



## FIXER UPPER

WEEK 2: *The Transforming Power of Humility*

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Fixer-Upper is a popular TV series starring Chip and Joanna Gaines, who take broken-down old houses and transform them into beautiful homes. We are using the TV series as a means of talking through the potential for God to transform even our most challenging relationships into something beyond what we might have ever imagined possible. Our approach is to do a “deep dive” into a few core Biblical values, each of which has the capacity to radically change the way we interact with our spouses, children, parents, friends, neighbors and co-workers. In this series, we will be demoing some old attitudes and behaviors in order to make room for the good work God wants to do in our lives.

### HUMILITY BRINGS POWER TO RELATIONSHIPS...

**Philippians 3:2-8 MSG** Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand. <sup>5-8</sup> Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became *human*! Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that—a crucifixion.

God doesn't challenge us for the sake of challenging us. He calls us to take courageous steps because He loves us and He wants more beauty in our lives. Many of us can agree that when it comes to relationships, brokenness has a habit of rearing its inconvenient head more often than we would like it to. It takes a lot of courage to enter into brokenness with humility. Jesus calls us there, and so we must follow.

When Philippians was written, Paul's audience faced some of the same divisions that we have today. People were separated by wealth, bloodline, race, beliefs, and religion. Paul made the case for unity in the name of Jesus to this crowd. Using the example of Christ's life and death, Paul challenged his audience, the church at Philippi, to go beyond their divisions and see the Kingdom of God. In God's kingdom, unity flows from selflessness. This should be a central value to all of God's people.

If we're going to be real with each other, we can admit that humility is a foreign concept. Even if we're not especially competitive, we all want to win at something. And in our efforts of striving toward goals

we have all felt the sting of loss and our limitations have been made plain. This cycle of striving – sometimes winning, sometimes losing – can impart a sense of entitlement or pride.

### DISCUSS/JOURNAL:

**Matthew 22:37-38 NIV** says, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” How are these commandments related to one another? How do these verses talk about humility?

We are enamored by trophies (Oscars, Commissioners Trophy, Stanley Cup), but do we look at the stars at night in the same way? In order to have the right view of others, we need to have a proper estimation of God. How does your view of God inspire your relationships with other people?

Jesus paid this ultimate price to invite us into His kingdom. What flowed out of Jesus' humility is our testimony. Write or share how your relationship with Christ flowed out of His perfect act of humility.

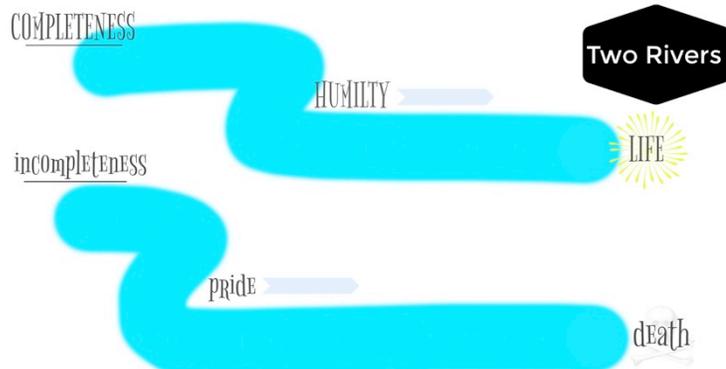
## TWO RIVERS

Imagine two rivers. One is the river that leads to death, while the other is a river that leads to life. When it comes to our relationships with other people we are to have the same mindset Christ Jesus had with us. We are all on the receiving end of grace - undeserved favor – by the greatest act of mercy – withheld punishment.

When we exercise grace with others, our posture is humility. When we enter into our marriages, workplaces, social circles, friendships, communities, and neighborhoods with humility, the love and life of Jesus flows into these relationships. Humility is always an option – but so often we disobey and instead give into pride.

Pride is a problem. Pride can appear as arrogance – but it can also masquerade as self-pity. Pride manifests in different ways, but is rooted in entitlement – and entitlement is not what some would falsely claim belongs only to millennial's. Self-obsession screams, *my rights, my world, my American dream, my happiness* and drowns out the whimpers of a broken soul. **Proverbs 16:18** says, “Pride goes before destruction and haughtiness before a fall.”

Humility lifts people up, while Pride pushes people down. Pride closes the door to forgiveness, pride keeps people from having a conversation, and pride breaks down relationships before they even begin to grow. Pride can issue the death warrant to relationships on the edge.



### DISCUSS/JOURNAL:

What do you feel you are entitled to? Why? How does this conflict with God? Explain.

How can pride manifest as both arrogance and self-pity?

How can you approach someone you don't agree with, having grace instead of pride? Our Christian relationships are meant to be like iron sharpening iron. In order to honor **Proverbs 27:17** in light of **Philippians 3:2-8**, what must we do? What about our interfaith relationships? How are we to operate?

## THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER DETERMINES THE QUALITY OF THE WATER

**John 4:13-14 AMP** Jesus answered her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. But whoever drinks the water that I give him will never be thirsty again. But the water that I give him will become in him a spring of water [satisfying his thirst for God] welling up [continually flowing, bubbling within him] to eternal life."

We might be tempted when talking about humility and pride to just look at what is downstream, but life and death are just symptoms of the real problem – we need to look at the source! So, let's go back to the beginning.

Adam and Eve had a perfect relationship with God, but when confronted with the question of entitlement, they believed the lie and ate from the tree in the middle of the garden. Expressions of a lie that God isn't enough, or that He isn't good, repeat throughout history; from Adam and Eve, to you and me. Oftentimes, our love for God and love for people become overshadowed by our need for success, significance and pleasing people. Consider the Samaritan woman in **John 4**. Here we read a story about a woman who put her significance in the hands of men. But Jesus doesn't approach the woman at the well with judgment or pushes her down; He approaches her with love and grace. He tells her the search for significance will always be fruitless with the wrong well (**John 4:13-14**).

Upstream the river of humility is completeness in Christ. The point of talking about humility isn't humility, it's chasing after Jesus. It's examining the quality of the water and reconciling the source.

### DISCUSS/JOURNAL:

Do you believe the search for significance is over in your job, marriage, family, or all of the above? Do you believe you don't have to earn your significance? Who are you in the living God?

Take an inventory of your life. How might pride have an effect on you? Is it keeping you from getting marital help? Is it keeping you from getting financial counseling? Is it showing up as a pattern of assigning blame over taking responsibility? Is pride leading you toward competition and comparison? Or is it masquerading as false humility by means of religious works (It was prideful people that took Jesus to the cross.)? Honestly journal or discuss how pride is showing up in your life.

What place does gratitude have in humility? Compassion? Grace? Forgiveness? Obedience? Consider the qualities of a life yielded to the Spirit and the qualities of a life living in opposition to the Spirit.

## ACTIVATION

### ENCOURAGEMENT

Have some time to read? Take some time to read the following:

*The Peace Maker* by Ken Sande

*The Return of the Prodigal Son* by Henri Nouwen

*Boundaries* by Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend

### PROVIDE US WITH FEEDBACK

We are excited about the potential these studies have to help each of us process the weekend message at a deeper level, and to see God change our lives in significant ways. In order to make these guides as helpful as possible, we would love to hear which elements are most helpful, which are least helpful, as well as any other comments, questions or suggestions. Feel free to send your feedback directly to Jon Holmberg at [jonholmberg@gmail.com](mailto:jonholmberg@gmail.com).

**Has God been prompting you to lean out over your ski's a bit? Have you had a desire to write, but not sure how to start to scratch that kind of itch? This may be your chance. We are currently looking to expand our team of writers. If you have experience, or no experience, writing studies or devotionals... it's not a big deal – Let God guide your fingers. If you would like to investigate this a bit more please contact me at [jonholmberg@gmail.com](mailto:jonholmberg@gmail.com).**

### REFERENCES