as we know, barely had they spoken these words, when they all fled from the Garden of Gethsemane like weak cowards, leaving their Master alone in the hands of wolves; but He was not really alone, for His Father was with Him:

"But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled."

Matthew 26:56, KJV

Shortly after that, Peter openly denied knowing the Lord three times when his own life appeared to be threatened with persecution; and it caused him no small grief when he realized his own weakness born of foolish human pride:

"And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly."

Matthew 26:75, KJV

You see, because of their pride, all of the Apostles had deceived themselves into thinking that they were much stronger spiritually than they actually were. The Gospel record clearly reveals that in the flesh, before the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them, they made mistake after mistake, and failed the Lord's tests time and time again. We read a number of occasions where the Lord had to openly rebuke them because of their pride, or because of their lack of love, or due to their lack of faith, or some other human weakness. Despite these things, after three and a half years of following the Master, they still had inflated images of themselves. But the Lord knew these things in advance; and not only did He graciously forgive them all, but He used them in even greater ways in the years ahead.

To put it another way, the Twelve Apostles were like young guys stumbling their way through boot camp. They were proud

and cocky and full of self-confidence. The Lord was still molding them and preparing them for the major battles ahead when He would use them to boldly, but humbly, preach the Gospel to the known world of their day. Like Moses of old who was basically useless to the Lord until his pride had been broken through spending forty years in the wilderness as a nomadic shepherd, the Apostles also had to go through a number of humbling experiences before they finally realized that it was only the Lord's Power working through them that made them who and what they were. If there is one important lesson we can all learn from this, it is as the Apostle Paul wrote, that the Lord truly uses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. I discuss this in more detail in my articles "The Only Credentials You Need!" and "The Wisdom Of God vs The Philosophy Of Men":

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

1 Corinthians 1:26-29, KJV

How true indeed! We are all so foolish and so weak. We make so many mistakes. It is truly a miracle that the Lord is able to accomplish anything through us at all. As I have stated before, the Lord doesn't use us because of ourselves; that is, because of who we are, or who we think we are; but rather He uses us in spite of ourselves; in spite of our many sins and shortcomings; so that as Paul says, "that no flesh should glory in His presence". In other words, when anything good is accomplished through us, we can only thank the Lord for it, and give Him the glory, knowing what a mess we are ourselves. As the Apostle Paul also wrote:

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

1 Corinthians 10:31, KJV

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

2 Corinthians 4:5-7, KJV

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

2 Corinthians 12:9, KJV

Thus far we have looked at the subtle destructive nature of pride, and how it can spoil our relationship with the Lord, cause division within our fellowship, and give us a false sense of self-confidence. We have also seen that, contrary

to the "sinless saints" doctrine, accepting Christ into our lives does not free us from pride or other sins of the flesh. Finally, we have seen how it is through the mistakes that we make, that the Lord actually molds us into the true humble servants that He wishes for us to be. In part two of this series, we will take a look at turning the other cheek, saving face and preserving personal images, Christian fellowships and the spiritually dead, guarding our tongue, godly exhortation and correction, being accountable to God, the Galatian compromise, hard sayings, man-pleasing, the absoluteness and authority of God's Word, and legalism versus love and mercy. I trust that you will join me.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

SO YOU REALLY THINK YOU ARE SO HUMBLE? : PART 2

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : October 9, 1998

Last Updated : February 13, 2012

Turning The Other Cheek, Christian Fellowships, Sideshows Of The Spiritually Dead, Pride And Saving Face, Guarding Our Tongue, Godly Exhortation And Correction, Accountable To God, The Galatian Compromise, Hard Sayings, Man-Pleasing, Absoluteness And Authority Of God's Word, Harsh Legalism vs Love And Mercy, Light Of The Gentiles, Conversion Of Paul

I find it rather interesting how our pride causes us to react differently depending upon the situation in which we find ourselves. For example, some dedicated Christians have no problem when they are verbally challenged, attacked and criticized by unbelieving people of the world. For the most part, it is usually easy for us to endure this kind of persecution, because in our heart and mind we rationalize, "Oh, they are just blind children of the world who don't understand our Christian faith. They don't know the Lord or His Word, and that is why they act that way." Because we adopt this attitude, it is fairly easy for us to, as we say in American slang, "let their words roll off of our back". The verse that comes to my mind is the following:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."  
1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

In other words, we know that their hurtful words are spoken out of ignorance of God's Word, and because they may not even have the Spirit of God, and thus no real spiritual discernment, so we don't let them bother us too much. In fact, sometimes, we have a tendency to become rather proud

of the fact that we are able to, as Jesus said, "turn the other cheek" with the people of the world:

"And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also."

Luke 6:29, KJV

We feel so good and holy about ourselves. In a symbolic sense, we self-righteously give ourselves a little pat on the back and tell ourselves that we are being such a good Christian example to the world. Because of our pride, we sometimes convince ourselves that we have no problem dealing with criticism and other forms of verbal persecution. This kind of attitude can be very dangerous, because as we saw earlier, the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

As proof of the above, consider that when we are closely involved in some form of Christian fellowship, such as with a church congregation, or with a prayer group, or with a Bible study group, our reaction to such hurtful words can be very different. Unlike the children of the world, such fellowships are normally full of Christians who do know the Lord, and who do know His Word. The spiritual standard in such gatherings of the Saints is normally much higher than that of the world, particularly if they are relatively small fellowships. In some cases, there is much greater spiritual intimacy and unity, although not always.

If you personally are involved in such a fellowship, you must maintain a seriousness about your relationship with the Lord; and you must realize that you are not just there to be entertained, or to be flattered. In other words, not only should you be there to be encouraged, to be inspired, and to be fed spiritually, but you should also occasionally expect to be corrected when necessary, and to be motivated to do more for the Lord. In other words, you should be there to grow spiritually, to make progress in your life and walk with the Lord; and this is not always easy. It requires a great deal of personal humility. There is no room for pride in such an environment.

Sadly, as I explain in some of my other articles, this is where part of the problem lies; because quite a few churches today are merely circus sideshows. They are there for the appearance only; they are there to entertain and to flatter only; they are not there to meet the spiritual needs of the congregation. They are cold, and they are dead. In fact, some people who attend such churches are no longer even interested in the spiritual aspects of their lives anyway. They are as spiritually dead as the dead stones of which their church is made. This is what the Lord was referring to when He told one person who wanted to follow Him, to let the dead bury the dead. Jesus was referring to letting the spiritually dead bury the physical dead, being as a physically dead person cannot possibly bury another dead person:

"And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."

Matthew 8:21-22, KJV

Some people within organized religion are only interested in creating the right appearance, and in giving the right impression, in order to maintain their standing within the community. They don't want their priest, pastor or minister to rock the boat. They love to have things just the way they are; but this is nothing new. The corruption and compromise of organized religion has been going on for literally thousands of years. Many of the Old Testament messengers, like the young Prophet Jeremiah, warned us about it; and the Apostle Paul likewise warned us that the very same situation would exist in the Last Days. Consider the following verses:

"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"  
Jeremiah 5:31, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."  
2 Timothy 4:3-4, KJV

What a sad picture of modern Christianity! Thank the Lord that, while this appears to be the prevailing attitude amongst many churches, there are still some dedicated Christians who are sincerely seeking to please the Lord and do His Will. These are the kinds of Christians with which we are concerned insofar as this topic of pride is concerned.

You see, the fact that we are amongst other Christians in our fellowships, makes a difference in how we choose to react to suggestions and lessons, and even criticisms, which may be presented to us. While it may be easy to ignore or to disregard words which are launched at us by the unbelieving world, when a well-meaning brother or a sister in the faith says something which hurts or offends us, or which strikes a chord with us in some way, we often tend to just fall apart. The facade of false humility which we present to the outside world quickly disappears, and up go our walls of pride. The reason we do this is because we feel we have to save face. We have to protect our image. It is the very same syndrome of self-preservation. Our thin Christian veneer has been scratched, and everyone gets a look at the horrors within; but we don't want them to see those things, do we?

One thing we have already seen in this series, is that we are all sinners; we all make mistakes; even we Christians. Sometimes we do indeed say or do things which are hurtful and unloving. The Apostle Paul battled with the evilness of his own flesh, so why shouldn't we have to do the same? Sometimes these offenses are intentional, and sometimes not. Sometimes we simply do not take the time to prayerfully consider the results before we say or do certain things. Oft times we are distracted by other stressful situations occurring in our lives, and so we blurt out certain remarks which are filled with emotions which were not intended. In other words, we let our wrath or frustration be felt by the wrong person. This is not to justify such errors; after all,

the Book of Proverbs is filled with such counsel as the following:

"In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise."  
Proverbs 10:19, KJV

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."  
Proverbs 15:1, KJV

"Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles."  
Proverbs 21:23, KJV

Clearly then, we would all be much wiser if we would just let the stress or the anger of the moment pass before we speak, if we even choose to speak at all. At the same time, those whom we have offended need to put aside their wounded pride and realize that they too have undoubtedly been guilty of the very same thing at some point in their life, and probably on more than one occasion. What it all comes down to is our sinful human condition. When it comes to bridling our tongue, as the Apostle James wrote, none of us is perfect:

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."  
James 1:26, KJV

"For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."  
James 3:2, KJV

Instead of yielding to our pride and firing back an equally provocative answer which is only bound to make matters worse, we would do better to just turn the other cheek and keep quiet; but oh how our pride prevents us from doing this! We just have to have the last word, don't we? We have to re-enforce our ego and repair our damaged self esteem. We have to prove to everyone that we are right, and the other person is wrong. They are the guilty party, and not us! How it must anger the Lord and sadden His Heart when He sees us acting in this manner. I discuss this topic of offenses and forgiveness more in-depth in the article "Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement". One of the key verses from that article which really sums up the entire issue is the following:

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."  
Ephesians 4:32, KJV

For those of us who find ourselves in the position of being a shepherd of one of the flocks of the Lord, whether we like it or not, sometimes we are faced with the responsibility of having to correct another brother or sister who has erred in the faith. Knowing what a terrible mess we are ourselves, this is not an easy task; nevertheless, it is a vital part, as well as a Scripturally-sound part, of being a shepherd of

God's heritage. We are obligated by the Lord to fulfill this responsibility, regardless of how uncomfortable it may make us feel. Consider the following verses:

"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

Proverbs 27:17, KJV

"He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue."

Proverbs 28:23, KJV

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Hebrews 3:13, KJV

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

Hebrews 13:17, KJV

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

James 5:19-20, KJV

Looking at my personal situation, as a shepherd of one of the Lord's small flocks, I could easily do as some worldly preachers and church leaders do, and simply flatter people as the above verse states. I could just tell them what they want to hear. I could just tell them that they are okay spiritually. It would fit right in with the "I'm okay, you're okay" mentality which has been prevalent since the sixties. As Jeremiah wrote, some people love to have it so. Their spiritual leaders are paid to not rock the boat; to simply be politically correct and preach what is in fashion. They aren't paid to talk about the things which make people feel uncomfortable. They aren't paid to expose spiritual improprieties in the lives of their flock. If they did, they would quickly find themselves looking for another job!

Thankfully, I find myself in a position where I don't have to worry about such things, because I am not paid for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I don't need to watch my mouth for fear of losing my paycheck. I can preach the full Gospel of Jesus Christ unhindered. The worst that could possibly happen is that I might lose a few of my readers; and this has indeed happened, but His Truth goes marching on. In the Gospels we discover that even Jesus lost some of His followers, or potential followers, when He said or did things which were too difficult for them to receive. Such was the case with His "eat my flesh, drink my blood" sermon:

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you . . . Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this

offend you? . . . From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."  
John 6:53, 60-61, 66, KJV

As the previous verses clearly point out, if we don't tell people the truth, if we fail to fulfill our responsibilities as shepherds, God will not overlook such things; because as the Apostle Paul states, we are accountable for their souls; we are accountable for telling them not what they want to hear, but rather what they need to hear, regardless of how uncomfortable it makes us feel; no matter how uncomfortable it makes them feel, and no matter how unpopular it may make us with them. As Paul wrote:

"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"  
Galatians 4:16, KJV

Paul wrote these words right after he had blasted the Galatians for compromising their new-found Christian faith with the Law-observing Jews who had snuck into the midst of their fellowship, and had convinced them that circumcision, and other observances of the Mosaic Law, were still necessary for Salvation. This compromise upset Paul very much, and he did not hesitate to tell them exactly what he thought. In one verse, he goes so far as to ask them who has bewitched them that they are no longer obeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain."  
Galatians 3:1-4, KJV

Paul was one "tough cookie" as we say in American slang; but what he wrote, he wrote in love, because he truly cared for the spiritual welfare of those whom he had helped win to the Faith. Like Paul, I too can sometimes be a bit rough with those with whom I am dealing; but don't think for a minute that I am not ever-conscious of my own sinful condition. It is difficult to point out a problem to another person when we know that we have been guilty of the very same thing ourselves. Satan is very quick to accuse us of being hypocrites. Oh, he is a pro when it comes to pouring on the condemnation! "Who are you to tell them that they are wrong? Who are you to tell them how to live their lives? Who are you to tell them what their sins are? Are you any better, you hypocrite?"; and on and on he goes. Of course we aren't any better! We are all sinners; but that still does not relieve us of the responsibility that God has given us as shepherds of His flocks!

Sadly, sometimes we listen to the Devil and we don't do what God expects us to do. We fail the Lord, and we fail them. We become menpleasers instead of God pleasers. We become more concerned about the opinions of men, just like the Scribes and the Pharisees, instead of only being concerned with what



God thinks. I know that I personally have done this on a number of occasions. I did or didn't do or say something because of the way I knew some people would react to it. I bowed to pressure. I put their opinion above God's opinion. Instead of telling them what they really needed to hear, what I knew would really help them if they received it, I put friendship first, or I placed my pride first.

Let me tell you, once you become a man-pleaser, it is hard to break out of that mold. Once you get caught in that rut, your wheels just keep spinning in the mud, and you lose your spiritual effectiveness for the Lord. As leaders of the Lord's flocks, we must have some godly conviction burning in our hearts, or else we will be rolled over every time. The only way to get that godly conviction, is by knowing the Word of God. When you know the Word of God, and you stand upon the Word of God, and you quote the Word of God, then you know that you are right; because God's Word is never wrong! In fact, as I have pointed out quite a few times before, God's Word is so important to Him, that He has magnified it above His very Name:

"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."  
Psalms 138:2, KJV

When you are forced to deal with certain problems in your particular fellowship, you must ask the Lord for His wisdom as James says, and you must give them God's Word, and not just your own human counsel. Maybe they can argue against your word and what you think is right or wrong, but they certainly can't argue against God's Word if they know what is good for them. Consider these verses:

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."  
James 1:5, KJV

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."  
Hebrews 4:12, KJV

As I point out in "Exposing the Judge Not Fallacy", when you quote the straight Word of God, you bring people to a decision. They have to either accept the authority of God's Word, or else they have to reject it. There is no middle of the road about it. Of course, there is an inherent danger here which I feel that I should point out to you; and that is this: The Scribes and the Pharisees of old also knew the Scriptures. In fact, they knew them better than anyone else. Time and time again we find them questioning Jesus about a certain law found in the writings of Moses. They were pros; they were legalists; they were just like our modern-day prosecuting attorneys; but they were wrong! Why? Jesus exposed their sin quite thoroughly when He told them such things as the following:

"And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."  
Matthew 9:11-13, KJV

"But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day . . . But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless."  
Matthew 12:2, 7, KJV

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."  
Matthew 23:23, KJV

You see, the Scribes and the Pharisees were right about a lot of the things which they said and did; at least as far as the Mosaic Law was concerned; however, where they were wrong was in the spirit in which they administered the Law to the people. Instead of being loving and merciful, they were harsh, cold and cruel. They only used the Mosaic Law as a sword to cut people to the heart and to tear them down, instead of to lovingly woo them into the Kingdom of God. The Lord accused them of this very thing when He said:

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."  
Matthew 23:13, KJV

The Scribes and the Pharisees used the Law to emphasize their own righteousness while condemning and oppressing the common people through the same. In other words, they boasted of their own goodness by comparing themselves to the common people whom they made to feel condemned and lost through their interpretation of the Law. All of this was in direct contradiction to what we find written in the Epistles of Paul and Peter:

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."  
2 Corinthians 10:12, KJV

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."  
1 Peter 5:2-3, KJV

This is why the people loved Jesus so much; because His approach was the exact opposite of that of the Scribes and

the Pharisees. He told the people the same things as the Scribes and the Pharisees, but His delivery was totally different. He tempered everything He said with love, so that He gave people hope. Whereas the Scribes and the Pharisees only offered them gloom and darkness, Jesus offered them Light and Salvation. When Joseph and Mary went to the Temple in Jerusalem to have Jesus circumcised on His eighth day of life, the old man Simeon referred to Jesus as:

"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."  
Luke 2:32, KJV

In one of his final sermons in Jerusalem, when he appeared before King Agrippa just prior to being sent to Rome, The Apostle Paul said in part:

"That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."  
Acts 26:23, KJV

Both Matthew and Paul also quoted from the prophecies of the Prophet Isaiah concerning the fact that Jesus would offer hope and Salvation to the Gentile world:

"And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust."  
Romans 15:12, KJV

These are but a few of the many verses which describe how Jesus came to be the Light and the Salvation of the world. If you are interested in a more in-depth study of this topic, allow me to encourage you to read the article, "The Children of Light: Are You One of Us?". It will thrill your heart.

As I point out in "Biblical Cafeteria Or The Whole Course?", the Scriptures clearly indicate that before his miraculous conversion, the Apostle Paul was very much like these self-righteous Pharisees; after all, he was one of them for many years. He was totally overcome by the legality of the Law; and this is why he had no problem arresting the early Christians; and even escorting them to their deaths. Exactly as Jesus had prophesied only a few years earlier, Paul was convinced in his heart, that he was in fact doing God's service by killing the first Christians:

"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."  
John 16:2, KJV

The Lord had to totally break and remold Paul during that incident on the road to Damascus. Once He had, Paul became an entirely new creature who administered to others in a spirit of meekness and love, instead of with the harshness of the Law. Knowing in his heart what a sinner he was himself, how could he do otherwise, even when they did err from the Way? This is why in his concluding remarks to the brethren in Galatia, he writes:

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."  
Galatians 6:1, KJV

What a far cry from his previous attitude when he had deceived himself into believing that he was so good and holy like his pharisaical brethren! I suspect that when Paul wrote his world-renown chapter of 1 Corinthians 13, it may actually have been his public confession of his own personal weakness. Because of the overpowering influence of being a legalistic Pharisee for so many years, since his youth in fact, he must have had to constantly remind himself of his own inadequacies in order to make sure that he tempered everything with love. In fact, this is evident throughout his writings as I point out in the aforementioned article.

If we do find ourselves in the position of having to administer godly correction to someone; and if we do it in a spirit of love and meekness as the Scriptures advise us to do, according to that previous verse which I shared from the Book of Proverbs, if that person's heart is right with the Lord, they are supposed to be thankful that we had enough love for them, that we were willing to take the time to try to help them to see the error of their ways. In fact, the Book of Proverbs also tells us that they are supposed to love us for it. They are not supposed to resist us and argue with us:

"Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee."  
Proverbs 9:8, KJV

"He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue."  
Proverbs 28:23, KJV

You see, a person with a healthy spiritual attitude will say, "Thank you brother for helping me to see the error of my ways. Thank-you for loving me enough that you were willing to leave the ninety and nine and help out this one lost sheep. Thank-you for helping me to not fall over that cliff". Isn't this what Jesus instructed us to do?:

"How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?"  
Matthew 18:12, KJV

Sadly, as the previous verse from Proverbs makes clear, this is not the way things always work out. Our attempts to resolve an issue, or to help a certain brother or sister to gain a needed victory in their life, are often received with resentment. It is for this very reason that we sometimes try to avoid correcting others because we simply do not wish to deal with the mess which we know will inevitably follow once a person's problem has been exposed. Godly correction is hard work. It is a real drain on one's spirit. It can really wear you down; particularly when the person being dealt with is not receiving a single word you have to say; or at least

very little of it. As I pointed out earlier, quite often their pride quickly come to the fore, and they begin to present all of their excuses as to why they are right and you are wrong. Oh, they will come up with what will seem like very logical, rational and valid excuses; but are they acceptable to the Lord?

In the third part of this four-part series, we will be taking a close look at some of the tactics which are used in order to try to resist godly counsel and correction. As you will see, all of these tactics are motivated by nothing more than that loathsome spiritual disease of pride. I hope that you will join me.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

SO YOU REALLY THINK YOU ARE SO HUMBLE? : PART 3

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : October 9, 1998

Last Updated : February 13, 2012

Turning The Tables, The Judge Not Tactic, Sowing Division Through Pride And Exaggeration, The Legalist's Approach, The "You Don't Love Me" Tactic, The Direct Approach, Offended By The Truth, Public Rebuke And Love, Emphasizing The Positive, Time Wasters And Energy Drainers, Spiritual Midgets, False Humility, Spiritual Frigidity And Sterility, Our Struggle

Remember; Satan is very subtle. He has all kinds of tactics which he will use in order to try to defeat you. Sometimes he will use the person being corrected to totally turn the tables on you. They will become an accuser of the saints. Instead of humbly receiving the counsel you are trying to share with them, which is really for their own benefit, they will begin to point out your own errors, some of which will probably be true. But do you see what they have really done? Despite the fact that everything you have told them is true, by putting up their own shield of pride, and then casting their own set of accusatory darts right back at you, they have completely rejected the conviction which the Lord was trying to place upon their heart.

To put it another way, they have used your own personal sins and weaknesses as a red herring in order to justify their not receiving a single word that you have shared with them. Because you aren't perfect enough in their view, they feel that your counsel is either not true, or of little worth to them. Short of God Himself, or Jesus coming down in person to deal with them, they probably won't listen to anyone. They will walk away feeling totally justified that they are right, and that you are wrong. What a bad attitude, and what

a tragic situation!

If there is one accusatory question which has been used as a defense mechanism by both worldly people and Christians more than any other, it has to be "Who are you to judge me? What right do you have to judge me?". Right after this, they will attempt to quote you, or at least paraphrase Jesus' own words found in the seventh chapter of the Gospel of Matthew:

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."  
Matthew 7:1-5, KJV

While the vast majority of people do not know their Bibles, this is one set of verses which they will keep stored in their arsenal of personal defenses. Whenever a brother or a sister tries to point something out to them, out come these big guns! Sadly, because of their inexpertness with the Word of God, these people take the above verses out of context in order to justify their inappropriate behavior, and their rejection of the truth. The Apostle Peter referred to this as wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction:

"As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."  
2 Peter 3:16, KJV

Being as I offer a full explanation of this issue of "judge not" in the article "Exposing the Judge Not Fallacy", I will not go into great detail here. Suffice it to say that the Lord has indeed given His shepherds the responsibility of judging the flocks of God. Moses did it with the children of Israel; the Judges who followed Moses and Joshua did it for over four hundred years; the Prophets who followed them did it for about another thousand years; Peter, Paul and others did it in the New Testament; and we are called to do it today as well. In my view, to use the previous verses to try to negate any form of judgment, correction, or spiritual authority within the body of believers is nothing short of ludicrous. Consider the following example verses which delegate us this authority:

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."  
John 7:24, KJV

"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."  
1 Corinthians 2:15-16, KJV

"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit,

have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,"

1 Corinthians 5:3, KJV

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"

1 Corinthians 6:2-3, KJV

Another tactic Satan will use is to try to exaggerate or to distort the words that have been spoken. He will attempt to blow the situation out of proportion. He will blow his foul breath on the hot coals of pride and try to create a bonfire which will engulf others in your fellowship. He will do his best to sow division and dissension within the fellowship of the Saints so that some members will side with you, while others will side with the person being dealt with. He has been doing it for thousands of years, and he has perfected his tactics. If there are any verses in the Bible which Satan must truly hate, it must surely include the following:

". . . Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Psalms 133:1, KJV

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, KJV

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

1 Corinthians 1:10, KJV

It is in situations like this where other members of your fellowship become involved in the problem, that the full dangers of pride become manifested. You see, while Cancer is indeed a dangerous affliction in the physical sense, pride is an even more dangerous disease in a spiritual sense. Why is this? Quite simply, it's because Cancer is not considered a communicable, or contagious, disease. It normally resides in the body of its victim/host. It is not like the flu, or like chicken pox, or like poison ivy which can spread from one person to the next. Pride, on the other hand, is very contagious. Once it rears its ugly head in one person, it doesn't take long before others are manifesting it as well. What started out as an honest attempt to help out one person, could very easily turn into a serious problem which engulfs the entire fellowship.

Another tactic which some people use in order to try to avoid the conviction of God's Spirit, is to simply become legalists. For example, in their pride they might tell themselves, "Oh, that person just doesn't understand the situation correctly, so I can't possibly accept what they

are saying to me. Their perspective is all wrong. They have totally misunderstood me and don't have all of their facts straight. They are in no position to tell me what is true and what isn't."

If that tactic doesn't work, they might become involved in semantics; that is, in particular words that were used. They might say "That isn't what I really meant"; or "That isn't how I really understood the situation". In other words, they try to argue about what you really meant, as opposed to what they really meant. They try to twist the meanings of words, or else they try to give entirely new definitions to certain words or phrases that were spoken. One worldly example of this which immediately comes to my mind is the current sex scandal surrounding American President Bill Clinton and former White House intern, Monica Lewinsky. I find President Clinton's attempts to save his reputation, and his job, by applying his own definition to the term "sexual relations" absolutely ridiculous. Instead of becoming such a legalist, I think people would respect him more if he just acted like a man and fully accepted responsibility for his actions, come what may.

Another tactic used by certain people when they are being dealt with is to say something like, "Oh, you didn't say that in a very loving spirit, so I can't possibly accept that as being of the Lord!". Or they might say "You just said that to be vindictive! You don't really love me!". They become offended by a particular word or phrase, and thus justify their ignoring the main lesson the Lord might have for them. They say to themselves, "Well, that person used a very poor choice of words; they really offended me; so I can't accept anything they have to say". Instead of seeing the Lord trying to work behind or through that person, because a grain of truth has pierced their heart, they allow their pride to look for any technical reason which will allow them to justify, (at least in their own heart), their not receiving what is being said to them. Sadly, this tactic usually works, because as we have already seen, the Apostle James wrote:

"For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."

James 3:2, KJV

Now, as I mentioned earlier, some of us, like myself, tend to be rather blunt and to the point when we deal with certain people. We don't like to waste our time "beating around the bush" carefully choosing our words so as not to offend anyone. We simply want to make our point, deal with the problem at hand in as Scriptural a manner as possible, and then move on to other issues. When one is dealing with what he believes to be a group of mature Christians, he expects them to be able to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to humbly receive what is being shared with them, without putting up their defensive walls of pride.

This direct kind of approach has its advantages and its disadvantages. Sometimes while in the course of trying to resolve an issue, feelings do get hurt, because you say



things that people do not want to hear about themselves. Sometimes it simply can't be helped. We saw earlier how some of the Lord's Disciples were greatly offended when He gave His "flesh and blood" sermon. He told them the straight Truth, but they weren't able to bear it, so they backslid. It is better to speak the truth and lose one, than not speak the truth and lose all, or at least lead them all astray through compromising the truth. Besides that, some people's pride is so great, that they will be offended no matter what you say, and no matter how softly or how diplomatically you try to say it. Someone somewhere will always be offended. As the old saying goes, you can please all of the people some of the time, and you can please some of the people all of the time; but you can never please all of the people all of the time.

Such people would do well to study the Scriptures. The Lord said and did many things in both the Old and the New Testaments which His critics would clearly label as being unloving or too harsh. If Jesus in fact had to rebuke His own Disciples to their faces on certain occasions, which was clearly for their own good, why should we today expect to be treated any differently when we fall into error? I am reminded of the following verse found in Paul's first Epistle to Timothy:

"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."  
1 Timothy 5:20, KJV

Thus we see that when someone falls into error, whether it be doctrinal error, or a sin of the heart, and it is known to the body as a whole, it is Scripturally sound to rebuke and correct them before all so that everyone may profit from the lesson being taught. We are all familiar with the popular saying, "A wise man learns from his own mistakes, but a wiser man learns from the mistakes of others". While I normally do not quote from sources of worldly wisdom, it is appropriate for this situation as it does agree with Paul's admonition above. In fact, it is in full agreement with the following verse found in the Book of Proverbs:

"Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning."  
Proverbs 9:9, KJV

Let's be honest here for a moment; a public rebuke can be hard on the pride of the person being dealt with, but it is probably exactly what they need in order to put the fear of God back into them. As we read in the Old Testament:

"And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."  
Job 28:28, KJV

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."  
Psalms 111:10, KJV

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."

Proverbs 3:7, KJV

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding."

Proverbs 9:10, KJV

"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil."

Proverbs 16:6, KJV

As with a small child who cannot always see or understand a parent's love for him while he is in the middle of being chastised, Satan may also lie to the person being dealt with at the time, and tell them that they are no longer loved; but this is the furthest thing from the truth. As I have pointed out in other articles, godly chastisement is a form of love. It is when we ignore our child's wrongdoings and don't chastise him, that we show our lack of love. If we really love him, we will correct him, no matter how hard it may be on us to do so. When we are rebuked by one of our spiritual elders in the Lord, we need to remember that it is because they love us, and because they are held accountable by God for our souls. They watch for our souls. It is not because they hate us, or because they don't like us, or because they are simply being vindictive because of something we said to them. These are all lies of Satan. In the Old and the New Testaments, we find the following verses:

"Open rebuke is better than secret love."

Proverbs 27:5, KJV

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Hebrews 12:5, 11, KJV

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Revelation 3:19, KJV

One thing which all of the Lord's shepherd's need to watch out for, is that they don't waste time dealing with the Devil's dirty work any longer than is absolutely necessary. When a problem arises in your fellowship, you need to try to resolve it as quickly and as effectively as possible before it drags down the entire flock. As the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians, we are to strive to emphasize the good and the positive as much as possible:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Philippians 4:8, KJV

Believe me, if you let him, the Devil will keep you tied

down with a certain person and their personal problems for a very long time. He will drain you of your time and your energy, and cause you to neglect your main responsibilities to the flock. The more you try to help some people see the error of their ways, the more they will continue to resist. You will find yourself getting caught up in a war of words with no end in sight. Not only will you personally be affected by it, but your flock will as well. Spiritual fatigue and discouragement will set in; and unless the problem is resolved as quickly as possible, some may even choose to leave the flock in search of greener more peaceful pastures. In some cases, you might even end up becoming physically sick, as may have happened to me recently. I was dealing with about three or four different situations at the same time, besides a certain problem involving my own flesh family; and I suspect that it simply became a little too much for me. My spiritual and my physical resistance were down, and I became quite sick for about three weeks. Thank the Lord that I am finally recovering from my illness.

The bottom line is, because of their pride, some people will always find a way to justify their actions, and refuse to be corrected. They will find some way to derail the real issue, and thus remove the spotlight of God's conviction which has been placed upon their heart. What they don't realize is that the longer they cling to their pride, and stubbornly refuse to accept the lesson which the Lord may be trying to teach them, the longer their spiritual growth will be stunted. While those around them might be growing in their relationship with the Lord and with each other, these problem cases will remain spiritual midgets by their own choice. So do you see who the real losers are in these kinds of situations? They are. Sadly, they can use these very same tactics over and over again every time they are dealt with, and they will probably work; but they will never grow.

By now, I am sure you are fully aware of the dangers of yielding to our pride. At this point you may even be asking yourself, "Well, exactly how is one supposed to rid himself of his pride?". As I pointed out earlier in this series, amongst some deluded Christians, one common approach is to simply pretend that they no longer have it. The way they do this is by feigning false humility. Just like the Scribes and the Pharisees of old, they try to be very careful with their words so that they appear to others to be very humble and very pious. They also tend to do certain things, or to act in a certain way which gives others the false impression that they are godly and humble; however, in the Gospel of Matthew, we find the Lord saying the following concerning such hypocrites:

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."  
Matthew 6:1-2, KJV

"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.

Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."  
Matthew 6:5, KJV

"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."  
Matthew 6:16-18, KJV

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."  
Matthew 23:25-28, KJV

Clearly then, this is not the way to truly be humble. Acting in this way is simply a proud, pretentious, sickening show of false humility! All of these things done by the religious elders of Israel were merely self-righteous works of the flesh which did not draw them closer to God, but only to themselves and to their own egos. Sadly, Christianity today is full of these very same things. A number of people have written to me telling me how, even though they have been church-goers for many years, something seems to be seriously lacking in their fellowship. While their members appear to be pious, there is a certain spiritual coldness which keeps everyone distanced from each other. In one of His Endtime sermons, Jesus prophesied of this coldness when He said:

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."  
Matthew 24:12, KJV

In other words, because sin and evilness shall abound in the Earth in the Last Days, many people will grow cold towards each other. This is something which none of us can deny. As I point out in other articles, many of us don't even know the names of our neighbors who live down the street from us, or even across the hallway in the same apartment building. We are total strangers to each other. As we have seen throughout this series, one of the chief sins which is prevalent in our lives today, is pride. Pride, inflated egos, and self images we feel we must preserve, strengthen this spiritual coldness which abounds in the world today; and our churches are not immune to it. In fact, I will go as far to say that pride even creates frigidity in our personal sexual relationships; and that if you realize that we are symbolically the Bride of Christ, it is easy to see how it can also affect our relationship with the Lord and with each other. Pride can make us spiritually sterile so that we cannot bare fruit for the Kingdom of God. Our pride simply will not allow us to humbly yield ourselves to the Lord as we know we should.

So perhaps our real question should not be, "How do I get rid of my pride?", but rather "How do I learn to be truly humble?". From the Old Testament, all the way through the New Testament, we are clearly and repeatedly told that we are to walk humbly before the Lord our God. For example, consider some of the following key verses:

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."  
Psalms 34:18, KJV

"Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility."  
Proverbs 18:12, KJV

". . . but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."  
Isaiah 66:2b, KJV

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."  
Matthew 5:3, KJV

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."  
Matthew 5:5, KJV

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."  
Matthew 11:29, KJV

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."  
Matthew 18:4, KJV

"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."  
Matthew 23:11-12, KJV

"But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."  
Mark 10:43-45, KJV

Over and over again we are told to be humble, to practice humility, to esteem our brethren more than ourselves. How do we do this when our ego wants us to do the exact opposite? How do we resist our pride and make ourselves humble? The simple truth of the matter is that we cannot make ourselves humble no matter how hard we try. We cannot be humble of our own accord. We can try to be humble, and we might even convince ourselves that we have actually succeeded at it for a short time, but others will see right through it; just as Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of the Scribes and the Pharisees of old. We can consciously make efforts to take the lower seat as Jesus and His Disciples advised us to do, but believe me, it won't last for very long. Sooner or later we will grow tired of this vain work of the flesh, and we will be back to our old selves again. Not only that, but we will

probably end up more discouraged than ever, thinking that we are just one hopeless case; which we are, without Jesus.

So what is the solution to this problem? Is there really a solution? Obviously there must be; otherwise the Bible would not instruct us so many times to be humble. The Lord is not in the habit of placing a stumbling block in the way of His children. There is a way out of this predicament, just as there is a way out of every trial that we face; for as the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."  
1 Corinthians 10:13, KJV

The Lord will not ask us to go where He Himself has not gone before; and that is actually part of the answer right there. To be humble, we must first understand what it actually means to be humble. As you will see in the final part of this series, the world's definition of what it means to be humble is very different from how God views humility. By looking at the life of Christ, we will come to a full understanding of godly humility. I hope that you will join me.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

SO YOU REALLY THINK YOU ARE SO HUMBLE? : PART 4

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : October 9, 1998

Last Updated : February 13, 2012

Defining True Humility, Wedding Feast And Being Clothed With Humility, Humility Lowliness And Submission, Our Daily Cross Under-Cover Christians, Christ's Humble Example, The Mind Of Christ, Faith But No Works?, Mighty Hand Of God, In The Mud! Rebellion Of King Saul, One Of Two Masters, Self-Idolatry, Cloak Of Humility, Grace To Obey, Brotherly Submission, What We Need When We Need It, Yes No Or Wait, Satan's Reprobates, The Muslim Deception, Fruit Of Humility, Closing Remarks

Believe it or not, most people do not understand true humility according to the Biblical definition. Quite often we hear the phrase, "he grew up in humble surroundings". The immediate picture which forms in our mind, is that the person in question grew up in a poor environment. Maybe his mother stayed home with the seven children, while dad was forced to work at two low-paying job because that is all his education could get him. Or perhaps we think of someone who

grew up the slum or ghetto of some major city in the world. Well, Biblically-speaking, this is not what it means to be humble. Sometimes we also hear it said of a certain person, "he is really a humble soul". The implication is that the person is probably soft-spoken and self-effacing. They often give the credit to others for things which they have accomplished. These kinds of people can be humble, but this still is not a full accurate description of true humility according to the Bible. As the following two verses reveal, being humble is actually a mental and a spiritual attitude which one must acquire:

"Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:"  
Acts 20:19, KJV

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."  
Philippians 2:3, KJV

In the above verses, the words "humility" and "lowliness" are derived from the same Greek word "tapeinophrosune", pronounced tap-i-nof-ros-oo'-nay, which means to have a humble opinion of one's self, or a deep sense of one's moral littleness. It is also described as modesty, humility or lowliness of mind. Exactly how does one go about acquiring this attitude of humility? As we saw earlier, it cannot be a self-righteous work of the flesh, any more than the gift of Salvation can be a self-righteous work of the flesh. It may surprise you to know that the way we receive humility is similar to the way we received our Salvation. In my article "The Gospel of Thomas: Introspection Or Heaven-spection?", I share the Lord's parable concerning the man who entered the wedding feast without a wedding garment. I then explain that the garment is symbolic of the righteousness of the Saints as is explained in the Book of Revelation. The garment which this man failed to wear is synonymous with the white linen worn by the Bride of Christ at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. The following verses confirm this fact:

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."  
Revelation 3:5, KJV

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."  
Revelation 3:18, KJV

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;"  
Revelation 7:9, KJV

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the

righteousness of saints."  
Revelation 19:8, KJV

As all Christians know, this righteousness comes only through faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and no other way. We cannot merit it through our own "good" works as the following verses clearly demonstrate:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."  
Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"  
Titus 3:5, KJV

Just as the Lord is the one who chooses to clothe us with Salvation, He is also the one who chooses to clothe us with humility, because we, by our own sinful nature, desire the exact opposite. Just like the man who proudly thought he could sneak into the Wedding Supper by doing things his own way, in our pride, we also want to be our own boss. We want to run our own lives. We want to rule the Earth our own way without any help from God. Sadly, the past six thousand years clearly reveal what happens when we try to do things our way, instead of submitting ourselves to The Boss and doing things His way. Notice in the following two sets of verses that not only are we told that we must be clothed in humility, but we are told exactly how the process works:

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."  
James 4:6-10, KJV

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"  
1 Peter 5:5-6, KJV

In the previous verses, the first word "humble" is derived from the same Greek root word as the two words we looked at earlier; "humility" and "lowliness". This is the word "tapeinos", pronounced tap-i-nos', which means not rising far from the ground, of low degree, brought low with grief, depressed, lowly in spirit, humble. In the same verses, the word "submit" is derived from the Greek word "hupotasso", which is pronounced hoop-ot-as'-so. This word means to arrange under, to subordinate, to put in subjection or to subject one's self, to obey or to submit to one's control, to yield to one's admonition or advice. The second word "humble" is derived from almost the same Greek word as the



first. It is the word "tapeinoo", which is pronounced tap-i-no'-o. This word means to make low or bring low, to bring into a humble condition, to assign a lower rank or place, to abase, to bring down one's pride, to have a modest opinion of one's self, to behave in an unassuming manner devoid of all haughtiness.

As can be seen by the previous definitions, in the Biblical context, the words "humility", "lowliness" and "submission" basically mean the very same thing. They are all comparative words. One person's status is being compared with that of another. For we Christians, our status is being compared with God's status. Humility is synonymous with submission, and submission is synonymous with humility. We cannot submit to God's Will unless we are humble, and we are not humble unless we submit to God's Will; and that is the key to overcoming our pride. God cannot clothe us with humility unless we surrender our minds, our hearts, our lives, our wills and our pride to Him. As Paul beautifully states in his Epistle to the Romans, and as I clearly explain in my article "What is God's Will for My Life?", to find God's Will, we must begin with no will of our own, other than to want to do His Will. We must deny ourselves and take up our symbolic cross daily, as Jesus said, and present our bodies a living sacrifice in daily service to others. Consider the following verses:

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."  
Luke 9:23-24, KJV

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."  
Romans 12:1-2, KJV

This daily submission to God's Will, this daily humbling ourselves before our Creator in order to fulfill His plan and His purpose for our lives, is half of the solution. As we have already seen, the problem is that most of us simply do not want to do this. We all want the benefits of our Salvation, but then most of us stop right there. We don't want to have to give up our comfortable selfish lives of materialistic living. We say we are Christians, but many of us are only under-cover Christians. No one else knows that we are Christians except we ourselves; and of course those who may attend the same fellowship as we do. The rest of the world can't tell the difference; because most of us continue to act and live exactly the same as we did before our day of Salvation. In other words, we keep doing things our own way instead of God's way. Totally contrary to Jesus' words, we hide our light under a bushel; so we are truly under-cover Christians:

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put

it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16, KJV

Naturally, the Lord isn't too happy about this situation. Consider the facts. Our Lord was willing to leave His Heavenly Estate in order to come down to Earth, and to take on the form of lowly human flesh. During the final years of His life, He was willing to be scoffed at and to be publicly humiliated. Ultimately, during the final day of His life, He was willing to be horribly tortured, and then to die an agonizing death on the Cross. The Apostle Paul summed it up quite well when he wrote:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;"  
Philippians 2:5-10, KJV

There are some very important things I would like you to notice here. First of all, notice that exactly as we saw in the verses from James' Epistle, Paul also equates humility to submission and obedience. He says of Christ, "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death". The Greek word used here is the very same one we saw earlier. It is the word "tapeinoo". If it still isn't clear to you, that word "servant" is derived from the Greek "doulos", pronounced doo'-los, which means a slave, bondman, or man of servile condition. Jesus Christ became His Father's slave. He bowed Himself in submission to His Father's Will, even to the death of the Cross. He obeyed. So again we see that true humility is simply a spiritual attitude of being submissive to the Will of God. Paul tells us that Jesus agonized over His decision to do His Father's Will. Even though He was the Son of God, He was in weak human flesh; and it was not easy for Him to contemplate the immense pain and suffering which He would soon experience:

"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;"  
Hebrews 5:7-8, KJV

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."  
Romans 5:19, KJV

It should now be clear to you that true humility is a mental attitude of knowing who is the Real Boss in your life. It is knowing who is in control of your life; and it is obeying and reverencing Him, and doing His Will, and not your own.

This is precisely why Paul starts out those verses in Philippians by stating "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus". He is telling us that we need to have the same spiritual attitude towards our Heavenly Father as did Christ; which he then goes on to explain in more detail. That phrase "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" is synonymous with those two phrases we read earlier; "all humility of mind" and "in lowliness of mind". This is precisely what the Lord was referring to when He spoke the following verses found at the end of the eleventh chapter of Matthew:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30, KJV

When Jesus said that He was meek and lowly in heart, He meant that He was submissive to His Father's Will. He wasn't talking about being soft-spoken. Our Lord was anything but soft-spoken. Time and time again He blasted the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees. That word "lowly" is derived from one of the words we have already discussed before; "tapeinos". Jesus knew who had rightful authority over His life. He was comparing His status with that of His Father's. He had no doubts concerning what was expected of Him as His Father's slave who had come down to the Earth to take upon Himself the sins of the wicked world. Throughout the four Gospels, the Lord emphasized over and over again the importance of doing His Father's Will, and not His own. Consider these verses:

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 7:21, KJV

"For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

Mark 3:35, KJV

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

John 4:34, KJV

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:38-40, KJV

This was and continues to be the mind of Christ; to humbly submit ourselves to the Will of God. Let me say it again; submission and obedience equal humility. In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, when Paul is discussing the difference between the attitude of the people of the world

who only seek to do their own will, and the attitude of the born-again believers, he states in part:

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

1 Corinthians 2:12-16, KJV

You see, no matter how you understand those verses, to be instructed of God, or even to instruct others in the ways of God, we must first have the mind of Christ; which means that we must be submitted to the Will of God in our own lives first, just as Christ was. Sadly, when most of us hear this call to humble submission, we tend to say, "Thanks Lord for the Gift of Salvation, but that is all that I really want from You; and that is all that I am willing to do for you in return". We may call Him Lord and Saviour, but do we really do the things that He asks of us? Do we submit to Him in all humility? Surely, the following verses speak to all of our hearts:

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Luke 6:46, KJV

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

James 2:26, KJV

Well, our Heavenly Father is a very wise Father, and He has a way of helping us to finally see the light; and in this case, that light is knowing that "Father Knows Best"; and I am not talking about Robert Young who played the 1950's - 60's television character!

Earlier I shared some verses from Peter's second Epistle in which he stated in part "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time". As we have already seen in this series, this is a lesson which proud Peter certainly learned through his own bitter experiences. In fact, not only did all of the first Apostles and their successors have to learn this valuable lesson, but every man and woman of God must learn it before the Lord is able to effectively use them. In the Christian world today, sometimes when we see the Lord's Hand in a picture or a painting, it is resting on someone's shoulder as He leads them up the Path of Life. They are usually seen walking side by side as friends; for as Jesus Himself said:

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

John 15:15, KJV

However, if we are proud and rebellious, that Hand might not always be resting lightly on our shoulder in an encouraging way. Sometimes, in a figurative sense, that "mighty hand of God" might be pushing down on us quite heavily. In fact, the Lord might have His Hands on both of our shoulders as He sternly but lovingly forces us to bow to His Will. If we stubbornly continue to resist what He knows is best for us, He might just decide to give us a real swat so that we take a nosedive into the mud! Sometimes, it is only after we have repeatedly fallen flat on our faces due to our pride, and our stubbornness in wanting to do things our own way, that we can finally humbly look up out of the mud and ask the Lord for His help. Consider the following verses:

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."  
Proverbs 16:18, KJV

"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."  
Psalms 40:2, KJV

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."  
Proverbs 3:5-6, KJV

This process of being swatted down by the Lord may be one of the hardest ways, but it is definitely also one of the best ways to learn true humility and submission to God's Will. I should point out though, that it doesn't always bear the good fruit that the Lord is hoping for. This is because it is not often that the Lord will override human free will. As we saw earlier, God resists the proud. If we continue to resist His Will for our lives, especially to where our poor example of humility is being detrimental to the overall work of the Lord, He may just choose to dispose of us and throw us on His scrapheap. Proud King Saul was one such case. He resisted and he resisted; and God did not take it lightly! Saul was responsible for the welfare of an entire nation. When the showdown finally came, the Lord had the Prophet Samuel say to Saul:

"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king."  
1 Samuel 15:22-23, KJV

Those are very strong words! Because of his stubborn rebellious heart, and his utter refusal to do things God's way instead of his own way, Saul lost the kingdom. But why in the world would the Lord compare rebellion to witchcraft, and stubbornness to idolatry? The answer to this question is found in several other verses found throughout the Bible. In the Lord's Eyes, there are really only two basic choices:

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:"  
Deuteronomy 30:19, KJV

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."  
Joshua 24:15, KJV

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."  
1 Kings 18:21, KJV

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."  
Matthew 6:24, KJV

In short, we are either serving El Shaddai, the Almighty God, or else we are serving Satan, regardless of what local name he may go by. To rebel against God's Will in our lives is akin to witchcraft because it is devil worship. It is either one or the other. As popular American music artist Bob Dylan once sang, "Now it may be the devil, or it may be the Lord, but you gotta serve somebody"; and that is the absolute truth! Either we are serving the God of Heaven by humbly submitting ourselves to His Will in daily sacrifice to others, or else we are serving the god of this world; Satan; the prince of the power of the air who works in all of the children of disobedience:

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."  
2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"  
Ephesians 2:2, KJV

But why does the Lord have the Prophet Samuel compare stubbornness to idolatry? The answer which immediately came to my mind is that when we stubbornly refuse to follow God's Will for our life, we are in effect idolizing ourselves. We are idolizing our own mind, our own wisdom, our own plans, and our own ego. Like Satan, because of our pride, we think that we know better than God Himself. We become gods in our own minds; but these are all false gods; and thus it is idolatry in the Lord's Eyes. Both Jesus and the Apostle James exposed the folly of making our own plans which may be contrary to the Lord's plans when they said:

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Matthew 6:34, KJV

"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil."

James 4:13-16, KJV

As a final note on the sad story of King Saul, you might find it interesting to know that because of his pride and his stubbornness, Saul did in fact choose the way of death as Moses had spoken hundreds of years before. It was shortly after Saul's fall from grace that both he and his sons died in battle at the hands of their Philistine enemies.

Normally, however, I don't believe that the Lord employs such strong measures, unless we are extremely important to His overall Work. I tend to believe that His normal mode of operation is to let us stubbornly go our own way until we learn through our own sufferings, brought on by our own stupid mistakes, that He truly knows what is best for us. As with Christ, it is through our sufferings and breaking that we truly learn obedience and submission. It is in this way that He strips us of our cloak of pride, and places upon our shoulders the mantle of humility. It is His doing, and not our own. It is simply not a human trait to want to be clothed in humility.

What is interesting about the Lord's humbling and breaking process, is that the more we yield ourselves to our Father's Will, the easier it becomes for us to continue to submit to His Will. This is because, as I shared earlier from the Epistle of James, ". . . he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble". In short, He will give us the grace to obey, once we show our desire, and put forth our effort to obey. The Apostle Paul taught the very same thing. He wrote:

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

2 Corinthians 12:9, KJV

In addition, as James also wrote, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you". So the more effort we make to do what is right in His sight, instead of stubbornly doing what we want to do, the easier it becomes for everyone involved. Finally, James states, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up". As we continue to submit ourselves to Him, He will honour our obedience and lift us up; presumably above our brethren; perhaps as He did with Joseph and his eleven brethren. As I said earlier, Peter taught the same thing when he wrote:

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"  
1 Peter 5:5-6, KJV

Notice that walking humbly before the Lord by submitting ourselves to His Will, has an exponential effect. The more we submit to God's Will in our lives, the easier it also becomes for us to submit to those who may have spiritual authority in our lives, whether it be our own husband, or our parents, or perhaps spiritual elders in our particular Christian fellowship, whatever form it may take. In short, we can only yield to each other in direct proportion to how much we are yielded to the Lord. We cannot possibly say we are yielded to our Heavenly Father as long as we remain unyielded to our spiritual overseers here on the Earthly plane.

Now that you have read this series, you should have a clear understanding of what it truly means to be humble according to God's Holy Word. Being humble does not just mean growing up in poor surroundings as the world would have us to believe. Being humble does not just mean being soft-spoken and self-effacing. There are many poor people in the world who are soft-spoken and self-effacing, but this does not necessarily mean that they are humble; that is, submitted to God's Will in their lives. Many of these people are very hard-hearted and either don't believe in God, or else they don't have very much respect for Him. Being humble does not just mean performing outward acts of piety for all to see such as some modern Christians tend to do.

I am now going to share with you a short true-life story which clearly demonstrates some of these points. While I was working on the last part of this series, the Lord reminded me of a small incident which occurred to me just a few days ago. Sometimes the Lord allows certain incidents to happen to us which we do not understand at the moment they occur; however, if we are patient, sooner or later He will reveal His purpose and His plan to us. As we read in the Book of Isaiah:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."  
Isaiah 55:8-9, KJV

As some of my readers know, whenever I am out in public, I always try to remember to take my little nylon waist pouch with me. I actually refer to it as my "seed pouch" because it contains my "Gospel seeds"; that is, my homemade Gospel tracts. Whether I am at the store, or waiting at the bus stop, or at the post office, or standing in line waiting to take care of personal business, I try to pass out a few tracts. Sometimes I'll pass out up to perhaps fifty tracts during one outing. On this particular day, I was having an usually rough time. Things were just not going as easily as I had expected; and I was a bit frustrated and moody. Well, I finally finished taking care of my personal business and



was waiting at the bus stop for the shuttle to arrive.

While there are normally a lot of people at this particular bus stop to whom I can witness, at that time there were only two persons; a man and a woman. As is my way, I offered both of them a tract to read. In the short conversation that followed, I discovered that, according to them, they were both homeless. The man was the first to speak; and he informed me that he had been praying for fifteen years for the Lord to provide him with a place to live; however, as far as I could tell, his attitude was not one of brokenness and humility, but rather it seemed more like he was judging God for not taking better care of him. I recall that at several points in our conversation, he said something like, "I need money. Why doesn't God give me money?". Again, I did not sense any sincerity in his words; and more than that, I did not sense any godly fear or reverence either.

The only thing the Lord gave me to share with this man, was something which I have learned myself through personal experience; and that is that the Lord always gives us what we need, when we need it. Sadly, I seriously doubt that he even understood what I meant by that statement. As I shared earlier in this series:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."  
1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

That man was probably thinking to himself, "Well, if God gives us what we need when we need it, then why don't I have a place to live or any money? I've been praying for fifteen years!". You see, the witness of the Spirit I received, is that if this man truly had been praying for fifteen long years, which I honestly doubt, it certainly wasn't with the right attitude. I don't believe that God is so limited in power that He requires fifteen years to answer a prayer if He truly wants to answer it. As I also told this man, God usually answers yes, no or wait. What I basically was trying to tell him without offending him, was that God had indeed given him exactly what he needed at the moment, but that he simply failed to recognize it. It seemed to me that through his homelessness and his poverty, the Lord was trying to break his proud, haughty and accusatory spirit. The Lord was waiting for him to stop praying "Lord, why haven't you provided for me? What's wrong with you Lord?" and start humbly praying, "Please forgive me for my pride and other sins in my life, and for accusing you falsely. Please provide for me Lord". The latter is a true attitude of humility before our Creator, and not the former.

The homeless woman, if she was indeed homeless, surprised me even more. She was standing very close to the other man, and had heard every word that I had spoken to him. Upon giving her a tract, she noticed the addresses on the back of it and quipped, "What's this, a gimmick?". I tried to explain to her that there was no gimmick, and that no one was asking her for any money. She was just as hostile in attitude as the man; and after a few short exchanges, she told me that she believed that God makes mistakes. Although she didn't come right out and say it directly, the implication seemed

to be that God had made a mistake with her by allowing her to become homeless. This statement really surprised me, so I asked her again, and she confirmed that this was truly what she believed; that is, that God makes mistakes; that He is not perfect. As Christians, we all know that this simply is not true. God does not make mistakes. As I have quoted many times before:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28, KJV

I immediately sensed that she was just like the man in her attitude, and that nothing I would say was going to make her think any differently. That this woman would even say such a thing, clearly showed me that, like the man, she had no real fear of the Lord; and I was very candid with them both and told them so. After making her outrageous statement, this woman then tried to lecture me on how to be a good listener in order to properly witness to people. I quickly realized that I was dealing with two of Satan's reprobates who were simply trying to give me a hard time and discourage me even further. Well, as some of you know, Jesus specifically told us to not cast our pearls before swine; that is, to not share His Word with the unworthy who really don't wish to receive it:

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

Matthew 7:6, KJV

So, following the Lord's advice, I decided to take my leave by going to the other side of the bus shelter. Within a few minutes, an elderly man sat down next to me, and we began to engage in friendly conversation. As I think about it now, I don't know where he came from, as I don't recall seeing anyone else at the bus stop while I was talking with those two people; although he could have approached unawares to me from an angle outside of my view. At any rate, he knew what we had been talking about, and immediately began to talk to me about free moral agency and our pre-existence in the Heavenly Realm. I don't doubt that we would have had a very interesting conversation; but alas, my bus arrived and I had to leave him with the words still in his mouth; but not before apologizing to him for my quick departure.

No doubt you can see how this incident with these two poor people is relevant to this current series. It is truly amazing to me how the Lord often allows certain incidents to occur in my life, which He knows will later find their way into an article. This story is a prime example of how the world defines things vastly different from the way the Lord sees them. A worldly mind might view these people as two poor humble persons who were the sad victims of certain circumstances which had occurred in their lives; in God's Eyes, however, I seriously doubt that He sees anything humble about them whatsoever. In fact, as I have already stated, I would think that He would be very upset by their proud defiant attitudes. These kinds of experiences are supposed to break and humble us, and not make us bitter and

even more rebellious against the Lord.

As a final small example of how twisted worldly views are compared to what we are taught in the Bible, consider the Islamic faith. As I point out in my controversial series "Holy Qur'an and Islam: A Doctrine Of Devils?", the word "muslim" -- or "moslem" if you prefer -- actually means one who submits himself to the Will of God. This is a very big thing with the Muslims. It is something of which they are extremely proud; however, if you read the aforementioned article, you will quickly realize that the last thing the Muslims do is submit themselves to the Will of God in all humility. In fact, they are in open rebellion against God's Will. As we saw earlier in this series, God's highest Will for all men everywhere, regardless of ethnic origin, is that they accept the Sacrifice of His dear Son for the remission of their sins. As Jesus said:

". . . This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."  
John 6:29b, KJV

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."  
John 6:40, KJV

Despite this Universal Truth, while Muslims claim to accept Jesus Christ as a great prophet, their holy book, the Qur'an, is full of verses which deny His Divine Sonship. It repeats over and over again that God does not have a Son, and that Jesus did not die for the sins of the world. He was only a prophet like Moses, but not the Saviour of the world. In fact, Muslims are taught that Muhammad -- or Mohammed -- is the greatest prophet who has ever lived. So tell me, how is it that the Muslims can claim to be submitted to the Will of God when they deny the most basic Truth of the entire Bible? It is all a lie. It is a deception. They can claim to be humble; they can claim to be submitted to the Will of God; but don't you believe it!

Before concluding this series, let me ask you; what about you? Do you really think that you are so humble? Do you truly believe that you are submitted to God's Will in your life? Or are you so full of pride that you rebel against the Lord, and complain against the Lord? Do you know how to humbly submit to godly correction through your brethren in the Lord when God requires it of you? Remember, as Jesus said in the Gospel of Matthew:

"Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."  
Matthew 7:20, KJV

If you are truly humble, that is, yielded to the Lord, it will be manifested in your life in some way. It will bear positive fruit for His Kingdom. This means that not only will it bear good fruit in your personal life, but more importantly, you will bear positive lasting fruit in the lives of others; for as Jesus said:

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your

fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."  
John 15:16, KJV

As we have now seen, if there is one thing which can stand in our way of being what God truly wants us to be, and if there is one thing which can separate us from our brethren in the Lord, it is our own pride. Pride is a spiritual growth inhibitor, and not a growth stimulant. It causes us to fall down, and not to sprout upwards; although in the long run, what may appear to be a fall downwards in our eyes, God can indeed turn into great victory, if we learn the lessons He is trying to teach us. I also discuss the topic of following the Lord's path more fully in the article "Are You Clean Every Whit?". I encourage you to read it when you have the chance.

In closing, I pray that this series will serve as a catalyst to motivate all of us to truly search our hearts. I pray that it will convict all of us to be more humble servants of the Lord who strive to do His Will, and not our own. If you personally are not sure what God's Will is for your life, or if you do not know how to find God's Will for your life, allow me to again encourage you to read the article "What Is God's Will For My Life?". It will offer you some sound Scriptural advice for making sure that you are in the center of His Will. If you are, then His Word promises us;

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."  
Psalms 37:4, KJV

Lest some of you feel a bit discouraged after reading this series, please remember that none of us have arrived yet. None of us have attained. None of us have apprehended as Paul wrote. We are all still vessels in the making. We are still "under construction". We have not yet been perfected. We still have problems with our pride and with other sins of the flesh which we must battle against daily. As long as we are in this life, the Lord will continue to break and to mold us into the people that He wants us to be. As far as I can tell, this is a life-long process which may not even end at physical death. As I have suggested in other articles, we may have to continue learning on the next level. Just please remember, the Lord does not expect perfection in the flesh. What He does expect is that we have willing minds and hearts to do His Will. This is true humility. This is true submission. I pray that this series has been instructional, and a blessing in your life.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>