

Spiritual Formation – Character Trait Study

Character Trait: _____ HUMILITY _____

Definition of Character Trait:

Humility is defined as freedom from pride or arrogance; ranking low in a hierarchy or scale; not proud, haughty, arrogant or assertive.

Opposite Character Trait:

The opposite of humility is pride and arrogance; an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or ability.

Relationship of Character Trait to my Identity:

Humility is related to my identity in that when I feel insecure or as if I am not enough, I act in ways that boost my ego or make me feel powerful, or more important. If I want others to think well of me, I might make myself look better in their eyes by lifting myself up.

Relationship of Character Trait to the Kingdom:

2 Chronicles 7:14

If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Thoughts on Scripture: God notices when we exalt ourselves, disobey, or choose other gods in our lives to replace him, and he wants us to humble ourselves before him, look only for his approval, and return to him as the center of our lives, he will hear, forgive and heal.

Kingdom value: Humility begins in our relationship with God.

Matthew 23:11-12

The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Thoughts on Scripture: The teachers of the law and the Pharisees said one thing and did another. Through the increase of laws that were required to be obeyed to the letter, they loaded burdens onto men's shoulders without any effort to help lighten that burden.

Kingdom value: Humility moves from relationship with God to relationship with people; serve others, humble yourself and refuse to make yourself more important than the people you are with.

Philippians 2:3-8

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as Christ Jesus: who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Thoughts on Scripture: Being like Jesus requires checking our motives and a search for an inappropriately elevated sense of our value. We are literally to think about others before we think about ourselves. This does not mean we are not important and should not care for ourselves, but in comparison, use our advantages for the needs of others first. We are willing to endure discomfort or even suffering at times when the situation calls for it, and we trust God to reward or exalt us when that is his desire.

Kingdom value: Christ followers renew their minds to think like Christ in establishing the right balance between how we think about and value ourselves in comparison to how we do the same for others. The result is God elevates us when he feels it will be helpful.

How this Character Trait will create or encourage Agape Love:

Humility creates agape love when I put the needs of others above my own, when I share generously my possessions and resources, and value people by respecting them regardless of what they can do for me.

Actions that encourage and discourage the Character Trait:

ENCOURAGE:

- Speak to others with respect and awareness of their worth as a creation of God
- Speak the truth about me and am willing to talk about my weaknesses
- Remind myself regularly that my worth and value come from God
- Make myself aware of the needs of others and find ways to meet them

DISCOURAGE:

- Talk negatively about others and the things I don't like about them
- Spin stories or explanations to make myself look better than I am
- Push my weight around and expect people to serve my needs and do things for me
- Hold onto my belongings making sure I take care of myself first

Transforming my mind to experience this Character Trait differently:

THOUGHTS: (Images, ideas, facts, and how we process information)

An image of ___humility___:

Person bowing or on their knees; Football player visiting children's hospital; One who does the work

Ideas I have about ___humility___:

Easier to do when people are looking; If I don't take care of me, who will?

Facts I know about ___humility___:

Not something very popular in our culture; few examples; Foundational to everyday life connected to my identity

Thoughts I might entertain that make ___humility___ difficult:

I deserve going first because I have earned it; I'll think of others next time - this one for me

FEELINGS: (Emotions, desires, and sensations)

Emotions I feel associated with ___humility___:

Gratitude, empathy, compassion, generosity, curiosity

Desires that surface regarding ___humility___:

A longing to accurately perceive my self elevate another person to success; refuse inordinate recognition for achievements

Sensations I experience related to ___humility___:

A feeling of being grounded; perspective; Appreciation for the contribution of others; A quiet confidence without self-centeredness

Feelings I might experience that work against the development of ___humility___:

Superiority

Transforming how I view my body and the impact on this Character Trait:

When I am ___humble___, my primary source of gratification is...

Affirmation from God for agape love

In an effort to exhibit ___humility___, I might use my body to...

Love and serve others first

When pursuing ___pride___, I am tempted to use my body to...

Gratify my needs above all others

In order to achieve ___humility___, I may have to deny my body...

From being in charge; being boss

When I am devoted to how my body looks, smells, and feels, achieving ___humility___ is made more difficult because...

My body will be priority, and I will feel my needs must be met first

Transforming my relationships and the impact on this Character Trait:

When I am ___humble___ my relationships become more...

About understanding, respect & Connection; Acknowledge my flaws, value others, listen well; Open to learn, and compromise more effectively

When I am the opposite, ___proud___ my relationships become more...

Defensive, controlling, a lack of vulnerability, inability to compromise or see from another person's perspective

___Humility___ affects my "Circles of Sufficiency" by...

Asking me capable of acknowledging the worth and value of others, and submitting to the work of the Spirit in that person's life

When the Spirit is working in me, around me, and through me, humility is used by the Spirit to...

Increase my availability to be used in many different situations because I am willing to listen and be obedient, and to follow instructions well

Relationships help me become more humble when they...

Are honest and open and foster love and trust; mutual and generous acceptance is valued

Spiritual Disciplines that will help me grow in humility: mark options, choose 2-3, set time frame

Disciplines of Abstinence

- Solitude & Silence
- Fasting
- Simplicity
- Chastity
- Secrecy
- Sacrifice

Option

- humility
- humility
- humility
- humility
- humility
- humility

Choose

- Karl

Time Frame

- ongoing

Disciplines of Engagement

- Reading the Bible on a daily basis
- Journaling
- Prayer
- Scripture Memory
- Service
- Fellowship
- Evangelism
- Spirit Check-in

Option

- humility
- humility
- humility
- humility
- humility
- humility
- humility
- humility

Choose

- Karl
- Karl
- Karl
- Karl
- Karl
- Karl
- Karl
- Karl

Time Frame

- ongoing
- ongoing
- ongoing
- ongoing
- ongoing
- ongoing
- ongoing
- ongoing

My VISION of being a person of humility:

My vision of being a person of humility is becoming on the inside a person who honestly measures his worth & value by God's grace; acceptance of my flaws, an accurate perception of my qualities and achievements, and seeing value in others naturally, putting others first. A person who finds gratification in the success and elevation of others.

My INTENTION to become a person of humility:

My intention to become a person of humility is to better understand what it looks like and how to achieve it as an inner person character quality necessary for life in the Kingdom. I am committed to removing pride and arrogance wherever I find it in me, and I will seek the approval of the Father and be satisfied with it and it alone.

My MEANS of becoming a person of humility:

The means by which I will become a person of humility is to ask the Spirit to do this work in me, fuel my efforts with grace, and to partner with him through the implementation of spiritual disciplines and the accountability of those closest to me to help me stay on the path of humility.