

What We Think about Others

In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than herself. ~Philippians 2:3

Scripture Reading: Philippians 2:1-11

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Introduction: *Take the mind of Christ. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus when it comes to others. This Mind will bring healing and unity to your relationships. The "Mind" of Christ means the attitude of Christ. Attitude is how we choose to frame our experiences and view people. An attitude to serve others is the heart of Jesus Christ.*

Humility in Relationships

Be kindly affectionate to one another. ~Romans 12:10 Why? Because everyone you meet is fighting a battle. All of us are fighting battles, and we desperately need all the help and kindness we can get—not only from God but from others.

The Bible is not only a book about redemption; it's also a book about relationships, and it's filled with truths for making our relationships work. Since God designed relationships, it makes sense to read His Word about how to navigate them.

We have two relationships to consider: Our relationship with Jesus Christ; and our relationship with others. These two relationships should shape our day. And there is one word about relationships that stands above all else—**humility**. We can't love people, especially difficult people, by our own strength. So the Holy Spirit helps us look at people the way the Lord Jesus does—in love and grace.

Jesus Christ's Humility

*"It is important that we know who Christ is, especially the chief characteristic that is the root and essence of His character as our Redeemer. There can be but one answer: it is His **humility**."* ~Andrew Murray, *Humility*

The Lord Jesus, God of very God, gives outward expression of His **humility** in becoming the servant of all. He was just as much God while on earth as He was before He came and He is now. But His humanity was the only way he would express Himself as a servant to us.

The God of the universe left heaven, where He was glorified and worshiped, and spent His time on earth taking care of people, sinlessly and in the power of the Holy Spirit, comforting others, encouraging others, washing disciples' feet, and pouring Himself out as a drink offering to a dry and thirsty people.

The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. ~Matthew 20:28

But even more than serving others, He came to save others from their sin. God created us, and we rebelled which separated us from God, and we fell short of His Glory. Only God can save us. So Jesus became the **perfect sacrifice**. The **perfect God** had to become the **perfect Man** to offer the **perfect sacrifice** to make us **perfect** and live with God forever. And that required humiliation.

The Lord Jesus became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross—the kind of death meted out to criminals. *“For God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”* ~2 Corinthians 5:2

*Therefore God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name. The One who was servant is now promoted to the highest place ever conceived. Could it be that our position in heaven will be determined by our humility on earth? *Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He might exalt you in due time.* ~1 Peter 5:6*

What is humility? *Not to think of [herself] more highly than [she] ought to think.* ~Romans 12:3.

Humility is nothing more or less than an accurate sense of self. I am a sinner saved by God's grace, perfectly loved, known, and accepted by God. I have not earned nor do I deserve God's favor or eternal life, *for by grace [I] have been saved through faith, and not of [myself], it is the gift of God, not of works, let I should boast* ~Ephesians 2:8-9.

Salvation is by grace through faith—a gift of God—not by my good works. And that humbles me.

What Humility Is Not: *“I am wonderful, marvelous, extra-special, outrageous, surprising, superlative—and, above all . . . humble.”*

Genuine humility is attractive to others.

People who are humble usually don't realize it. Anytime you begin to notice you're humble, it's easy to take pride in that.

Humility is an art of communication.

If anyone could focus on talking, it would be the Lord Jesus because He knows all the answers. He asked questions of people more than talked. **Humble people are more interested in knowing what the other person thinks.** They treat the person with respect and dignity when they listen because it shows they value their thoughts.

Humility in Counseling Others

Be very careful how you counsel others. Humility is to recognize that in relationships, I don't have to be the one with all the answers. Do not be so glib as to think you have found God's hidden purpose behind your friend's trial. There are matters we shall never understand in this world; nothing is gained by thinking we can read God's diary. Better to approach counsel with **humility** than overwrought confidence.

"I don't know the answer to your "why" question, nor can I explain what God is doing in your life, but we can pray about it."

What do you need in your trial today? You need a friend. And you have the best Friend, the Lord Jesus.

But you also need a human friend who knows all about you and will stick with you. And that's the way the Lord Jesus planned it. There are times we cannot get rid of our problems alone—and that's why God gave us friends. *Pray for one another.* ~Colossians 1:9-12

And we need the Body of Christ . . . a safe place where we are all sinners, and we know it, and all hurting, and we know it . . . and we find God leads us to others who walk with us through hard things. We *"bear one another's burdens."* The church should be a place where we are **fully known** and **fully loved**, for **we grow in an atmosphere of love**, the fruit of the Spirit, 1 Corinthians 13, Christ-like kind of love. *"Through love serve one another."*

~Galatians 5:13

The opposite of humility is pride: *"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.*

~James 4:6

Pride is spiritual cancer; it eats up the very possibility of love or contentment or even common sense in our life" (C.S. Lewis). Every single one of us has had struggles with pride at one time or another. We can have the stronghold of **pride** and not even know it nor recognize it.

Pride focuses on the failures of others; or has a critical, fault-finding attitude; or has to prove you are right and have the last word. Or **pride** can camouflage itself as spirituality or hard work. We get delusional about who should get the credit . . . the Lord or I.

Pride shows up in comparisons: We live in a culture of comparisons, thinking we deserve better. *Comparing [ourselves] among [ourselves] is not wise* ~2 Corinthians 10:12.

We spend a lot of energy focusing on other people's lives instead of our own. What does **pride** do in our relationships? We envy. "*Comparison is the thief of joy*" (Teddy Roosevelt).

How should younger women deal with comparisons? You are worthy of being loved for who you are. You don't need to be MORE ANYTHING (smart, pretty, outgoing, interesting) to be worthy of God's love and acceptance. "*You are fearfully and wonderfully made, knit together in your mother's womb by the Creator of the universe; made in His image, and inherently worthy of love regardless of your strengths or limitations.*" ~Psalm 139: 13-14

Humility helps to focus on gratitude and grace. "*God gives grace to the humble.*" Remind yourself that God is good. You have unique experiences and unique gifts and capacity to love others; and a capacity to serve and contribute in your own way—all by God's grace.

Thoughts for younger (and older) women:

1. Don't put someone else down to pull yourself up.
2. Focus on God's plan for your life and your uniqueness.
3. Serve others rather than comparing yourself with others.
4. Think on things that are true. ~Philippians 4:8

Humility in Singleness

Being single is good; being married is good. It all depends on how God leads you. ~1 Corinthians 7:1-2

Singleness is not Plan B. There are great things in singleness and hard things in singleness, just as in marriage. Your relationship status (married or single) is not the biggest thing about you—the most important thing is your relationship with Jesus Christ and your identity in Him.

We are called to give of ourselves to others, where we are the hands and feet of our Savior. It's the posture of **humility** that models Jesus Christ. Our life is shaped by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And you can live out the Gospel every day wherever the Lord leads you. **God is shaping your story—a "love story."**

If you come to the place where dating is a possibility, consider a man who is **humble** and **teachable**, for every character quality is wrapped in those two areas. A posture of **humility** models Jesus Christ. When you say, "I don't have all the answers. That's why I need Jesus Christ, His Word, and His Spirit to guide me"—you are **teachable**.

Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. ~Hebrews 12:1-2

Many conversations have to occur to really know the person and his attitude toward the Lord. And then watch if his behavior aligns with what he says. You will then discover if you're moving in the **same direction** and with the **same mind**—the Mind of Christ. You want someone who is running the **same "race"** as you, so you don't have to drag him into the race. But if he's already in the race, you can be confident you're moving in the right direction and then see how God leads.

Humility in Marriage

*"Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but **one flesh**."*

~Matthew 19:4-5

God has made husbands and wives different, so He can make them one in marriage. Because of differences, we're bound to face conflict, but the Bible shows us how to handle these conflicts. I think that's why God brings opposites together . . . to cause us to depend on Him to work through the relationship.

The Power of Our Words: *Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary **edification**, that it may impart **grace** to the hearers. ~Ephesians 4:29*

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue; and those who love it will eat its fruit."

~Proverbs 18:21

We can bring life to our marriage or kill our marriage by our words. If you don't like the way your marriage is headed, consider how you and your husband communicate. In marriage, we have so many conversations during the years; it's easy to forget to use edifying, "grace"-filled words.

Love and Respect: *Husbands, **love** your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her . . . and let the wife see that she **respects** her husband. ~Ephesians 5:25*

Regarding husbands, studies show:

1. **I want to be respected:** Three out of four men have said they would rather feel unloved than disrespected. **Respect is not a feeling—it's a choice—it's an attitude.** "A wise woman builds her house." ~Proverbs 14:1

2. **I want to be your hero:** You have the power of influence by your words: "I am with you. I'm behind you." Research says if a husband is affirmed once a day there is a higher marital satisfaction in the relationship.

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ~Ephesians 5:22-23

What about that word "submit?" Submission has been misapplied, attributing "inferiority" to the word, or that it means women have to be weak. Submission is not keeping your mouth shut or being a doormat. It's not the husband's job to force his wife into submission. It's his responsibility to lead his wife, protect her, love her.

A man and a woman are not inferior to one another or superior to one another, but God has set order in the home. **And here is the model:** Jesus Christ, the Son, is co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father. **And the head of the man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God** (1 Corinthians 11:3). Submission requires **humility.**

Wives have tremendous influence.

Let it be the hidden woman of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you. ~1 Peter 3:6

Sarah was used as the example of a submissive wife. Sarah and Abraham faced real problems. They had to go through many hard things, and they stuck it out because at the core, Abraham **loved** Sarah, and Sarah **respected** Abraham. They had a lifetime love affair.

When it comes to submission, I don't want to have a louder voice than God does in my marriage. Your day-to-day life speaks volumes to your husband whether you respect him or not . . . how you talk to him, how you look at him, how you treat him.

The Fruit of Respect: *"The heart of her husband safely trusts in her . . . she will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."* ~Proverbs 31:11-12

Conclusion

"Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." ~Proverbs 11:25

Humility isn't weakness; it can become your greatest strength in relationships.

Not I, but Christ to gently soothe in sorrow,

Not I, but Christ to wipe the falling tear;

Not I, but Christ to lift the weary burden,

Not I, but Christ to hush away all fear.