

# **Yesterday. Today. Forever.**

## **Module: A Faith Learned**

### **Lesson 4: Walking Humbly with God**

#### **Objectives:**

- Students will learn what humility means
- Students will contrast humility with pride
- Students will reflect how to be less arrogant and more humble

#### **Materials Needed**

- ☐ 2 pieces of chart paper and at least two markers
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Pens for each student
- ☐ optional: props/costumes for skits
- ☐ optional: 1 copy of Appendix 1 per student

## Minds On

Introduce the lesson by reminding your students of Micah 6:8 as the focal point for this module of learning our faith and introducing today's topic of humility.

**Prompt:** Micah 6:8 tells us that what God wants from us is to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. In the past weeks we have talked about justice and mercy, and today we will focus on humility. Can anyone tell me what humility means or give me an example? (Allow for students to answer.) And what would you say the opposite of humility is? (Arrogance or pride are the best answers.)

Divide your students into two groups and give each a blank piece of chart paper and at least one marker. Have one group write HUMILITY in the center of their page and the other group write ARROGANCE or PRIDE (depending on your students' answers above). Ask your students to brainstorm and write definitions or examples for their word and give 5-10 minutes to complete the task. If you have a very small group, all your students can collaborate on brainstorming for both words.

Bring both groups together to see each other's work and discuss the differences. Tape each piece of chart paper on opposite sides of the room and tell your students to stand on whichever side of the room represents their answer.

Ask:

- Do you think you are more of a humble person or a proud person?
- Do you like to be around people who are humble or arrogant? (students should change sides if their answer is different)
- Do you think it is easier to be humble or arrogant?

Ask your students to stay wherever they are standing and answer:

- What are the benefits to being humble or arrogant?
- What are the downsides of being humble or arrogant?

**Prompt:** The Bible has a great definition of humility in Philippians 2:3-4 (you can ask a student to read): Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. So humility boils down to putting others before ourselves. We do not forget that we have value, but we try to emphasize the value of others rather than focus on ourselves all the time. By the end of this lesson, I hope we'll agree that humility can be very freeing, and we'll talk about some practical steps to grow more humble and support humility in others.

## **Action**

If you haven't already, gather your group together.

Ask a volunteer to read Proverbs 18:12

Before a downfall the heart is haughty,  
but humility comes before honor.

**Prompt:** Solomon wrote this proverb during the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C. That means over 800 years before Jesus was born! Even back in Solomon's time human nature had this struggle between pride and humility, and Solomon tried to warn people that haughtiness, or arrogance, has consequences – it can make us blind to our weaknesses and lead to our downfall! On the other hand, when we fly under the radar it leaves room for other people to recognize and celebrate our good qualities and accomplishments. Even if some things do get missed, God sees everything, and part of humility means trusting that he sees the good works and character development and integrity that goes unnoticed by others. Jesus told a parable that illustrates what Solomon talks about in Proverbs 18:12, so we are going to read what he said and create some skits to bring the parable to life. The passage is found in Luke 14:7-11. (Read the passage.)

Have students pair up with another person. (If you have an odd number of students, have a leader participate.) After each student has paired up, instruct them that you will give a

series of questions, one at a time. After each question, students will have a short time of silence to think, and then discuss their answer with their partner. Each person should be prepared to share their partner's answer. After each discussion segment, have 2-3 students share their partner's answer. Then move to the next question. (**Leader's note:** This is not a free-for-all of students shouting out answers, but a repetitive rhythm of reflection, sharing and listening.)

Questions for discussion:

- In the parable, people were seated at feasts according to how important they were. What are some ways that our culture shows who is most important? [Possible answers include awards, publicity, seating in some circumstances (especially weddings and funerals)]
- Do you agree with Jesus that those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted?
- Can you think of an example when this has happened to you or someone you know? [A great public example is when Kanye West interrupted Taylor Swift's VMA acceptance in 2009.]

Now divide your students into groups to create skits about the passage. Use your discretion based on the number of students you have and how enthusiastic they are for this type of activity. Students who are shy may prefer to play the role of "guests" at the dinner and simply react to what happens as the host rearranges the seating. If you have many students who want to participate, speaking roles could be created for the bride and groom, for relatives making toasts, etc.

**Leader's note:** If you have a very creative group, your students may prefer to create their own scenario demonstrating how "those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." Instead of a wedding feast, they could act out humility/pride on a sports team or in the classroom. If this activity really suits your group, consider asking your pastor or board if a simple illustrative skit could be

incorporated into a worship service for the whole congregation – it could be a great way for your students to serve and to share what they are learning!

If you have groups creating different skits, and if time allows, let each group perform their skit.

### **Consolidate/Debrief**

Distribute pens and Appendix 1 to your students. Ask them to complete the questions individually and then discuss some of their answers.

**Prompt:** It is important to remember when we talk about humility that we are not saying Christians should have low self-esteem. The point is to put others first because we are confident in our value before God. Jesus' parable shows that it is better to be humble than try to put ourselves first. God will never overlook us, even if the world sometimes does.

Close the lesson in prayer for any requests students share and by asking God to help students put these principles into their lives.

## Appendix 1

### **Philippians 2:3-4**

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*

Think of a time when you acted arrogantly and briefly describe what happened.

Who did you affect?

Did any negative consequences happen to you?

What would have happened in the situation if you acted humble instead?

What would others think?

How would you feel?

What is one way you can show value for someone else or look out for someone else's interests this week?

Ask God to help you be aware when you act selfish or proud. Ask him to remind you about humility and show you ways you can put others before yourself.