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Humble Engagement: The Antidote to Pride (Part 2)

A few weeks ago, in "The Poison of Pride," we saw how arrogance erodes trust—like invisible acid eating away at relationships, leadership, and advocacy. Remember the coffee shop story? Long-term employees stayed because their leader embodied humility, not hubris. Scripture warned relentlessly: "Pride goes before destruction" (Proverbs 16:18), God opposes the proud (James 4:6), and those who exalt themselves will be humbled (Matthew 23:12). The diagnosis is clear: pride destroys. But here's the good news—change is possible through Christlike "humble engagement."

Humble engagement is a posture of relating to others that combines honesty and conviction with deep humility, respect, and a willingness to listen and learn. It means engaging people without arrogance or coercion, honoring their dignity and personhood even when there is disagreement. It involves setting aside ego and status and showing up as a person who chooses trust, honesty, and empathy over self-centeredness. Humble engagement people recognize their own faults and limits while remaining open to correction, questions, and the experiences of others.

Those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior, humble engagement in evangelism often describes sharing hope or the gospel with "gentleness and respect," joining firm conviction to gracious character and genuine love for the other person. More broadly in ethics, education, healthcare, and public life, it names a way of interacting that seeks collaboration, equity, and cultural humility instead of control or superiority.

Numerous New Testament passages urge Christians to act with humility and patience in all relationships. Ephesians 4:2 advises living "with all humility and gentleness." Philippians 2:3–8 emphasizes valuing others above oneself, following Christ's example of humility. When sharing faith, 1 Peter 3:15 calls for gentleness and respect, while James 1:19 encourages listening before speaking or reacting. Overall, believers are repeatedly instructed to embody humble conduct in every aspect of life.

About now I suspect many are wondering if becoming a Christian is the antidote to the toxicity of arrogance and pride, why do I see so many arrogant, prideful Christians? Even the writers of the New Testament saw these poisons in early believers and felt compelled to address in writing urging these early followers of Jesus to take on a spirit of Christlike humility.

Christians are urged to actively pursue humility because, while accepting Christ forgives sin and imparts a new heart, and a new life growing in Christlike character—including humility—is a lifelong, progressive process that requires intentional obedience. Scripture commands believers to "clothe yourselves with humility toward one another" (1 Peter 5:5) and to "put on" humility

as part of the new self (Colossians 3:12), showing it does not come automatically but must be cultivated through effort empowered by the Spirit.

Jesus modeled perfect humility (Philippians 2:5–8), but He instructs those that follow Him that they must "learn" it (Matthew 11:29). Paul the former persecutor, teaches from firsthand experience, that producing the fruit of the Spirit-- love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23)—requires believers' active cooperation with the Holy Spirit, because the flesh and Spirit are in ongoing conflict (Galatians 5:17). He urges "walking by the Spirit" as a daily choice to resist sinful desires and let the Spirit lead, resulting in visible fruit rather than fleshly "works."

Embodying Ephesians 4:2 each day involves intentionally choosing humility, gentleness, patience, and steadfast love in everyday interactions. While pride can be destructive, humility brings healing. Turn to Scripture, pray for a humble spirit, welcome honest feedback, and—if you haven't yet—consider placing your faith in Christ, who empowers us to engage with others in ways that foster trust and display His love.

As humility grows within us, it profoundly impacts our relationships and communities by fostering genuine dialogue, reconciliation, and shared growth. Every small gesture—from offering forgiveness and patiently accepting others' faults to listening with true empathy—pushes back against the damages of pride and demonstrates Christ's transformative presence in our lives. Ultimately, living humbly is not merely a personal choice; it represents collective hope, enabling God's grace and love to shape us and those around us for everyone's benefit.

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