



Forgive Luke 17

Forgiving Oneself – Understanding the Role of Grace in Salvation

PRAYER BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

Forgiveness: 1/27th, 2/3rd, 2/10th, 2/17th (Gone), 2/24th, 3/3rd, 3/10th, 3/17th, 3/24th, 3/31st

1. Forgiveness as Worship: The Six Challenges of Forgiveness in Luke 17 (add Communion notes to this: Communion = celebration of forgiveness, Communion is worship.)

Forgiveness is not 'a choice' for Christians:

- #1.) LIVE a lifestyle that does *not* cause others to stumble (Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42)
- #2.) GUARD your heart.
- #3.) GUARD your heart so you can rebuke while taking no offense
- #4.) Living as a forgiven person comes with responsibilities.
- #5.) ASK for supernatural help
- #6.) **Forgiveness is an act of duty....forgiveness is an act of Worship**

2. What Forgiveness Is/What Forgiveness is Not

3. The Role of Anger in Forgiveness: Is it legitimate?

- #1.) Is it a sin to be Angry?
- #2.) Does God get Angry? YES
- #3.) Does Jesus get angry?
- #4.) Can Anger be a motivator for good?
- #5.) Mishandling Anger has dire (terrible, disastrous) consequences

4. **Forgiving Oneself (Understanding Your Salvation) – Begins with understanding GRACE**

5. Equality Beliefs
6. Making Judgements
7. Boundaries in Forgiveness
8. Necessary Endings: The Wise, The Foolish, The Evil
9. The Role Grief Plays in Forgiveness
10. Addressing Conflict: Peace Maker v.s. Peace Lover
11. The Art of Relinquishing Control

*Communion slaps us with forgiveness each time we enter into this ordinance

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Colossians 1:13-14 (ESV)

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Forgiving Oneself: Understanding the Role of Grace in our Salvation

Grace for oneself is formed when we repent and open our inner being to be filled with Jesus. His Grace comes along with that experience via the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:29-30

*²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ **And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.** ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger*



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and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

NLT

²⁹ Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

³⁰ And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own,^[e] (Or *has put his seal on you.*) guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.

³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. ³² Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

- Why cannot this statement of Paul's be applied to our self-talk, our self-thoughts, our self-esteem?
- Perhaps we have embraced an ideal that 'self-esteem' is just pride relabeled.
- Here is my definition: The ability to accurately examine oneself and, therefore, define oneself in our physical state as well as our spiritual state. (Looking in the Jesus mirror.)
- You cannot accurately see yourself when you are looking at just one facet.

Tonight's process-

Accurate Self Examination: The tasting of God's Grace leads us to examine who I am without Christ → Salvation Now, who am I in Christ?

I. The Tension of Self Esteem

(Pride V.S. Self Love? Acceptance? Embrace? Respect.)

Pride: When self-esteem is based solely on our physical self. Can be good, can be bad, can be demented by selfishness and sin and evil.

Self Esteem: Assessing one's abilities and giftings in the natural and the supernatural/spiritual realm. Respect for self and other's is a natural by product of heading this direction. Confidence is a fruit.

A. God Created:

Brand, C., Draper, C., England, A., Bond, S., Clendenen, E. R., & Butler, T. C. (Eds.). (2003). [Self-Esteem](#). In *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (pp. 1460–1461). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

Psalm 8:3–8



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³ *When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,* ⁴ *what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?*

⁵ ***Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.***

⁶ *You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet,⁷ all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,⁸ the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.*

NLT - When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—
the moon and the stars you set in place—

⁴ what are mere mortals that you should think about them,
human beings that you should care for them?^[a]

⁵ Yet you made them only a little lower than God^[a]
and crowned them^[a] with glory and honor.

⁶ You gave them charge of everything you made,
putting all things under their authority—

⁷ the flocks and the herds
and all the wild animals,

⁸ the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea,
and everything that swims the ocean currents.

Genesis 1:26–27 – I am an image bearer (i.e. sports teams insignia).

²⁶ *Then God said, “Let us make man **in our image, after our likeness**. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

²⁷ *So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

B. Self-centered/Selfish Sinners:

Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

Romans 7:21-25 NLT

²¹ *I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong.* ²² *I love God’s law with all my heart.* ²³ *But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.* ²⁴ *Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?* ²⁵ *Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God’s law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.*

II. What Give Us Value?

A. Being formed on purpose

Psalm 139:13

¹³ *For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb.*



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What thoughts/behaviors ask: “Did God make a mistake when He formed me?”

B. Being crucified with Him

Romans 6:6

⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

C. Being Heirs w/ Christ

Romans 8:23

²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Romans 8:11

¹¹ If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Romans 8:16-17

¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

D. Walking WITH one another – Living Humility

Galatians 6:1-3

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³ For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Philippians 2:3 - Humility

³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

NOTE: What does God think of the process of self-comparison as a way to measure our value?

2 Corinthians 10:12b

But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.

III. Resiliency

Developed by: Long term...

A. Examining oneself according to the Word = Being supernaturally honest



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Hebrews 4:12

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- B. Being aware of being natural with a complete makeover coming that is partially present inside of us already (What is and what is to come)

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

5 For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. 2 We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. 3 For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. 4 While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. 5 God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

6 So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. 7 For we live by believing and not by seeing. 8 Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. 10 For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.

- C. Understanding you are on purpose

Psalm 139:13-16

*13 For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.
15 My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance;
in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.*

Closing....something....[writing exercise?]

- I.



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Am.

On Purpose.

NOTES:

How to Develop Resiliency

Al Siebert, Ph.D., in his book, *The Survivor Personality*, claims that emotional resilience comes from developing the following attributes:

- Be curious, play, and laugh. Life’s best survivors have a child-like curiosity.
- Learn from unpleasant experiences. Treat difficult situations like a workout at the gym. You do your very best, pause afterward to reflect on what happened, and ask, “What can I learn from this?” Then imagine yourself doing better next time.
- Develop strong self-esteem. Self-esteem works like a thick skin or blanket of energy around you.
- Value your paradoxical traits. Interviews and surveys show that life’s best survivors value being flexible, resilient, and adaptable above any other quality. Appreciate your inborn ability to be both one way and the opposite. It is healthy to be both serious and playful, self-appreciating and self-critical, optimistic and pessimistic, angry and forgiving, trusting and cautious. Paradoxical traits are, at the psychological level, like the opposing muscles in your body that contract and extend.
- Practice empathy for difficult people.
- Expect good outcomes.¹

Every person, no matter how sinful, is of inestimable value to God (Luke 15:11–32; 1 Cor. 6:20) and supremely loved by Him (1 John 4:10; cp. Rom. 8:35–39). [The beckoning of Common Grace]

Brand, C., Draper, C., England, A., Bond, S., Clendenen, E. R., & Butler, T. C. (Eds.). (2003). [Self-Esteem](#). In *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (pp. 1460–1461). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

Christians possess a new nature that allows them to be self-confident, but only through Christ (1 Cor. 9:24; 2 Cor. 3:5; 10:7; Phil. 3:4–7; 4:13). [The completion of Saving Grace]

NOT USE Both self-elation and self-abasement ignore the work of Christ in a believer (2 Cor. 12:7–10; Col. 2:18, 23). Brand, C., Draper, C., England, A., Bond, S., Clendenen, E. R., & Butler, T. C. (Eds.). (2003). [Self-Esteem](#). In *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (pp. 1460–1461). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

~~Paul taught that Christians should strive for a balanced self esteem that is able to minister to the needs of others (Rom. 12:3; 2 Cor. 10:7–13; Gal. 6:1–3; Phil. 2:3).~~²

¹ Morgan, R. J. (2000). [Nelson’s complete book of stories, illustrations, and quotes](#) (electronic ed., pp. 667–668). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

² Brand, C., Draper, C., England, A., Bond, S., Clendenen, E. R., & Butler, T. C. (Eds.). (2003). [Self-Esteem](#). In *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (pp. 1460–1461). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.



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SELF-ESTEEM: *A HEALTHY YOU*

Self-esteem is how each individual values herself. Poor self-esteem (bad, condemning feelings about yourself) are weights that keep believers under condemnation and cause them to be less than what God intends. Believers are to combat such feelings of inferiority (Heb. 12:1).

Proper self-esteem in a follower of Christ is a matter of recognizing and confronting yourself in your humanity, including the tendency to sin, “going astray” (1 Pet. 2:25). It is also a matter of embracing Jesus’ work on the Cross—His grace that covers a multitude of sins. The process of comprehending God’s infinite care for the individual—each with unique strengths and weaknesses—puts a perspective on self-esteem. Psalm 139 expresses the wonder of being uniquely created by God and the intimate care of His presence at all times. Jesus tenderly described His love for His children (Matt. 6:25–34).

Prerequisites to healthy self-esteem include these:

- Recognize the need of a Savior (Is. 53:6).
- Accept being “in the beloved” (Eph. 1:6; Rom. 8:1).
- Move forward in God’s plan for your life (Phil. 3:13, 14).
- Have a realistic view of yourself (Rom. 12:3).
- Avoid comparisons to others (2 Cor. 10:12).

A person with healthy self-esteem is marked by these characteristics:

- Resting in “ownership” by God (1 Cor. 3:16).
- Submitting to being the “workmanship” of God (Eph. 2:10).
- Appreciating the differences of others (1 Cor. 12:1–31).
- Willingness to take risks, steps of faith (Esth. 4:13–16).
- Forging good relationships with others (Ruth 1:16, 17).

God does not evaluate human worth as we do. He looks to the heart within, while we tend to look only at the outer frame (1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Pet. 3:3, 4). The heart of a healthy self-esteem is recognizing that “self” must be seen as created for God’s glory. We might more accurately say that within every believer there must be “God-esteem,” which accepts whatever lot in life is ours.

We must be willing to change weaknesses into strengths when possible—and when that is not possible, we are to look for opportunities for God to be glorified even in our failures and suffering. God does not make mistakes, and He is never finished working in us as He continues to refine and edify, helping each woman reach her maximum potential (1 Pet. 5:10). Negatives can be changed into positives and tragedies into triumphs with the Savior’s touch.



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See also notes on Appearance (2 Cor. 3); Beauty (Prov. 4); Identity in Christ (Col. 2); Image of God (Ps. ³

2 Corinthians **10:7 Certain religious leaders** had presented themselves to the Corinthian church as ministers of Christ (2 Cor. 11:23). They brought letters of recommendation (2 Cor. 3:1), commended themselves (2 Cor. 10:12), and identified themselves with so called “super apostles” (2 Cor. 11:5). These men had credentials, social status, education, and persuasive rhetoric (1 Cor 1:26; 2:1). However, despite outward appearances, they were not genuine apostles (2 Cor. 11:13). They opposed Paul (2 Cor. 10:10), sought monetary gain (2 Cor. 2:17), and indulged in sensuality (2 Cor. 12:21). Paul urged the Corinthians to evaluate these men by spiritual rather than carnal standards.⁴

Jude

²⁴ Now to Him ^(AR) who is able to protect you from stumbling ^(AS) and to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless ^(AT) and with great joy, ²⁵ to the only ^(AU) God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, ^(G) be glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time, ^(H) now, and forever. Amen.

- A. [Jude 1:24](#) : [Rm 16:25](#); [Eph 3:20](#);
- B. [Jude 1:24](#) : [Jn 17:12](#);
- C. [Jude 1:24](#) : [Eph 1:4](#); [5:27](#); [Php 2:15](#); [Col 1:22](#);
- D. [Jude 1:25](#) : [Jn 5:44](#); [Rm 16:27](#);

E. **6666**

F. **grace**

G. The unmerited favour of God, made known through Jesus Christ, and expressed supremely in the redemption and full forgiveness of sinners through faith in Jesus Christ.

H. This set of themes consists of the following:

I. 6667 grace, in OT

J. 6668 grace, and Jesus Christ

K. 6669 grace, and salvation

L. 6670 grace, and Holy Spirit

M. 6671 grace, and Christian life

N. 6672 grace, in human relationships

O. **6667**

P. **grace, in OT**

Q. In the OT, grace is evident in the special relationship between God and his people.

³ Thomas Nelson, I. (1995). [The Woman's Study Bible](#). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ Thomas Nelson, I. (1995). [The Woman's Study Bible](#) (2 Co 10:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



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- R. **God's grace was expressed in the covenant relationship**
- S. **Dt 7:7-9; 2Ki 13:22-23** *See also Ge 9:8-11; 17:1-8; Ex 6:2-8; Dt 8:17-18; Ne 1:5-6; Isa 55:1-3; Eze 16:1-8*
- T. **God's grace affirmed**
- U. **God's grace shown in his compassion Ps 86:15; La 3:22; Joel 2:13** *See also Ex 33:19; Dt 13:17-18; 2Ch 30:9; Ezr 8:22; Ps 103:13; Eze 39:25; Hos 2:19; Jnh 4:1-2; Mic 7:18-20; Zec 10:6; Mal 3:17*
- V. **God's grace shown in his readiness to forgive Isa 55:7; Jer 33:6-9** *See also Da 9:9-10; Mic 7:18-20*
- W. **God's grace shown in his favour, provision and healing Lev 26:9; Jer 32:40-41** *See also Nu 10:29; Dt 13:17-18; 2Sa 22:28; Ps 30:4-5; Isa 49:8; Jer 9:23-24; 33:6-9; Na 1:7; Zec 12:10*
- X. **God made his grace known to individuals**
- Y. **Ne 9:16-20** *The Israelites confess their sins; Job 10:12* *See also Ge 24:35-36 Abraham; Ge 32:9-10 Jacob; Ge 39:20-21 Joseph; Ex 33:12-13 Moses; Dt 33:23 Naphtali; Jdg 2:18 in the period of the judges; 1Sa 2:21 Hannah; 1Ki 3:6 Solomon; Ezr 7:27-28 Ezra; Ne 2:8 Nehemiah; Ps 6:9 David; Isa 26:10 God's grace may be unavailing.*
- Z. **God's grace implored**
- AA. **2Ch 33:12; Ps 51:1; Isa 33:2** *See also Ge 24:12; Ex 32:11; 1Ki 8:28-30; 2Ki 13:4; Ne 9:32; Ps 25:16; 69:13; Da 9:17-19; Hos 14:2; Hab 3:2; Zec 1:12*
- BB. *See also*
- CC. 1030 God, compassion
- DD. 1055 God, grace & mercy
- EE. 1085 God, love of
- FF. 1095 God, patience of
- GG. 1320 God as Saviour
- HH. 1330 God, the provider
- II. 1345 covenant
- JJ. 5856 extravagance
- KK. 8261 generosity, God's
-
- LL. **6668**
- MM. **grace, and Jesus Christ**
- NN. Grace is demonstrated pre-eminently in Jesus Christ and the work he came to do.
- OO. **God's promise of grace has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ**
- PP. **Jn 1:14,16-17; 2Ti 1:8-10** *See also Jn 3:16-17; Ac 13:38; Ro 1:1-5; 5:8,16-17; Eph 1:3-8; Tit 2:11-14; 3:4-5; 1Pe 1:3-5*
- QQ. **Grace was expressed in Jesus Christ's life and ministry**
- RR. **Mt 9:36** pp Mk 6:34 **2Co 8:9** *See also Mt 9:10-13 pp Mk 2:15-17 pp Lk 5:27-32; Mt 11:4-5; 19:13-15 pp Mk 10:13-16 pp Lk 18:15-17; Lk 2:40; 4:22; 19:9-10; 23:34; Jn 10:11; Ac 10:37-38; Heb 2:9; 1Jn 3:16*
- SS. **Grace is demonstrated in Jesus Christ's atoning death on the cross**



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TT. **Jn 1:16-17; Eph 2:4-5; 1Pe 2:10** *See also* Jn 3:16; Ro 3:22-24; 5:1-2; 8:32; 1Co 1:4-6; 2Co 5:18-19; Gal 2:21; Eph 4:7; 2Th 2:16-17; 1Ti 1:13-14; 1Pe 1:3-5; 1Jn 4:10

UU. *See also*

VV. 1115 God, purpose of

WW. 2015 Christ, compassion

XX. 2027 Christ, grace & mercy

YY. 2048 Christ, love of

ZZ. 2525 Christ, cross of

AAA. 6615 atonement, necessity

BBB. 6654 forgiveness, Christ's ministry

CCC. 6676 justification

DDD. 6708 predestination

EEE. **6669**

FFF. **grace, and salvation**

GGG. Deliverance through Jesus Christ is the result of accepting God's undeserved favour.

HHH. **Salvation is all God's doing**

III. **Ro 5:6-8; 9:14-16; Eph 1:7; 1Ti 1:15-16** *See also* Ex 33:19; Ac 4:12; 20:24; Ro 5:15-17; 2Co 6:2; Col 1:13-14; 2Th 2:16; Tit 2:11; Heb 7:23-25; Rev 7:10

JJJ. **There is nothing human beings can do to save themselves**

KKK. **Tit 3:4-7** *See also* Lk 18:9-14; Ro 11:5-6

LLL. **Salvation is not by keeping God's law**

MMM. **Gal 5:4** *See also* Ro 5:20-21; 6:14; 8:1-4; Gal 2:21; 3:17-18; 1Ti 1:9

NNN. **Salvation must be accepted as a free gift by faith**

OOO. **Eph 2:4-9** *See also* Ac 15:7-11; 16:30-31; Ro 3:21-24; 4:14-16; 5:1-2; Heb 4:16

PPP. *See also*

QQQ. 2530 Christ, death of

RRR. 4018 life, spiritual

SSS. 5375 law

TTT. 6510 salvation

UUU. 6606 access to God

VVV. 6626 conversion

WWW. 6634 deliverance

XXX. 6644 eternal life

YYY. 6710 privileges

ZZZ. 6720 redemption

AAAA. 8020 faith

BBBB. **6670**

CCCC. **grace, and Holy Spirit**

DDDD. The Holy Spirit is both an expression of God's grace and the means by which it is experienced.

EEEE. **The Holy Spirit is himself a gracious gift of God**



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- FFFF. **Ac 2:38; 6:5-8; Tit 3:4-7; 1Jn 3:24** *See also* Jn 6:63; 20:21-22; Ac 5:32; 11:15-17; 15:6-8; 1Co 2:12; Gal 3:14
- GGGG. **Through the Holy Spirit God brings believers out of slavery and into his family**
Ro 8:15-16 *See also* Gal 4:6-7; Eph 2:17-18
- HHHH. **Through the Holy Spirit God equips believers to serve him** 1Co 12:4-7 *See also*
Jn 7:37-39; Ac 1:8; 2:4; 4:31; Ro 5:5; Gal 3:5; Heb 2:4
- IIII. **The Holy Spirit in God's gracious work of redemption**
- JJJJ. **Ro 8:1-2** *See also* 1Co 2:4-5,13; 1Th 1:4-5; 1Pe 1:12
- KKKK. **The Holy Spirit in God's gracious work of sanctifying and sustaining his people**
- LLLL. **2Co 3:17-18; 2Th 2:13** *See also* Ac 9:31; Ro 8:26-27; 14:17-18; 15:13; Gal 5:4-5,22-23; 6:8; Eph 2:22; 3:16-20; Php 1:18-19; 2Ti 1:14; Heb 10:29; Jas 4:4-6
- MMMM. *See also*
- NNNN. 3230 Holy Spirit & regeneration
- OOOO. 3233 Holy Spirit & sanctification
- PPPP. 3251 Holy Spirit, filling with
- QQQQ. 3254 Holy Spirit, fruit of
- RRRR. 6744 sanctification
- SSSS. 7115 children of God
- TTTT. 7966 spiritual gifts
- UUUU. 8102 abiding in Christ
-
- VVVV. **6671**
- WWWW. **grace, and Christian life**
- XXXX. The Christian life, from its beginning to its end, is totally dependent upon the grace of God.
- YYYY. **God's grace compensates for human weaknesses**
- ZZZZ. **2Co 12:8-9; 1Pe 5:10** *See also* 1Co 2:1-5; 2Co 9:8; Heb 2:14; 4:15; 5:2; Jas 4:6; 2Pe 3:17-18
- AAAAA. **Believers are to pray for grace**
- BBBBB. **Heb 4:16** *See also* Ps 25:16; Hos 14:1-2; Col 1:9; 4:12
- CCCCC. **Christian experience may be summed up in terms of grace**
- DDDDD. **1Co 15:10** *See also* Ac 18:27; Ro 5:2; Gal 1:15; Php 1:7
- EEEEE. **Believers should go on to experience more of God's grace**
- FFFFF. **Ac 20:32** *See also* Ac 13:43; Col 1:3-6; Heb 13:9; 1Pe 5:12; 2Pe 3:18
- GGGGG. **Believers are enabled to serve Jesus Christ by his grace**
- HHHHH. **1Pe 4:10** *See also* Ac 15:39-40; Ro 5:17; 12:6; 15:15; 1Co 3:10; 2Co 12:9; Gal 2:9; Eph 3:7-9
- IIIII. **God's grace is seen in Christian character, especially in generosity**
- JJJJJ. **2Co 8:6-7** *Referring to a collection being taken up for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. See also* Ac 4:33; 11:22-23; 2Co 9:13-14; Col 4:6
- KKKKK. **An ongoing experience of God's grace requires the believer's co-operation**
- LLLLL. **2Co 6:1** *See also* Php 2:12-13; Heb 12:15; 1Pe 5:5; Jas 4:6



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MMMMM. *See also*

NNNNN. 5902 maturity

OOOOO. 5954 strength

PPPPP. 8256 fruitfulness

QQQQQ. 8347 spiritual growth

RRRRR. 8357 weakness

SSSSS. 8434 giving

TTTTT. **6672**

UUUUU. **grace, in human relationships**

VVVVV. Undeserved favour or kindness, mercy, compassion and generosity are to be found in human relationships and are strongly encouraged in Scripture.

WWWWW. **Examples of grace in human relationships**

XXXXX. **Ru 2:10; 2Sa 9:1-7; Ac 28:2** *See also Ge 33:8-11; Jos 2:12-14; 1Sa 15:6; 24:18; 1Ki 2:7; Ps 37:25-26; Ac 4:8-10; 1Co 4:13*

YYYYY. **Grace in relationships encouraged**

ZZZZZ. **Lk 6:27-28** pp Mt 5:44 *See also Pr 14:9; Ro 15:7; Phm 14*

AAAAA. **Grace in relationships expressed as mercy and compassion Eph 4:32** *See also 2Ch 10:7; Zec 7:9; Mt 9:13; Hos 6:6; Mt 18:32-33; Lk 10:36-37; 17:3-4; Ro 15:1-2; 1Pe 3:8; Jude 22*

BBBBB. **Grace in relationships expressed as generosity and kindness Dt 15:10-11** *See also 1Sa 25:8; Ps 112:5; Pr 11:25-27; 1Co 10:24; 2Co 9:11-13; Gal 6:9-10; 1Ti 6:18; 2Ti 2:24; Heb 13:16; 2Pe 1:5-7*

CCCCC. *See also*

DDDDD. 5446 poverty

EEEEE. 5806 compassion

FFFFF. 5972 unkindness

GGGGG. 6655 forgiveness, application

HHHHH. 6686 mercy

IIIII. 8244 ethics and grace

JJJJJ. 8262 generosity, human

KKKKK. 8264 gentleness

LLLLL. 8291 kindness

MMMMM. 8292 love

NNNNN. 8445 hospitality⁵

⁵ Manser, M. H. (2009). [*Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies*](#). London: Martin Manser.



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GOD'S SALVATION THE DOCTRINES OF HUMANKIND, SIN, AND SALVATION

Men and women are the highest forms of God's earthly creation. All other aspects of creation are for the purpose of serving men and women; men and women are created to serve God and are thus theocentric. In this section we will discuss the subjects of humankind, their fall into sin, and God's salvation of men and women from their estranged, guilty, and dreadful plight.

Humankind

The Position and Nature of Humanity

Men and women are complex creatures of God composed not only of a physical body but also an immaterial self, called a soul or spirit. In the present life men and women function as whole persons, though it is a type of conditional unity because the material and immaterial aspects interact upon each other in such intricate ways that they are not easily distinguished. Yet as has been expounded by many in the history of the church, the characteristics of the immaterial (soul/spirit) cannot be attributed only to the physical. They remain distinct, but not separated until death, closely related and interacting with each other. Humans were a unity at creation and will again be a complete unity at glorification, but during the present time we can affirm a type of conditional unity brought about by the entrance and effects of sin. The primary reason for the importance of men and women in creation, over against the rest of God's creation, is related to their creation in God's image (Gen 1:26–27).

The Image of God

God has created us in His image and likeness. At first this might appear to refer to our physical makeup—that we look like God. That is not what the Bible means by the terms “image and likeness of God.” Men and women, because they are created in the image of God, have rationality, morality, spirituality, and personality. They can relate to God and other humans while rightly exercising dominion over the earth and the animals (Gen 1:26–28; Ps 8).

Nothing in us or about us is separable, distinct, or discoverable as the divine image. Each person individually and the entire race corporately are the image of God. But no single aspect of human nature or behavior or thought pattern can be isolated as the image of God.

Male and Female

In creation there is a complete equality between men and women; neither sex is given prominence over the other. Again this is related to the fact that male and female are both created in God's image. Also “in Christ” in our redeemed state there is neither male nor female (Gal 3:28). We cannot, however, bypass the teaching that a distinction between the roles or functions carried out by men and women is addressed in Genesis 2:18–25.

Sin and the Fall



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Even though men and women are created in God's image, the entrance of sin into the world has had great and negative influences upon God's creation, especially humans, created in God's image. As a result of sin the image of God was not lost (Gen 9:6; Jas 3:9) but was severely tarnished and marred. The role of exercising dominion (Gen 1:28) has been drastically disturbed by the effects of sin on humans and the curse on nature. The ability to live in right relationship with God, with others, with nature, and with our very own selves has been corrupted. All attempts at righteousness are as filthy rags in God's sight (Isa 64:6), and humans are ultimately spiritually dead and alienated from God (Eph 2:1–3). Therefore we are unable to reflect properly the divine image and likeness (Rom 1:18–32).

It is necessary to see that the sin of Adam and Eve (Gen 3) was not just a moral lapse but a deliberate turning away from God and rejection of Him. The day that they disobeyed God, they died spiritually—which ultimately brought physical death (Gen 2:17). The consequences were many as Paul described in Romans 1:18–3:20; 5:12–21; and Ephesians 2:1–22. Important among these consequences are the effects upon our wills, the volitional elements of men and women. Sin's entrance has brought about a sinful nature in all humanity. People act in accord with their sinful nature. No one ever acts in a way that is contrary to his or her own inner nature apart from regeneration.

Satan as a serpent approaching Eve in the garden of Eden

This idea is significant when reflecting upon the matters of our relationship to God. Because of the entrance of sin into the world and our inheritance of Adam's sinful nature (Rom 5:12–19), we are by nature hostile to God and estranged from Him (Rom 8:7; Eph 2:1–3). We then have wills that do not obey God, eyes that do not see, and ears that do not hear because spiritually we are dead to God.

While we function as free moral agents with free wills, our decisions and actions are always affected by sin. In day-to-day decisions we have the ability to make free and rational choices, but these choices are always influenced by our sin nature. In regard to our relationship with God, we do not genuinely repent or turn to God without divine enablement because we are by nature hostile to God.

An awareness of these ideas helps to clarify frequently misunderstood concepts about the nature of sinful humanity. Our nature is depraved, but this does not mean we are as wicked as we can be. Rather the idea of depravity refers to the fact that all aspects of our being are negatively impacted by sin. Men and women still can and still do right and good things as viewed by society, but these thoughts and actions no matter how benevolent are sinful if not done for the glory of God. People choose to do good, but not the ultimate good that is the goal of pleasing God and seeking His eternal glory. Thus depravity involves our total willful rejection of the will and glory of God.

We are therefore totally depraved, but we cannot say that we are totally corrupt. Other factors such as environment, emotional makeup, heritage, and, of course, the continuing effect of our having been created in God's image influence the degree of corruption. The degree of wickedness, corruption, and deceitfulness differs from individual to individual and from culture



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to culture; but certainly some are more noble than others (Acts 17:11). Still, sin is inevitable because all in this world are estranged from God, but the biblical answer is that Jesus Christ has regained what was lost in Adam (Rom 5:12–21). The grace of God has provided our restoration and brought about a right relationship with God, with one another, with nature, and with ourselves.

Salvation

Grace

Salvation is a *free gift of God*, and it cannot be merited by our good behavior (Rom 3:22–24). Grace declares that salvation is not the culmination of humanity's quest for God but that it resides in the initiative of God toward men and women (Eph 1:4–7). Even our faith is a gift of God (Eph 2:8–9), and, as a matter of fact, all of life is such (Jas 1:17). If grace brings us to God, it also enables us to continue and complete our spiritual pilgrimage. This does not deny human involvement in salvation, but it does affirm the primacy of grace. When men and women receive the grace of God, it is a testimony to the impact of grace itself; but when grace is rejected, it is attributable to the hardness and sinfulness of the human heart.

Grace comes to us while we are still in our sins and brings spiritual transformation based on the accomplished cross work of Jesus Christ. Even the sanctifying work of the Spirit is enacted in those who do not merit or deserve it. In reality *grace is God's free and loving favor to the ill-deserving*.

God does not graciously accept us because He sees our change for the better, as if conversion were the basis for receiving God's grace. Instead, the Bible pictures God coming into our lives, taking us just as we are because He is abundantly merciful (Eph 2:1–10).

Salvation is of God and is not based on the human response, yet men and women must respond to God's grace. Only persons who receive and are transformed by divine grace can make a favorable response to God's salvific invitation, but only those who do respond are indeed transformed by grace. Thus we affirm the priority of initiating grace without neglecting simultaneously to maintain our responsibility to believe.

Far from violating our wills or personalities, God's grace appeals to our deepest yearnings. Therefore when we are exposed to grace, intrinsically we are drawn toward it. We therefore affirm that in salvific grace, we are not merely passive. Neither do we want to imply that God does some and we do the rest; rather, God does all, and we do all. God does not override the will but releases the will for believing response. It is certain that convicting grace can be rejected (Matt 23:37; Luke 7:30; Heb 12:15); yet when we receive the gracious gift of regeneration, our wills are turned in a completely new direction. When God extends His grace to us, He is the active agent, but He always extends grace through various means. The means of grace include the preached gospel, the written Word of God, the invitation to respond to grace, the prayers of other believers, and the faith of the respondent. This leads to the need to understand further the meaning of faith.

Faith

The Bible maintains that faith is the means by which we receive and appropriate the salvation purchased for us by the cross work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gal 2:16; Eph 2:8–9). *Faith includes a full commitment of the whole person to the Lord Jesus, a commitment that involves knowledge, trust, and obedience*. Faith is not merely an intellectual assent or an emotional response but a complete inward spiritual change confirmed to us by the Holy Spirit. Faith is altogether brought about by God, and it is altogether the human response bringing about complete enslavement to God and full liberation from the snare of sin.



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The object of faith is not the teaching about Christ but Christ himself. Though faith is more than doctrinal assent, it must include adherence to doctrine. In our belief in and commitment to Jesus Christ, we acknowledge Him as Savior from sin and Lord of our lives, even Lord of creation (Rom 10:9). True conversion definitely involves a belief in Christ's person as the God-Man and in His work as Savior. We must remember, however, that it is possible to have orthodox understanding of Christ without a living faith in Him.

Conversion and Repentance

Conversion signifies our turning to Christ initiated by God. It is a great work of God's power changing the heart and infusing life into our dead spirits. It is important to recognize that the outworking of this grace in the conversion experience displays itself differently in some than in others. Not all have a "Damascus road experience" like the apostle Paul. Some are converted quietly like Lydia and others dramatically like the Philippian jailer (Acts 16). But for all it involves a turning away from sin to righteousness, and it issues in service to the world and separation without withdrawal from it.

The *turning away from sin, renouncing, and changing our minds about sin and Christ is what we mean by repentance*. It is not merely feeling sorry for ourselves but forsaking sin.

True conversion does not just stimulate our natural abilities to do better, to "turn over a new leaf"; rather it is the impartation of a new nature. Conversion must be differentiated from reformation of character; it is a radical yet progressive alteration of our very being.

Salvation Metaphors

Briefly we must mention some of the important biblical themes and metaphors or models that picture our salvation. None of these concepts completely present the full understanding of salvation. See articles in the Pauline Letters on Adoption," Justification by Faith," and "Salvation in Paul's Thought."

Regeneration. This is the most frequently discussed term within popular Christianity. It is *a spiritual change by which the Holy Spirit imparts divine life*. The idea is familiar in the writings of John, Peter, and Paul and is not without Old Testament precedent. The classic presentation is found in John 3:3–8 (see also 1 Pet 1:23; Titus 3:5–7). From John 3 comes the popular term "born again"—which is better translated as "born from above"—whereby God imparts righteousness to us. It is the experiential picture of our entrance into God's family, whereby adoption refers to our position in this family.

Sanctification. Sanctification involves different aspects of our salvation and is in some sense an umbrella term. The Bible speaks of positional sanctification (1 Cor 6:11), progressive sanctification (Rom 6:14–7:25), and ultimate sanctification (1 John 3:1–3). It is a work of the Father (John 17:17), the Son (Gal 2:20), and primarily of the Spirit (2 Cor 3:17–18). Yet it is also a work of the believer (Rom 12:1–2). The Bible does not teach a "letting go and letting God" approach to sanctification; rather, we are to strive after holiness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling. This is accomplished through the Bible's transforming effects in our lives (1 Pet 2:2), prayer (Col 4:2), fellowship and worship (Heb 10:19–25), and the circumstances of life (Rom 8:28).

Glorification. The arrival at the state of absolute righteousness is our glorification. *Justification is a declaration of righteousness; sanctification is the process of becoming more righteous; and glorification is the final consummation of our righteousness* (Rom 8:28–30).

Forgiveness. The putting away of sin and its penalty is forgiveness. It includes a gracious forgetting (Eph 4:32), a sending away of our sins (Matt 26:28), and a putting aside or disregarding of all sin (Rom 3:25). The Bible is the only religious book that emphasizes total and complete forgiveness (Heb 10:17), as pictured in the account of the wayward son (Luke 15:11–32). Scripture presents the bases of forgiveness as the shedding of blood (Heb 9:22–26), as well as our faith and repentance (Luke 17:3–10).



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Union with Christ. The result of the concepts of adoption, forgiveness, and justification is pictured as the believer's new sphere of union with Christ (John 15; Rom 6:1–11; Eph 1:3–14). Positionally, our union with Christ presents us in a new position before God. Experientially, the union of believers with God is one of the most tender concepts expressed in Scripture: it is invisible and imperceptible to the senses; it is unfathomable, escaping all inward vision. Yet this mystery (Col 1:27–28) cannot be dissected or denied.

Eternal Security

God is the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb 12:2). Salvation is from sin, for the world has primarily a need of a sin bearer (John 1:29). This involves disarming believers from the rulers and authorities of this world (Col 2:14–15). Salvation is only in Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), is imperishable (1 Pet 1:4), and is the source of all spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3).

Our salvation is secured in Christ, and nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (Rom 8:31–39); yet our response to this truth brings our assurance. Eternal security is an objective truth, but our response to it is experiential and subjective. It is based on the work of Christ (Heb 7:25), the witness of the Spirit (Rom 8:14–17), and our obedience (1 John 5:11–13). God has promised to keep us from stumbling (Jude 24), having sealed us until the day of redemption (Eph 4:30). Thus we are responsible to persevere and hold on to God. Ultimately our security in Christ comes because He has a hold on us (John 10:28–30).

Conclusion

We affirm that God has created men and women in the image of God. Humans have sinned and are alienated from God apart from salvific grace. In grace God takes the initiative in bringing sinners to Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and the human response of faith. As a result of God's grace, believers experience salvation from sin which involves conversion to God. All of salvation is of God, yet we respond in faith and commitment. The Bible expresses these truths in various metaphors, underscoring throughout that God is the Author and Finisher of our salvation.⁶

**Forgiveness is not an occasional act. It is a permanent attitude.
MLK, Jr.**

A STUDY IN HUMILITY:

⁶ Dockery, D. S. (Ed.). (1992). [*Holman Bible Handbook*](#) (pp. 830–833). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.



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MATTHEW 3:11

¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

THE POWER OF HUMILITY

MATTHEW 3:11 How difficult is it for you to accept and admit that others are mightier than you? If you regard strength as the power to dominate, you'll always be intimidated by those who seem to have more than you—more expertise, more experience, more energy, more intelligence.

John held a different understanding of strength (Matt. 3:11). He saw it as a gift from God to be used for divine purposes. That gave him tremendous power in his community (3:5). His humility gave him the capacity to serve and to welcome others—in this case, Jesus—as valuable associates.

Like John, Paul challenged believers to cultivate humility—not a groveling, abject demeanor, but rather an acknowledgment of what someone is. See "Humility—The Scandalous Virtue" at Phil. 2:3.⁷

PHILIPPIANS 2:3 HUMILITY—THE SCANDALOUS VIRTUE

By recommending "lowliness of mind" (Phil. 2:3), Paul fired a broadside at the Philippian culture—and our own. Like us, the Greeks and Romans exalted the lifestyles of the rich and famous!

Lowliness of mind? Who would want that? A "lowly" (or humble) person meant a slave—a servile, groveling, wretched individual. And for Paul to associate the word "lowly" with "mind" was a laughable contradiction: everyone assumed that lowly people had no intelligence, and everyone honored higher thinking and self-conceit.

The idea of humility seemed especially out of place in Philippi. The town hosted a Roman military colony by the pretentious-sounding name of Colonia Augusta Julia Philippensis. Unlike other conquered towns, it enjoyed the *jus Italicum* (law of Italy), which made it a sort of small, self-governing version of the empire. Pride and self-importance were part and parcel of Philippian life in Paul's day (see "Philippi" at Acts 16:12).

Yet Paul insisted that Christians there cultivate humility—but not a groveling, abject demeanor. No, biblical humility means not thinking of oneself more highly than is true (Rom. 12:3), but rather acknowledging what one is—with all of one's strengths and weaknesses, pluses and minuses, successes and failures.

Far from self-loathing, real humility makes people so truthful that they don't hesitate, when necessary, to tell about even their good qualities.

Do you want true humility? It comes from seeing yourself in relation to God. No wonder, then, that this virtue ran counter to the Roman worldview. Their concept of a god was grossly similar to their concept of humanity, and the mythological Roman gods were hardly noble.

By contrast, Jesus praised the humble, "the poor in spirit," (literally, "the destitute," Matt. 5:3). What would that attitude look like? David expresses it in Psalm 39:4–6:

Lord, make me to know my end,
And what is the measure of my days,
That I may know how frail I am.
Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths,
And my age is as nothing before You;
Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor.

⁷ [Word in life study Bible](#). (1996). (electronic ed., Mt 3:11). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.



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Surely every man walks about like a shadow;
Surely they busy themselves in vain;
He heaps up riches,
And does not know who will gather them.

Likewise, the prophet Micah warns that humility is one of three main virtues that ought to govern our lives (Mic. 6:8):

He has shown you, O man, what is good;
And what does the Lord require of you ♦
But to do justly,
To love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?

Humility is not an option for us as believers—it's an essential if we want to walk with God. Over and again, Scripture insists that we either walk humbly with Him, or not at all (Ps. 138:6; Is. 57:15; 1 Pet. 5:5–7). In short, a biblical lifestyle knows nothing of looking out chiefly for "number one". Just the opposite. With John the Baptist we need to say, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). ♦

Humility affects four crucial areas of everyday life:

- (1) *our view of ourselves.* See "The Proper Measure of All Things" at Heb. 2:6–8.
- (2) *our attitude toward controlling our circumstances.* See "Who's in Charge Here?" at James 4:13–16.
- (3) *how good or bad we think we are.* See "Are People Basically Good?" at Rom. 7:21.
- (4) *our perspective on status and power.* See "Leadership Equals Humility?" at Luke 22:24–27.⁸

THE PROPER MEASURE OF ALL THINGS

HEBREWS 2:6–8 "What is man?" David asked in Ps. 8:4–6. He found his answer not by looking at man in himself, but man in relation to God. Five hundred years later, the Greek philosopher Protagoras took a completely different approach by offering, "Man is the measure of all things." Today, our culture tends to side with Protagoras.

But the Bible shows that God is the true measure of all things. Adopting that perspective is the beginning of humility, the doorway to all the other virtues (see "The Way Up Is Down" at Matt. 5:3).

Scripture constantly emphasizes the relative insignificance and transitoriness of humanity and the rest of creation in comparison to the greatness of eternal God. David asked, What is man in comparison to his Creator (Ps. 8:3–4)? What is man that he should merit God's attention and affection (144:3–4)?

This lends perspective to so many of the idealistic, even utopian, plans to solve the problems of our world. There's nothing wrong with humans working cooperatively to solve problems. But it's a grave mistake to dismiss faith in God and rely instead on the omnipotence of a corporation, a state, or an international collective. To do so smacks of the same blind pride that brought judgment at the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9). It is cause for God to laugh (Ps. 2:1–4). If we as individuals are as fleeting as grass (Is. 40:6–7), then groups of us, no matter how large, are just as fleeting. We still need the wisdom and strength that only God can suppl⁹

ARE PEOPLE BASICALLY GOOD?

⁸ [Word in life study Bible](#). (1996). (electronic ed., Php 2:3). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

⁹ [Word in life study Bible](#). (1996). (electronic ed., Heb 2:6). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.



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ROMANS 7:21 Many of us want to believe that we are “basically good” people—or at least better than other people. In fact, it’s popular today to subscribe to the view that humankind is basically good, and that moral problems are simply the result of bad parenting, bad education, and the foibles of “society.”

The Bible presents a different view, however. Scripture affirms the inherent dignity and value of every human being (Ps. 139:13–14; see “People At Work” at Heb. 2:7). But it insists that each of us is born “in sin”—that is, apart from God, naturally tending toward wrong rather than right. That’s what Paul addresses in Rom. 7.

Original sin is a sobering concept, one that our pride would dearly love to do away with. But then, pride lies at the root of sin. Therefore, the first step toward rooting it out of our lives is to humbly admit our true condition—not to blame someone else, but rather to confess our sin to God and trust solely in His grace for forgiveness and acceptance (Luke 18:13).

This attitude of humility in light of our sin needs to become a way of life. Sin is so deeply entrenched within us that we can never safely say that we’ve conquered it (1 Cor. 4:4; 10:12). Instead, we live with limitation, admitting that we don’t have all the answers to our own problems, let alone those that plague the world.

This perspective provides insight into the troubles that come our way. Sometimes they come as a result of our own sinful choices. Sometimes God allows them as a way of building our character, especially our faith in Him (Ps. 119:67, 71–72; Heb. 12:7–11; James 1:2–4, 12–18).

Do you want true humility? It comes from seeing yourself in relation to God. See “Humility—The Scandalous Virtue” at Phil. 2:3.¹⁰

¹⁰ [Word in life study Bible](#). (1996). (electronic ed., Ro 7:21). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.