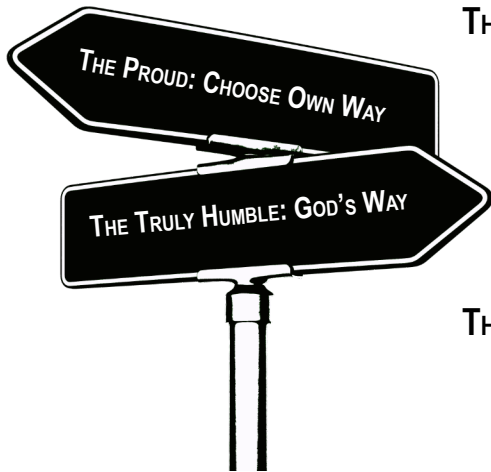


HUMILITY 101: THE TRULY HUMBLE



All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be,
declares the Lord. **But this is the one to whom I will look:** he who is humble
and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word (Isaiah 66:2 ESV).

“One object in creation, amid suns and stars, secures the gaze of the great Creator—the humble.”
(Thomas Birks)



THE TRULY HUMBLE ...

- (Psalm 25:4-5 ESV) **Make me to know your ways, O Lord**; teach me your paths. 5 Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.
- (Psalm 27:11 ESV) **Teach me your way, O LORD**, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.
- (Psalm 86:11 ESV) **Teach me your way, O LORD**, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.

THE PROUD ...

- (Isaiah 66:3b ESV) **These have chosen their own ways**, and their soul delights in their abominations.

1. The truly humble know that the LORD, he is God, 66:1-2a.

- (Isaiah 66:1-2a ESV) Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; **what is the house that you would build for me**, and what is the place of my rest? 2 All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD.
- (1 Kings 8:27 ESV) But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, **heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!**

John Oswalt ... But what is he saying? Surely the point is, as Delitzsch well says, "God will have no temple at all if men think by temple-building itself to do him service." This is the consistent attitude of all the prophets toward the whole [religious] enterprise. If [religion] is performed to curry favor with God, to satisfy God's supposed needs, and thereby get something for ourselves from him, we should shut the doors of the temple at once and abandon the whole thing. [Oswalt, J. N. (1998). *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66* (p. 667). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.]

- (Psalm 100:3 ESV) **Know that the LORD, he is God!** It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

A) The truly humble acknowledge the immensity and the transcendence of the LORD.

To be transcendent means to be beyond the normal or physical level; beyond human experience; something that is surpassing, excelling, beyond the limits of possible experience.

The Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics & Philosophy of Religion defines transcendence in this way ...

Transcendence. That which is higher than or surpasses other things. What is transcendent is thus relative to what is transcended. God is conceived by traditional theologians as being transcendent with respect to the created universe, meaning that he is outside the universe and that no part of the universe is identical to him or a part of him. To think of God as transcendent with respect to time is to conceive him as timeless. [Evans, C. S. (2002). *In Pocket dictionary of apologetics & philosophy of religion* (p. 117). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.]

B) The truly humble know that the LORD is transcendent and so not impressed by the religious plans and efforts of humans.

Edward Young ... Inasmuch as God is thus King over all, **what is this house that these**

disobedient ones will build for Him? [Young, E. (1972). The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66 (Vol. 3, p. 518). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.] ... *he goes on to say that ... Among those who wished to build an earthly Temple ... there were none trembling at God's word.* [Ibid. Vol. 3, p. 519.]

2. The truly humble have been humbled before the LORD who is God, 66:2b.

- (Isaiah 66:2b ESV) **But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.**
- (Isaiah 57:15 NLT) The high and lofty one who lives in eternity, the Holy One, says this: "I live in the high and holy place with those whose spirits are contrite and humble. I restore the crushed spirit of the humble and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts."
- (Psalm 51:17 ESV) **The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**
- (Isaiah 6:5 ESV) And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

John Oswalt ... God's sanctuary is the human heart, and unless he dwells there, all other sanctuary building is an exercise in futility.

A) The truly humble person has been humbled **BY** the LORD and **BEFORE** the LORD.

- So she is marked by meekness and modesty, not by religious arrogance and pride.
- It is glaringly apparent to her that she is poor, needy, weak, afflicted and lowly.
- She grieves over and expresses pain for her sins and offenses and knows she is spiritually lame, stricken and smitten.

B) The truly humble grieve over their sins and tremble before the LORD's holy words.

C) The truly humble bow low before their Maker and trust themselves to his kindly care.

- (Psalm 95:6–7a ESV) Oh come, let us

worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! 7 For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

The Apostle Paul speaks of the kindly care of our Shepherd/Maker in Ephesians 1:5 in reference to our adoption as sons.

- (Ephesians 1:5 NASB95) He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

And again in Ephesians 1:9 as he tells us that God made known to us his salvation plan according to the kind intention of his will.

- (Ephesians 1:9 NASB95) He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him.

D) The truly humble person has strong faith in the LORD because her only faith is in the LORD.

She has faith in the LORD alone because she has seen herself before the LORD, so all the self-effort and pretense and false hope of mere religion have been vanquished and she possesses and expresses undeniable, unquenchable faith in the LORD who is God.

Thomas Birks comments ... The humble are socially those who are at the bottom of the heap, pushed down by stronger, dominant interests. ... **Contrite in spirit is "lamed in spirit" ... here used ... to express a sense of inability in spiritual matters. This is not the sense of sin but the sense of the damage wrought by sin in the personality and helplessness to please God.** [Motyer, J. A. (1996). *The prophecy of Isaiah: an introduction & commentary* (p. 534). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.]

E) The truly humble person trembles before the holy words of the LORD.

This person recognizes that it is only a God who is rich in mercy and great love who would bring his tender mercies to an undeserving sinner and instruct him in the way of righteousness.

- (Psalm 25:8–9 ESV) Good and upright is the Lord; therefore **he instructs sinners in the way. 9 He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.**
- (Psalm 25:12 ESV) Who is the man who fears the Lord? Him will **he instruct in the way that he should choose.**
- (Psalm 32:8 ESV) **I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;** I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

3. The proud—the “unhumble”—choose their own way, 66:3-4.

- (Isaiah 66:3–4 ESV) He who slaughters an ox is like one who kills a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, like one who breaks a dog’s neck; he who presents a grain offering, like one who offers pig’s blood; he who makes a memorial offering of frankincense, like one who blesses an idol. **These have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations;** 4 I also will choose harsh treatment for them and bring their fears upon them, because when I called, no one answered, when I spoke, they did not listen; but they did what was evil in my eyes and chose that in which I did not delight.
- (Isaiah 58:3a NLT) “We have fasted before you!” they say. “Why aren’t you impressed? We have been very hard on ourselves, and you don’t even notice it!” “I will tell you why!” I respond. **“It’s because you are fasting to please yourselves.”**
- (Isaiah 53:6 NLT) All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. **We have left God’s paths to follow our own.** Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.

A) The proud choose what delights them and what is detestable to God.

Unwittingly in choosing to worship on their terms they corrupt even the legitimate, prescribed worship of the LORD and this worship is an abomination—a detestable thing—to the LORD.

Edward Young ... Of particular interest is the manner in which the prophet condemns the sacrificers. He employs four similarly constructed phrases, each consisting of two parts, the first of which in each instance refers to a legitimate sacrifice of the Mosaic law, and the second to an action contrary to that law. ... **Are these phrases then condemnations of the Mosaic law, and of the Temple sacrifices?** This has been affirmed by some; **but the meaning actually is that all sacrifice is abominated by God if offered in the wrong spirit.** [*Ibid.* Vol. 3, p. 520.]

These have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations.

... they hated knowledge and chose not to fear the Lord. They rejected my advice and paid no attention when I corrected them. Therefore, they must eat the bitter fruit of living their own way, choking on their own schemes (Proverbs 1:29–31 NLT).

B) So God will choose harsh treatment for them and bring their fears upon them.

- i) He will do this because he calls and they do not answer.
 - ii) He will do this because he speaks and they do not listen.
 - iii) He will do this because they do evil in refusing to choose the things in which the LORD delights.
- (Proverbs 1:28–31 ESV) Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but will not find me. **29 Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, 30 would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, 31 therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices.**