

## No. 16 Humility or Ability—Which Does Jehovah Prefer?

*Note to the speaker:*

Talk with audience participation and videos. Stress the importance of continually cultivating humility, especially in view of the responsibility entrusted to appointed men

### **JEHOVAH IS NOT IMPRESSED BY HUMAN WISDOM OR ABILITIES** (3 min.)

From Jehovah's perspective, humans are like green grass or like grasshoppers (Isa 40:6, 7, 22)

None of us have a valid reason to boast in our abilities or possessions [**Read 1 Corinthians 4:7**]

Meditating on Jehovah's greatness and our own insignificance can help us to maintain a proper view of ourselves (Ro 12:3)

Because Jehovah is humble, he honors us with privileges of service (Ps 18:35; *w04 8/1 8 ¶5*)

One member of the Governing Body said: 'The more responsibility I have, the less authority I realize that I have. Christ is in charge'

The greater a brother's responsibility, the harder he must work at seeking humility (Zep 2:3, ftn.)

Humility is more important than ability

### **JEHOVAH "TAKES NOTE OF THE HUMBLE"** (4 min.)

Humble ones attract Jehovah's attention [**Read Psalm 138:6**]

Humility is lowliness of mind, freedom from pride or arrogance (Php 2:3, ftn.)

One Hebrew word translated "humble yourself" literally means "stamp yourself down" (Pr 6:3; *it-1 1157*)

Although humility is not listed as an aspect of the fruitage of Jehovah's holy spirit, it is a godly quality that requires deliberate cultivation and involves our state of mind (Ga 5:22, 23; *w04 8/1 11-12 ¶15-16*)

Humility can be lost

When circumstances in life change, our humility may be tested

Greater privileges of service can inflate a person's ego (Jer 17:9)

Constantly scrutinize your motives to avoid developing an inflated view of yourself

If we remain humble, we remain useful to Jehovah and his organization (Lu 1:51, 52)

### **HUMBLE MEN ACCEPT COUNSEL** (10 min.)

It is not always easy to accept counsel from an imperfect human, no matter how tactfully and lovingly the counsel is presented

This is especially true when it touches a sensitive area, such as dress, grooming, or choices in entertainment

It takes humility to "listen to counsel and accept discipline" (Pr 19:20)

But when we respond favorably, we will become even more useful to Jehovah and his organization

Moses was blessed for listening to the counsel of his father-in-law (Ex 18:13-24)

Peter accepted strong counsel from the apostle Paul, yet Peter called him his "beloved brother" (2 Pe 3:15, 16; Ga 2:14)

If some deficiency is brought to your attention, accept the counsel and make adjustments

Note in the following video how a brother detected a prideful attitude in himself when counseled by an elder and what he did to correct it

<<**PLAY VIDEO [1 min. 51 sec.]**>>

**Questions:**

1. What was this brother's initial reaction to personal counsel?
2. What did he do to adjust his attitude?
3. If we are given counsel, how should we respond? (Ps 141:5)
4. On occasion, why should we take the initiative to ask an elder for suggestions?

**MANIFEST HUMILITY WHEN GIVEN PRAISE (10 min.)**

Ministerial servants possess fine talents and abilities

Many of you are fine speakers and teachers, and the brothers may be generous with their commendation and praise

Because we are imperfect, we have to be careful even when praise is well-deserved (Pr 27:21)

When we have success, it primarily results from God's blessing, not our abilities (2Co 3:5)

We must continually work to cultivate humility [**Read Proverbs 27:2**]

Otherwise, our strength could easily become our weakness

Note how this happened to a ministerial servant in the following video

<<**PLAY VIDEO [1 min. 44 sec.]**>>

**Questions:**

1. What indicated to you that this brother lacked humility?
2. How do others view a brother who thinks too much of himself?
3. Why is his usefulness limited in the congregation?

Note in this next video how a humble brother should respond to praise he receives

<<**PLAY VIDEO [59 sec.]**>>

**Questions:**

1. How did this brother manifest humility?
2. Why are we naturally drawn to a humble person?
3. How does the quality of humility increase a brother's usefulness in the congregation?

We do not exaggerate our own worth but humbly acknowledge good that others have done

We do not reach out for privileges of service in order to receive praise from men (Col 3:23)

If we are pleasing to Jehovah, we will please all those who love him

Cultivating humility leads to praise from Jehovah (Jas 4:10)

**“CLOTHE YOURSELVES WITH HUMILITY” (2 min.)**

Humility must be worn like clothing [**Read 1 Peter 5:5**] (*cf* 33 ¶22)

Beg for Jehovah's help to root out all traces of competition and pride (Pr 8:13)

Cultivate the desire to slave for fellow Christians (Ga 5:13)

Continually remind yourself that it is humility that Jehovah prefers

He gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones

[Announce the break]