

WEEK 7: THE PRACTICE OF HUMILITY

Detailed Facilitator Guide with Notes and Questions

OVERVIEW FOR FACILITATORS

Week 7 Goal: Help participants understand and practice humility—not as self-hatred or worthlessness, but as right-sizing the self and living in proximity to truth.

The Transition: Weeks 1-6 focused on awakening and emptying—seeing patterns, facing harm, letting the false self die, confronting emptiness, releasing control, learning to listen. Now begins Phase III: **Rebuilding**. You're constructing a new way of being grounded in reality.

The Foundation: Humility. This is the bedrock of healthy selfhood. Without humility, participants will just rebuild new forms of narcissism—spiritual narcissism, "recovered person" narcissism, "humble" narcissism.

Why Humility Is Critical:

- Pride is the root sin of narcissism
- Until participants embrace ordinariness, they'll keep grasping for specialness
- Humility is what makes authentic relationships possible
- It's the antidote to the constant exhaustion of self-inflation

The Challenge: Participants must learn that humility is not:

- Self-hatred
- Worthlessness
- Being a doormat
- False modesty
- Performance of meekness

But rather:

- Seeing yourself accurately—no bigger, no smaller than you are
- Thinking of yourself less, not thinking less of yourself
- Living in reality instead of fantasy (grandiose or shame-based)
- Freedom from the tyranny of image management

UNDERSTANDING TRUE HUMILITY

What Humility Is NOT

False Humility (which is still pride):

- Fishing for compliments by self-deprecation: "I'm terrible at this" (waiting for "No you're not!")
- Performing meekness to be seen as humble
- Refusing appropriate recognition to seem modest
- Making yourself nothing to gain moral superiority
- "I'm the worst!" (grandiose self-hatred—still making it about you)

Self-Hatred (which is inverted narcissism):

- "I'm worthless" (still obsessed with self, just negatively)
- Constant apologizing for existing
- Refusing to acknowledge any gifts or strengths
- Believing you deserve abuse or mistreatment
- Self-flagellation as spiritual practice

Passivity (which is abdication, not humility):

- No boundaries

- Never expressing preferences
- Letting others abuse you
- Never leading when appropriate
- Refusing responsibility

What Humility IS

Accurate Self-Assessment:

- Seeing your strengths without exaggeration
- Acknowledging your weaknesses without devastation
- Understanding you're neither superior nor inferior to others—just human
- Accepting your limits gracefully

Self-Forgetfulness:

- Not constantly monitoring how you appear
- Able to focus on others without self-reference
- Free from performing
- Present in the moment rather than managing impressions

Proximity to Truth:

- Willingness to see reality as it is
- Accepting feedback without defensiveness
- Admitting when you're wrong
- Living in what's actual, not what you wish were true

Teachability:

- "I don't know" without shame

- Learning from others regardless of their status
- Accepting correction gracefully
- Growing without needing to already be perfect

Service Without Scorekeeping:

- Doing menial tasks without resentment
- Helping without needing recognition
- Contributing without needing to be thanked
- Giving without keeping track of returns

WHAT MAKES THIS WEEK DANGEROUS

Resistance Patterns to Expect

Spiritual Pride About Humility:

- "I'm so humble now!" (oxymoron)
- Competing to be the most humble person
- Using humility as new form of specialness
- "I'm further along in humility than others"

Collapsing Into False Humility:

- Swinging from grandiosity to worthlessness
- "I'm nothing, I'm terrible, I should disappear"
- Refusing to acknowledge any good in themselves
- Self-hatred disguised as holiness

Intellectual Understanding Without Embodiment:

- Talking eloquently about humility while remaining proud

- Knowing all the right things to say without living it
- Humility as theological concept, not daily practice

Resistance to Ordinariness:

- "But I AM special in some ways..."
- Finding exceptions to why they're different
- Subtle clinging to uniqueness
- Fear of being "mediocre"

Performance of Humility:

- Strategic self-deprecation
- Visible "servant leadership"
- Making sure others see their humble acts
- False modesty

OPENING SESSION (Day 1)

Transition to Phase III: Rebuilding (15 minutes)

Facilitator Script:

"For six weeks, you've been doing hard work—facing, releasing, emptying, listening. You've deconstructed the false self. You've let grandiosity die. You've sat with emptiness. You've released control. You've learned to be quiet and hear others.

Now we begin Phase III: Rebuilding. We're constructing a new self—grounded in truth, capable of genuine connection, free from the tyranny of image management.

Week 7 is the foundation: Humility.

Without humility, you'll just build a new false self—maybe a religious one, maybe a 'recovered' one, maybe a 'authentically broken' one. But it will still be performance, still be image, still be about you.

Humility is different. It's not self-hatred. It's not worthlessness. It's not being a doormat.

Humility is seeing yourself accurately—no bigger and no smaller than you are. It's freedom from the constant self-monitoring of pride. It's the ability to think of yourself LESS, not think LESS of yourself.

C.S. Lewis said: 'Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it's thinking of yourself less.'

Dallas Willard said: 'The humble person is not one who thinks little of himself, but one who thinks of himself little.'

This week: You're learning to be ordinary and okay with it. To serve without needing credit. To accept your limits without shame. To stop performing and just be real.

This is freedom. Pride is exhausting. Humility is rest.

Philippians 2:3 says: 'Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.'

That's our work this week—learning to regard others as more important than ourselves. Not because they are inherently better, but because love requires making space for others to exist fully."

Opening Check-In (Go Around Circle)

Question: "*What's your gut reaction to the word 'humility'? What images or feelings come up?*"

Facilitator Note: Listen for:

- **Fear:** "Being a doormat," "worthlessness," "disappearing"

- **Cynicism:** "Fake modesty," "weakness"
- **Confusion:** "I don't understand what it means"
- **Longing:** "It sounds restful," "freedom"
- **Resistance:** "But some pride is good, right?"

All are valid starting points. Don't correct yet—just witness.

SCRIPTURE FOUNDATION EXPLORATION (40 minutes)

Philippians 2:3 - "Regard One Another as More Important Than Yourselves"

Read aloud: Philippians 2:1-11 (full context of the Christ hymn)

Focus on verse 3: "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves."

Facilitator Teaching (15 minutes):

"Paul gives both a negative and positive instruction:

NEGATIVE: 'Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit'

- *Selfishness* (eritheia): Self-seeking, putting yourself first
- *Empty conceit* (kenodoxia): Vain glory, empty pride, seeking recognition

Paul says: Don't let these motives drive you. Check your 'why.'

POSITIVE: 'With humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves'

Key phrase: 'Regard one another as more important'

This doesn't mean:

- Others are ontologically superior (inherently better)
- You have no value
- Your needs don't matter

- You should be abused

This means:

- In interactions, prioritize their needs, not just yours
- Make space for them to exist fully
- Don't always center yourself
- Serve their flourishing, not just your own

'Humility of mind' (*tapeinophrosyne*):

- Lowliness of mind, modesty, humility
- In Greco-Roman culture, this was NOT a virtue—it was weakness
- Paul (following Jesus) is reversing cultural values

Verse 4: 'Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.'

Notice: NOT 'don't look out for yourself at all' BUT: 'don't MERELY look out for yourself—also attend to others'

For the narcissist: You've been looking out ONLY for yourself—your image, your needs, your recognition, your comfort.

Paul says: Also look out for others. Make their interests matter as much as yours.

This is radical for narcissism: Others exist not as supporting cast, but as equals—people whose flourishing matters as much as yours."

Discussion Questions:

1. **"Paul says do nothing from 'empty conceit.' When do you act from empty conceit—from desire for recognition or admiration?"**

2. **"What does it mean to 'regard others as more important'? How is this different from thinking you're worthless?"**
3. **"Verse 4 says 'also for the interests of others'—not 'only.' Why is that balance important?"**
4. **"In what areas of life do you primarily look out for your own interests without attending to others'?"**
5. **"What would change if you genuinely regarded others as important as yourself?"**

James 4:6 - "God Opposes the Proud, but Gives Grace to the Humble"

Read aloud: James 4:1-10

Focus on verse 6: "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Facilitator Teaching (12 minutes):

"This is one of the most sobering verses in Scripture.

'God is opposed to the proud' (*ho theos hyperephanois antitassetai*):

- *Opposed* (antitassetai): Stands against, resists, arrays Himself in opposition
- *Proud* (hyperephanois): Those who show themselves above others, arrogant

God doesn't just dislike pride. He actively opposes it.

Why? Because pride is:

- Living in delusion (thinking you're more than you are)
- Refusing dependence (pretending you don't need God)
- Rejecting reality (claiming self-sufficiency)

- Destroying relationships (making yourself center)

Pride is anti-reality, anti-relationship, anti-God.

'But gives grace to the humble' (*tapeinois de didosin charin*):

- *Grace* (charis): Unmerited favor, divine assistance, power to become what you're called to be
- *Humble* (tapeinois): Lowly, modest, those who know their need

The humble get grace. The proud get opposition.

Verse 10: 'Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.'

The way UP is DOWN. The way to exaltation is through humility.

For recovery: You've been seeking exaltation through self-promotion. God says: Humble yourself, and I'll do the exalting—in My time, in My way.

The paradox: When you stop trying to exalt yourself, God exalts you. When you insist on exalting yourself, you stay low—opposed by God, isolated from others, exhausted from performance."

Discussion Questions:

1. **"What does it mean that God 'opposes' the proud? How have you experienced opposition when operating in pride?"**
2. **"Why does pride provoke God's opposition? What's so dangerous about it?"**
3. **"The humble receive grace. What is grace, and why do you need it?"**
4. **"Verse 10 says 'humble yourselves'—it's active. How do you humble yourself? What does that look like practically?"**
5. **"Can you trust that if you humble yourself, God will exalt you—or do you need to exalt yourself?"**

Matthew 23:12 - The Great Reversal

Read aloud: Matthew 23:1-12

Focus on verse 12: "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted."

Facilitator Teaching (12 minutes):

"Jesus is teaching about the scribes and Pharisees—the religious elite who love:

- Places of honor (v.6)
- Being called Rabbi/Father/Leader (v.7-10)
- Public recognition of religiosity (v.5)

They exalt themselves. They position themselves above others, demand recognition, need titles.

Jesus says: '**Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled.**'

Not 'might be' but 'shall be'—it's certain. Self-exaltation leads to humbling.

Examples:

- The self-promoter gets exposed
- The image-manager gets caught
- The proud eventually fall
- Reality has a way of humbling those who refuse to humble themselves

'And whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.'

Again—not 'might be' but 'shall be.' True humility leads to exaltation.

But notice: The humble person isn't seeking exaltation. They're just living in reality. The exaltation is God's doing, not theirs.

Verse 11: 'But the greatest among you shall be your servant.'

Jesus reverses everything:

- Greatness = Service
- Leadership = Humility
- Honor = Lowliness

This is the way of the Kingdom—the opposite of narcissism.

For the narcissist: You've been exalting yourself—demanding recognition, positioning yourself strategically, managing your image. Jesus says that path leads to humbling (and you've probably experienced it—exposure, failure, isolation).

The invitation: Stop exalting yourself. Humble yourself. Be a servant. Trust God for vindication.

The promise: You shall be exalted—not by your effort, but by God's grace."

Discussion Questions:

1. **"Jesus says self-exaltation leads to humbling. Have you experienced this? How?"**
2. **"Why does self-exaltation always eventually fail?"**
3. **"Jesus says 'the greatest among you shall be your servant.' How is this different from cultural (or your) understanding of greatness?"**
4. **"Can you humble yourself without secretly hoping it will lead to exaltation? Is that even possible?"**
5. **"What would it look like to serve without needing to be seen as great?"**

DAILY PRACTICES INSTRUCTION

Morning Prayer: Identity Declaration (Days 1-7)

Detailed Instructions for Participants:

"Each morning, after your silence practice, pray this identity declaration—slowly, meditatively, letting it sink in:

'I am not the center. I am not God. I am beloved and ordinary.'

Unpack each phrase:

'I am not the center':

- The universe doesn't revolve around me
- My needs aren't the only needs
- Others' stories matter as much as mine
- I can be on the periphery and be okay

'I am not God':

- I am not all-knowing
- I am not all-powerful
- I am not the arbiter of truth
- I have limits—and that's okay
- I need help, need grace, need others

'I am beloved':

- I am deeply loved by God
- Not because I'm special, but because I'm His
- My belovedness is inherent, not achieved
- I don't have to earn love by being exceptional

'And ordinary':

- I am one of billions
- My limits are normal, not tragic
- My ordinariness doesn't diminish my belovedness
- Ordinary is where love lives

Say it out loud: Words spoken have more power than words thought

Sit with it (5 minutes): Let these truths settle. Notice resistance.

Journal: Which phrase is hardest to believe? Why?

Throughout the day: When you catch yourself acting like you're the center or like you're God, return to this prayer.

The goal: Rewiring your identity from 'special/superior' to 'beloved/ordinary.'"

Daily Practice: One Menial Task with Full Attention (Days 1-7)

Instructions:

"Each day, choose ONE menial, ordinary task and do it with full attention and care—as an act of worship, as humility practice.

Examples:

- Washing dishes
- Sweeping/vacuuming
- Taking out trash
- Cleaning a toilet
- Folding laundry
- Organizing a drawer
- Wiping counters
- Yard work

The Practice:

1. **Choose the task:** Preferably something you normally resent or rush through
2. **Set intention:** 'I'm doing this as practice in humility, as service, as being present in ordinary work.'
3. **Do it slowly:** Don't rush. Be thorough. Do it well.
4. **Pay attention:**
 - Notice the water temperature
 - Feel the texture of surfaces
 - Be present to the simplicity of the task
 - Don't let your mind wander to 'more important' things
5. **Don't announce it:** Do it anonymously if possible. If someone thanks you, just say 'you're welcome'—don't explain your spiritual practice.
6. **Notice your resistance:**
 - 'This is beneath me'
 - 'I should be doing something more important'
 - 'I'm wasting my talents'
 - 'Someone else should do this'

These thoughts reveal your pride. Just notice them. Then keep washing the dishes.

What you're learning:

- No task is beneath you
- Ordinary work has dignity
- Service without recognition is possible

- Humility is embodied, not just conceptual
- You can be fully present to simple things

Brother Lawrence (17th century monk) practiced the presence of God while washing dishes in the monastery kitchen. He said: 'The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees.'

Your assignment: Find God in the dishes. Find humility in the menial. Find yourself in the ordinary."

Evening Practice: Name and Thank Contributors (Days 1-7)

Instructions:

"Each evening, write down the names of 3 people who contributed to your day—and thank them specifically.

Why? Because humility recognizes: I am not self-sufficient. I am daily dependent on others. My life is made possible by countless people I rarely acknowledge.

How to practice:

Step 1: Notice Your Dependence (10 minutes of reflection)

Who contributed to your day?

- Who made your coffee/food?
- Who created the infrastructure you used (roads, electricity, internet)?
- Who taught you the skills you used today?
- Whose labor made your comfort possible?
- Who showed you kindness?
- Who did work you didn't see?

Most of life depends on invisible labor. Humility sees it.

Step 2: Choose 3 People (vary daily)

Pick 3 people to acknowledge:

- 1 close to you (family member, colleague, friend)
- 1 who provides a service (server, janitor, delivery person, store clerk)
- 1 from your past (teacher, mentor, someone who shaped you)

Step 3: Thank Them Specifically

For those you see: Thank them in person or via message

- Not: 'Thanks for everything!'
- But: 'Thank you for [specific thing]. It made [specific difference].'

For those you can't reach: Write them a thank-you in your journal (even if they'll never see it)

For those in the background: Notice them. If you can thank them, do. If not, pray for them.

Examples:

'Sarah, thank you for listening when I was stressed today. You didn't try to fix it, you just heard me. That gave me space to process.'

'Thank you to the person who delivered my package in the rain. I don't know your name, but your work made my day easier.'

'Mr. Johnson (3rd grade teacher), thank you for believing I could learn when I was struggling. I still use skills you taught me.'

What you're learning:

- You are constantly receiving
- Your life is made possible by others
- Gratitude is a humility practice

- Acknowledging others doesn't diminish you—it grounds you in reality

The antidote to entitlement: Gratitude. The narcissist believes they deserve everything. The humble person receives everything as gift."

THE ORDINARINESS EXERCISE (Days 3-6)

Instructions for Participants

Facilitator Introduction (Day 2):

"This week's major assignment: Spend 3-5 hours in service where NO ONE knows your credentials, achievements, or background. You will be ordinary, anonymous, one among many.

Why? Because humility requires experiencing ordinariness—not just thinking about it conceptually, but living it.

Where to serve:

- Soup kitchen
- Food bank
- Homeless shelter
- Community cleanup
- Hospital volunteering
- Nursing home visits
- Any service organization

The rules:

1. **Don't tell them who you are:** No mention of your job, education, achievements, or anything that might make you seem special
2. **Do whatever task you're given:** Even if it's menial, even if you're 'overqualified,' even if it seems like a waste of your talents

3. **Don't position yourself for recognition:** No angling for leadership, no offering expertise unless asked, no mentioning your experience
4. **Just be one of the servants:** Blend in. Be ordinary. Do the work.
5. **Serve for service's sake:** Not for your resume, not for a story to tell, not to feel good about yourself—just to serve

What you'll encounter:

Internal resistance:

- 'I should tell them I'm [accomplished person]—I could be more useful'
- 'This task is beneath my skill level'
- 'I'm special and should be doing something special'
- 'No one knows how impressive I actually am'

External reality:

- No one will treat you as special
- You'll do ordinary work
- You might feel invisible
- You'll be one among many volunteers

The practice: Can you be okay with being ordinary? Can you serve without needing to be known?

After serving: Journal extensively—

- What resistance came up?
- What did it feel like to be anonymous?
- Did you enjoy the work itself, or did you need recognition to make it worthwhile?
- What did you learn about humility?

- Could you do this regularly?"

Group Processing (Day 6-7)

Discussion Questions:

1. **"Where did you serve? What did you do?"**
2. **"What was it like to be anonymous—to have no one know your credentials or achievements?"**
3. **"What internal resistance came up? Did you want to tell people who you are?"**
4. **"What menial tasks did you do? What was your reaction?"**
5. **"Did you enjoy serving for its own sake, or did you need recognition to make it worthwhile?"**
6. **"What did you learn about yourself? About humility? About ordinariness?"**
7. **"Could you imagine doing this regularly—serving without anyone knowing how impressive you are?"**

STUDYING BIBLICAL MODELS OF HUMILITY

Christ: Philippians 2:5-11 (Kenosis)

Assignment (Day 2-3): Study Philippians 2:5-11 in depth (already covered in Week 3, but review with focus on humility)

Group Discussion (Day 3 or 4):

Facilitator Teaching (10 minutes):

"We studied this passage in Week 3 focusing on self-emptying. Now we're looking at it as the ultimate model of humility.

Verse 5: 'Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus'

Paul is saying: The way Christ approached His identity and mission—that's the way YOU should approach yours.

Verses 6-8: Christ's descent

- Didn't grasp at equality with God
- Emptied Himself
- Took form of servant
- Became human
- Humbled Himself to death

This is active humility: Jesus CHOSE the way down. He voluntarily limited Himself, served, humbled Himself.

Verse 9-11: God's exaltation of Christ

- Therefore God highly exalted Him
- Gave Him the name above every name
- Every knee will bow

The pattern: Humility → Exaltation. Not exaltation through self-promotion, but exaltation after self-humbling.

For us: We're called to have 'this attitude'—to choose the way down, to serve, to humble ourselves. And to trust God for vindication."

Discussion Questions:

1. **"Christ 'did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped.' What are you grasping at that you need to release?"**
2. **"Jesus took the 'form of a servant.' What does servanthood look like for you?"**

3. "**Christ 'humbled Himself'—it was active, chosen. Where do you need to actively choose humility?"**
4. "**God exalted Christ AFTER His humiliation. Can you trust that pattern for your life?"**

Moses: Numbers 12:3

Assignment (Day 3-4): Read Numbers 12:1-16

Group Discussion (Day 4 or 5):

Facilitator Teaching (10 minutes):

"Numbers 12:3 is a fascinating verse: 'Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.'

Context: Miriam and Aaron are criticizing Moses (probably jealous of his position). God defends Moses and highlights his humility.

'More humble than any man on the face of the earth':

- This is God's assessment, not Moses's self-description
- Moses didn't go around saying 'I'm so humble'
- His humility was evident to God and eventually to others

What was Moses's humility?

1. **He knew his limitations:** When God called him, he said 'I can't speak well' (Exodus 4)
2. **He depended on God:** Constantly interceding, asking God for guidance
3. **He bore insult without defending himself** (Numbers 12): Let God be his defender
4. **He didn't grasp at position:** Offered to be blotted out for Israel's sake (Exodus 32:32)

Moses was also a strong leader: Humility didn't make him weak or passive. He confronted Pharaoh, led the nation, made hard decisions.

Humility ≠ Weakness. Humility = Accurate self-knowledge + Dependence on God.

For us: Can you be confident in your calling without grasping at position? Can you lead without needing constant recognition? Can you let God defend you instead of defending yourself?"

Discussion Questions:

1. **"Moses is called more humble than anyone else. What made him humble?"**
2. **"Moses didn't defend himself when criticized. Could you do that? What makes it hard?"**
3. **"How was Moses both humble AND a strong leader? How do those go together?"**
4. **"What's the difference between Moses's humility and being a doormat?"**

John the Baptist: John 3:22-30

Assignment (Day 4-5): Read John 3:22-36

Group Discussion (Day 5 or 6):

Facilitator Teaching (10 minutes):

"John the Baptist is another model of humility.

Context: John's disciples are upset because Jesus is baptizing and 'all are coming to Him' (v.26). They're worried John is losing his position, his following, his significance.

John's response (v.27-30) is the epitome of humility:

'A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven.'
(v.27)

- John recognizes: My ministry is gift, not achievement
- I don't own it or control it
- God gives and God can redirect

'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent ahead of Him.' (v.28)

- John knows his role and stays in it
- He's not the center—Jesus is
- He's content being the forerunner, not the main event

'He who has the bride is the bridegroom.' (v.29)

- John compares himself to the best man, Jesus to the groom
- The best man's joy is complete when the groom succeeds
- John rejoices in Jesus's increase, not in his own

'He must increase, but I must decrease.' (v.30)

- This is active humility: John CHOOSES to decrease
- He doesn't cling to position or following
- He celebrates being less central so Jesus can be more central

For us: Can you celebrate when others increase and you decrease? Can you be the supporting actor and be genuinely happy? Can you release your need to be the center?"

Discussion Questions:

1. "John's disciples were worried he was losing followers. Why wasn't John worried?"
2. "John says 'He must increase, but I must decrease.' Where in your life do you need to decrease so Christ (or others) can increase?"
3. "John was content not being the center. What makes that hard for you?"
4. "Have you ever celebrated someone else's success while you decreased? What was that like?"

THEOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL DEEPENING

C.S. Lewis Quote Discussion

"Pride is spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even common sense." — C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Facilitator Teaching (15 minutes):

"Lewis calls pride 'spiritual cancer.' That's strong language. Why?

Cancer destroys from within. It takes healthy cells and turns them malignant. It spreads. It kills.

Pride does the same:

It eats up LOVE:

- Love requires seeing others as fully real
- Pride makes everything about you
- You can't love someone you're using as supporting cast

It eats up CONTENTMENT:

- Pride requires constant comparison: 'Am I better than...?'
- You can never rest because there's always someone above you

- Contentment requires gratitude; pride requires superiority

It eats up COMMON SENSE:

- Pride blinds you to reality
- You can't see yourself clearly
- You make terrible decisions based on inflated self-view
- Common sense requires humility—"I might be wrong"

Lewis says pride is '**the complete anti-God state of mind.**' Why?

Because God is reality, truth, love. Pride is delusion, self-worship, isolation.

For recovery: You're recovering from spiritual cancer. Pride has been eating away at your capacity for love, peace, wisdom. Humility is the cure.

Lewis also says: 'As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.'

You can't see God while you're looking down on others. Humility lifts your eyes."

Discussion Questions:

1. "**Lewis says pride 'eats up' love, contentment, and common sense. How have you experienced this?"**
2. "**Where has pride destroyed your capacity to love?"**
3. "**How has pride prevented contentment in your life?"**
4. "**Can you think of a time when pride made you do something foolish—losing common sense?"**
5. "**Lewis says pride is 'the complete anti-God state of mind.' Do you agree? Why is pride so anti-God?"**

Dallas Willard Quote Discussion

"The humble person is not one who thinks little of himself, but one who thinks of himself little." — Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*

Facilitator Teaching (15 minutes):

"Willard makes a crucial distinction that most people miss:

WRONG HUMILITY: Thinking little of yourself

- Self-hatred
- 'I'm worthless'
- Constant self-deprecation
- Focus on your failures

This is STILL pride—it's just inverted. You're still obsessed with yourself, just negatively.

TRUE HUMILITY: Thinking of yourself little

- Self-forgetfulness
- Not constantly monitoring yourself
- Free from self-obsession (positive or negative)
- Able to focus on others

Willard's point: Humility is freedom from self-preoccupation.

The narcissist thinks of themselves constantly:

- 'How do I look?'
- 'What do they think of me?'
- 'Am I impressive?'
- 'Did they notice me?'

The humble person is free from this:

- Not thinking 'I'm great'
- Not thinking 'I'm terrible'
- Not thinking about themselves much at all—focused elsewhere

This is why humility is restful: You're not carrying the exhausting burden of constant self-evaluation.

For recovery: You've been thinking about yourself constantly (grandiose self-focus). The goal isn't to switch to negative self-focus ('I'm terrible'). The goal is to think of yourself LESS—to be free from self-obsession entirely.

How? By focusing on God, on others, on reality outside yourself. By being present instead of performing."

Discussion Questions:

1. **"What's the difference between 'thinking little of yourself' and 'thinking of yourself little'?"**
2. **"Are you capable of thinking of yourself little—or are you always monitoring yourself?"**
3. **"What would it feel like to be free from constant self-evaluation?"**
4. **"Willard implies humility is self-forgetfulness. When have you forgotten yourself? What was that like?"**
5. **"How do you move from self-obsession (positive or negative) to self-forgetfulness?"**

Mother Teresa Quote Discussion

"Humility is the mother of all virtues; purity, charity and obedience. It is in being humble that our love becomes real, devoted and ardent." — Mother Teresa

Facilitator Teaching (10 minutes):

"Mother Teresa calls humility 'the mother of all virtues.' Why?

Because **all other virtues require humility**:

Purity (holiness): Requires admitting your need for God, your inability to sanctify yourself

Charity (love): Requires seeing others as real, which pride prevents

Obedience: Requires submitting to authority outside yourself

Without humility, no other virtue is possible.

You can't be loving while proud (you're using others). You can't be holy while proud (you're playing God). You can't be obedient while proud (you're your own authority).

'It is in being humble that our love becomes real, devoted and ardent.'

Mother Teresa connects humility and love:

- Humble love is REAL (not performance)
- Humble love is DEVOTED (not self-serving)
- Humble love is ARDENT (passionate, not lukewarm)

Pride's love is:

- Fake (image management)
- Self-serving (what do I get?)
- Cold (calculated)

Humble love is:

- Authentic (no pretense)

- Self-giving (what can I give?)
- Warm (genuine affection)

For us: Until you're humble, you can't truly love. Your 'love' will be strategic, self-referential, performance-based. Humble yourself, and love becomes possible."

Discussion Questions:

1. **"Mother Teresa says humility is 'the mother of all virtues.' Why is humility foundational?"**
2. **"Can you think of a virtue that doesn't require humility?"**
3. **"She says humble love is 'real, devoted, and ardent.' What does proud 'love' look like?"**
4. **"Where has pride prevented you from truly loving?"**

ANDREW MURRAY: HUMILITY

Reading Assignment Processing (Throughout Week)

Assign: Read selections from Andrew Murray's *Humility: The Beauty of Holiness* (or similar classic text)

Key Murray Insights:

- Humility is not a virtue among others, but the root of all virtue
- Pride is the root of every sin and evil
- Christ's humility is both our salvation and our example
- Humility before God leads to humility before others

Group Discussion (Day 6-7):

1. **"What struck you most in Murray's writing on humility?"**

2. "Murray says humility is the root of all virtue. How does this change how you think about it?"
3. "Murray emphasizes Christ's humility as our model. What specifically from Christ's example challenges you?"
4. "How does humility before God connect to humility before people?"

CREATING FOOT-WASHING PRACTICES

Instructions for Participants (Day 5-7)

Facilitator Introduction:

"Jesus washed His disciples' feet (John 13). He said: 'If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.' (v.14)

This week, you're creating ongoing 'foot-washing' practices—regular acts of humble service.

These are not:

- One-time grand gestures
- Public displays
- Done for recognition

These are:

- Regular, repeated, ordinary
- Often hidden
- Done for service itself

Examples:

In Your Home:

- Always do the dishes after family meals

- Take out trash without being asked
- Clean bathroom weekly
- Do a chore someone else usually does

At Work:

- Arrive early to make coffee for everyone
- Clean the shared kitchen
- Help a colleague without needing credit
- Do tasks no one wants to do

In Community:

- Volunteer regularly at service organization
- Mentor someone without recognition
- Serve on the behind-the-scenes team
- Do setup/cleanup for events

The criteria:

1. Regular (not one-time)
2. Humble (menial, ordinary)
3. Hidden (preferably no one knows it's you)
4. Genuine (not for recognition)

This week: Choose 2-3 foot-washing practices to integrate into your life. Begin them this week. Continue them ongoing.

The goal: Building a rhythm of humble service into your daily life—not as performance, but as formation."

FACILITATOR SELF-CARE

This week is foundational but can feel 'lighter' after the intensity of weeks 4-6.

Watch for:

- Participants who understand humility intellectually but don't practice it
- Performance of humility (new form of pride)
- Swinging to worthlessness instead of true humility
- Your own pride as facilitator

Remember:

- You're not exempt from humility practices
- Model what you're teaching
- Don't perform your own humility
- Stay grounded in your ordinariness

Self-care:

- Practice your own daily humility exercises
- Notice when you need recognition for facilitating
- Stay in supervision
- Remember: You're a servant, not a savior

CLOSING THE WEEK (Day 7)

Final Reflection Questions

1. **"Complete this sentence: This week, I learned that humility is..."**
2. **"Which practice was hardest? The menial task? The anonymous service? The identity prayer? Why?"**

3. "**What's the difference between the humility you're learning and worthlessness or being a doormat?**"
4. "**Where did you experience freedom from self-monitoring this week?**"
5. "**What foot-washing practices are you committing to continue?**"

Facilitator Closing Words

"You've done foundational work this week. You've begun learning humility—not as self-hatred, but as proximity to truth. As thinking of yourself less, not thinking less of yourself. As freedom from the exhausting tyranny of pride.

What you've practiced:

- Daily identity prayer: beloved and ordinary
- Menial tasks done with attention
- Anonymous service
- Gratitude for others
- Studying humble models

What you've learned:

- Humility is restful (pride is exhausting)
- Ordinariness is okay (you don't need to be special)
- Service without recognition is possible
- Others deserve space to exist fully

The challenge: Don't let this be a one-week exercise. Make humility your daily practice. Return to the identity prayer. Do menial tasks regularly. Serve anonymously. Thank others specifically.

Next week: We're learning empathy as spiritual practice. Humility opens the door to empathy—when you're no longer obsessed with yourself, you can finally see and feel for others.

Let's close:

'God, You are opposed to the proud but give grace to the humble. We've been proud—grasping, self-promoting, exhausting ourselves with image management. Teach us humility. Not worthlessness, but right-sizing. Not self-hatred, but self-forgetfulness. Help us think of ourselves less so we can think of You and others more. Make us like Christ—humble, gentle, servant-hearted. Give us the grace that only comes to the humble. Amen.'"

END WEEK 7