



## #4: Learn Humbly, Pastor Brad Williams

January 18, 2009

### A. Fellowship Time (10-15 minutes)

1. Chitchat. Perhaps offer coffee, tea, or a cold drink with some snacks.
2. Pray (or invite someone to pray) to open the discussion.

### B. Review Time (Read the summary below to the group: 5-10 minutes)

Making the most of the rest of our life means learning humbly, and there is nothing like difficulty or an unexpected and unpleasant surprise to really teach us what's valuable or most important in life. Life is full of moments when we end up in situations asking ourselves these two questions: "How did I get here, and how do I get out?" It's in the times that we come to the crossroads that God can have His greatest influence. **2 Corinthians 12:9** says, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."* It's in those weak times that the power of God is more prevalent in our lives.

#### 1. Learn from difficulty and loss or repeat your mistakes

The most important thing we can do in learning humbly is to learn from difficulty or loss, or we will just repeat our mistakes. The Apostle Peter made some mistakes and felt the same kind of desperation that many of us feel at times, but it was in those moments that he encountered God. Jesus warned Peter that he was about to experience one of the most difficult times in his life, and Peter essentially said, *Not me! I'm the rock*. But within 24 hours Peter denied Jesus three times. **Luke 22** records that Peter wept bitterly. He regretted what had happened so much that he went back to being a fisherman. We face difficulties too, and there are a lot of reasons why we don't learn from them. The biggest one is that we don't face the truth. We are constantly playing the blame game. But we must stop living as a victim and start living as a learner, or we will be destined to repeat our mistakes.

#### 2. Depend on God or depend on self

When we begin to see our difficulties as opportunities, then we have a reason to depend on God. Peter responded emotionally to circumstances and, while it worked out for him sometimes, he regularly made the wrong choices. So his life, much like ours, was a rollercoaster. Jesus said in **Luke 9:23**, *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."* Peter denied Christ at a moment of difficulty, and he crashed. But Jesus came to him after His resurrection, and when Peter learned to deny himself, he became the rock Jesus knew he'd become. If we'll depend on God and not on ourselves, then God will begin to transform those areas of our life we need Him to touch the most. Consider **Ephesians 3:20**: God *"is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us."*

#### 3. Experience humility or experience pride

Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it's simply seeing God for who He truly is in His greatness and then seeing yourself appropriately in relation to Him. If we depend on Him and see Him in all His power, we'll have no problem doing that. And then the bi-product should be a

very high view of ourselves because if the God of the universe, the Creator of all things, is willing to enter into and care for even the smallest things in our life, then we can't help but know that we're valuable. **Psalm 139:14** says, *"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."* We can either experience humility by depending on God or go the other route. And when we depend on ourselves, the result is pride. **Proverbs 16:18** warns, *"Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall."* Pride gets us nowhere and eventually leads to destruction because at some point we will fail.

#### **4. Learn, grow and experience freedom or stagnate, disintegrate, and experience frustration**

We can learn and grow and experience freedom in Christ. But if we keep depending on ourselves, we're going to wind up repeating our mistakes, stagnating, and living a life of quiet desperation. Most of us just want a little kick start, a little something to makes us feel better. We want a spa to deal with our problems, while what we often need is a hospital; there's something much deeper in us that needs to be addressed. If we had thirty days to live, we wouldn't live another day of desperation. It's time to experience true freedom. It's time to learn humbly.

#### **C. Life Group Questions** (select, revise, and add as desired: 20-40 minutes)

1. How do you get yourself to view difficulties with a positive perspective?
2. What mistakes are you repeating, and what do you need to learn from this repetition? Is there something in your life that maybe you aren't facing the truth about? In what ways do you allow others the freedom to be honest with you?
3. In what situations do you need to start genuinely depending on God instead of yourself? In what situations do you tend to ignore or "disinvite" God? Considering **Luke 9:23**, what's one area of your life in which Christ is asking you to deny yourself and pick up a cross in order to follow Him?
4. Brad said, *"Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it's simply seeing God for who He truly is in his greatness and then seeing yourself appropriately in relation to Him."* (Take a moment to think about that idea.) How does a proper understanding of God and your relationship with Him give you a healthy high regard for yourself?

#### **D. Personal Application** (1-3 Minutes)

- As you do your PBJ time this week, take time to journal about a current difficulty or loss you're dealing with. Are you depending on God or on yourself? Are you responding with humility or pride? Are you learning from mistakes and experiencing freedom, or are you repeating mistakes and experiencing desperation? However you answer these, journal about your next steps for ensuring you're depending on God.
- Share your stories as a Life Group or individuals on our blog: go to [www.lifecenter.net](http://www.lifecenter.net) and comment on the *One Month to Live Blog*.

#### **E. Prayer Time** (As a whole group or subgroups of 3-4: 10-15 Minutes)

- Ask God what you need to do this day or this week to be on the path of learning humbly, and pray for the motivation and strength to take those steps.
- Pray that He would help you see where you're relying on yourself instead of Him, and ask Him to help you learn to walk humbly with Him instead of proudly on your own.
- Ask for wisdom, growth and freedom in Christ.
- Bring other praises and requests before God that arose from your discussion.