

Humility Test (Part 3)

by Bryan Gibson

“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5). Does God count me among the humble—among those who receive His grace? So far we’ve asked nine questions designed to test our humility. Let’s wrap it up with a few more.

10. Do I **rejoice** in the honors and accomplishments of others, or do I **envy**? “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:15). The second part typically comes much easier to us, but the first part, the rejoicing part—well, that can sometimes be a different story. When others have reason to rejoice, do I feel the need to “one up” them? Or, do I ever feel the need to “block” their moment in the sun, to do or say something that might diminish their good news? If any of this sounds even vaguely familiar to me, then I’ve got serious work to do.
11. Am I sensitive and easily offended, especially when it comes to advice or correction in spiritual matters? Am I that person everyone talks about, the one around whom everyone must “walk on egg shells”? If that’s me, eventually most people will give up on me—they’ll no longer give me the advice or the correction I so desperately need. Here’s the humble approach: “Let the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness. And let him rebuke me; it shall be as excellent oil; let my head not refuse it” (Psalms 141:5). What we call thin-skinned is really self-centered.
12. Do I enjoy holding a grudge, or do I have the same spirit as my Savior? “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34). What if they DO know what they do—is it okay then? It’s awful hard to be “ready to forgive” (Psalms 86:5) and hold a grudge at the same time. If I continue to be upset over something said or done to me, it must mean I haven’t died—“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...” (Galatians 2:20). Indeed, Christ did live in Paul, because his spirit toward those who wronged him was the very same as his Savior’s: “At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them” (2 Timothy 4:16).
13. Do I have any trouble saying, “I’m sorry”? It may be that I forgive easily, because at least in that situation, I’ve got the “upper hand.” But, when I’m the one in the wrong, the right words, the right attitude, may not come as easily. “Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23-24). “I’m sorry” is not a sign of weakness—it’s a sign of strength, the kind of strength which comes from true humility.
14. Do I listen to those older and wiser than me—those who are more experienced and mature in the faith? “Wisdom is with aged men, and with length of days, understanding” (Job 12:12). Yes, there are exceptions to this “rule,” but generally speaking, the older

folks have a lot to offer—if we'll just listen. King Rehoboam sure wishes he had (1 Kings 12:6-11).

“You will save the humble people; but Your eyes are on the haughty, that You may bring them down” (2 Samuel 22:28).