

Growth Group Homework

For the week of March 1, 2015

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Pride is something virtually all of us have struggled with. Yet it is often difficult for us to see in ourselves but very easy to spot in others.

Can you think of a time when you were struggling with pride? When and how did you become aware that you were being prideful?

Why do you think it's easier to spot pride in others than in ourselves?

2. This weekend Larry gave us four unity killers. Can you think of a time when one of them impacted a relationship of yours? If so, explain what happened.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. We heard this weekend how pride and humility impact the unity we experience with other people. If we want to see unity flourish, we have to face the challenge of trying to eliminate pride while also developing greater humility. What do you learn about the process of developing humility from the following passages?

Deuteronomy 8:2, 3, 16

Luke 14:7-11

1 Peter 5:5-6

What are some steps you could take if you realized you were being prideful?

Can you think of anything in your life that could help you or has helped you to learn humility?

2. Larry reminded us that disagreements and conflicts are a part of life even in the church. Paul emphasized unity and humility because he knew we would be tempted to set ourselves up as "spiritual watch dogs" (checking up on other people's behavior) or "pit bulls" (not letting go of a pet belief) when it comes to the things Christians fight over. What insights do you find in Matthew 7:1-5 about how to avoid playing either of these roles with other people?

If you've ever experienced someone playing "spiritual watch dog" or "pit bull" in your life, what happened in that situation and how did you respond/feel?

As you look at your own life, can you think of times when you've made the mistake of playing either of these roles in other people's lives?

3. In addition to impacting our relationship with others, pride can also affect our relationship with God. Jesus illustrated this in a parable he told in Luke 18:9-14. Read the parable and then answer the questions below.

How would you describe how each of these men related to God?

If these men were a part of your Growth Group, how do you think they'd relate to everyone else in the group?

What do you think the relationship is between our humility toward God and our humility toward other people?

TAKING IT HOME

1. Is there anything from this week's sermon or study that you need to remember or apply?
2. Is there an area you're struggling with pride for which you'd like prayer?

Prayer Requests:

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Deuteronomy 8:2, 3, 16

² Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. ³ He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

¹⁶ He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you. *[NIV]*

Luke 14:7-11

⁷ When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: ⁸ "When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. ⁹ If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this person your seat.' Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. ¹¹ For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." *[NIV]*

1 Peter 5:5-6

⁵ In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

"God opposes the proud
but shows favor to the humble."

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. *[NIV]*

What are some steps you could take if you realized you were being prideful?

Can you think of anything in your life that could help you or has helped you to learn humility?

2. Larry reminded us that disagreements and conflicts are a part of life even in the church. Paul emphasized unity and humility because he knew we would be tempted to set ourselves up as “spiritual watch dogs” (checking up on other people’s behavior) or “pit bulls” (not letting go of a pet belief) when it comes to the things Christians fight over. What insights do you find in Matthew 7:1-5 about how to avoid playing either of these roles with other people?

Matthew 7:1-5

Judging Others

¹ “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

³ “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye. [NIV]

If you’ve ever experienced someone playing “spiritual watch dog” or “pit bull” in your life, what happened in that situation and how did you respond/feel?

As you look at your own life, can you think of times when you’ve made the mistake of playing either of these roles in other people’s lives?

3. In addition to impacting our relationship with others, pride can also affect our relationship with God. Jesus illustrated this in a parable he told in Luke 18:9-14. Read the parable and then answer the questions below.

Luke 18:9-14

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

¹³ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

¹⁴ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” [NIV]

How would you describe how each of these men related to God?

If these men were a part of your Growth Group, how do you think they’d relate to everyone else in the group?

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