

WISDOM FOR EVERYDAY LIFE | Session 4: Humility Over Pride

SESSION GOALS

The point of every session is a main idea with the goal of informing our knowing, feeling, and doing.

MAIN IDEA: The way down is actually the way up.

Head Change: To know that pride ultimately leads to disgrace.

Heart Change: To feel grateful that God pours out His grace on the humble.

Life Change: To pursue humility by going low, going last, and going long.

OPEN

Do you look for yourself first in a group photo?

Of course you do. We all do. Not one of us is above the insidious sin of pride. Thankfully, there's hope! The book of Proverbs helps us to recognise pride in ourselves and teaches us to apply the antidote of humility.

VIEW

As you watch, write down how Stephen answers these questions.

According to Proverbs, pride results in _____.

What extroverted and introverted forms can pride take?

How does pride hinder our connections with others?

What does Stephen mean when he says we should 'go last'?

Did Jesus spend time with people who could further His agenda?

Show SESSION #4: *Humility Over Pride* (11 minutes)

REVIEW

Stephen points out that, while our culture is all about grasping for success and prominence and pursuing our preferences, Proverbs shows us that the way down is actually the way up. In a world where pride is encouraged, humility is actually a superpower. **Does this seem counterintuitive, in your career space or elsewhere?**

It's the very opposite of wisdom (and the very essence of foolishness) to be opposed by God. We're told in the New Testament that God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble, and this theme is reflected in the book of Proverbs. Generally, when we're proud, bad things happen to

us, whereas humility puts us in a far better place. **How do you think God's opposition and God's favour play out in our lives?**

The first step to pursuing humility is to *go low*. Proverbs 11:2 says, 'When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.' **Does aiming low go against what you're encouraged to do at your sports club, work, school, or university? Are you motivated by pride when it comes to social media? Do you agree that 'every post is a boast'? Why, or why not? Scroll through your own social media posts from the past month or more and identify any humble brags. What's your next step?**

Pride can take extroverted forms (like someone talking incessantly about themselves or their achievements), or introverted forms (like someone silently convinced of their own superiority to those around them). **Which form of pride do you tend towards? If it's hard for you to answer, think about what those who know you best would say about your pride. What makes you feel a little more special than other people?**

Tim Keller said, 'Pride doesn't rejoice in having something; it celebrates having more of it than the next person... Pride is like the carbon monoxide of sin; it kills character silently.' **Can you relate? Are you currently working towards having more of something than someone else? Has pride suffocated any of your friendships or relationships?**

Stephen points out that pride is anti-social. He says, 'Your ability to connect well with people is closely linked to the degree of your humility or the extent of your pride. Pride inhibits the very authentic, selfless connections and friendships you need to become wise.' C. S. Lewis described pride as 'the ruthless, sleepless, unsmiling concentration on the self'. **Why, when it comes to wisdom, is pride your greatest enemy, and humility your greatest friend? Why do you think it's so easy to see pride in others and so hard to detect pride in ourselves?**

The second step to pursuing humility is to *go last*. Proverbs 18:12 says, 'Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honour,' and Proverbs 29:23 says, 'Pride brings a person low, but the lowly in spirit gain honour.' **Are you willing to recognise that you're proud? Are you constantly comparing yourself to someone else? If so, why, and is it helping you in any way? What might it look like in your life, this week, to let others go first?**

Stephen explains that pride isolates us and corrodes connections because we filter every comment, experience, or interaction through the question, 'Is this good for my status and image?' **Discuss the idea that pride builds barriers while humility builds bridges. Can you trace the ways you're building one or the other?**

Pride is a kind of cosmic plagiarism. Everything we have is a gift from God, and yet pride has us claiming we're self-made. **Have you ever taken credit for something God did? If you have kids, how would you explain to them that pride comes before destruction because it's the precursor to almost every other sin? What does Stephen mean when he says that pride makes us stupid?**

The third step to pursuing humility is to *go long* – in other words, take the eternal perspective. **What happens to your pride levels when you remember that life in this world is fleeting?**

Stephen reminds us that how we treat people who can do nothing for us says a great deal about our character. **Has someone important or famous or exceptionally busy ever stopped everything to spend time with you? Why is this kind of humility so astonishingly powerful? Who is God calling you to (humbly, self-forgetfully) love this week?**

BIBLE EXPLORATION

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God says, 'If My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.' **What would change in your community or city or nation, within a month, if every person humbled themselves, prayed, sought God, and turned from their wicked ways?**

Read James 4:10 and 1 Peter 5:6. **What is the direct result of humility?**

Read Paul's instructions in Romans 12:16 and Philippians 2:3. **How does humility influence our relationships within the church and elsewhere?**

LAST WORD

Before moving on to the final session of the series, take time to contemplate the humility of Jesus, the most important person who has ever lived. He had three years to accomplish His mission (teach and train a team to start and sustain the global church). Jesus' available time was finite – and yet He never pushed past people or jumped a queue. He spent time with the least, the last, and the lost. He helped the broken hearted. He came to serve not to be served, to give not to get. He fed thousands before feeding Himself. Although angels worship Him, He slipped away from crowds and deflected praise to His Father. The closer we get to Jesus, the more we realise the deep wisdom of these Proverbs. The way up is the way down. God shows favour to the humble. With humility comes wisdom.

DEEPER WALK

Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.

Read: Meditate on 1 Corinthians 1:26–31. How does God's Kingdom turn the world's perspective on greatness and wisdom upside down? What is the world's wisdom for the situation you're facing? What is God's wisdom for the situation you're facing?

Write: Read Micah 6:8 and paraphrase it into a personal humility manifesto.

Pray: Craft a prayer that you can come back to again and again to pray and re-pray, in which you relinquish your self-importance and independence and declare your total reliance on God.