

John # 49 “Opening Some Early Christmas Gifts” *John 3:31-36*

This is about our Lord’s best man, John the Baptist humbly bowing out of the picture and the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ increasing in popularity and effectiveness while John, God’s ordained minister decreases in popularity and scope.

By application, this relates to a major occupational hazard all too often faced by pastor-teachers today because spiritually weak congregation members have a tendency to focus on the man and not his message and this is especially prevalent if the pastor-teacher is weak or insecure himself which is undoubtedly reflected in his message.

We must all remember and never forget that the Christian life is all about the increasing glory of Jesus Christ alone, showing us constantly that He must increase and we must decrease.

Humility is freedom from the pride and arrogance of self-centered pursuits, so it cannot and does not exist in Satan’s world system being the first thing to vacate our thought-life when we choose to leave the experiential plan of God.

Arrogance, as it was for Lucifer is our greatest downfall in life as it pulls the pin of the grenade of self-destruction from mental attitude sins which inevitably lead to failed human viewpoint attempts at solutions to our problems.

Arrogance has so many traps attached to it that sooner or later believers become ensnared by it when not residing in the experiential plan of God, under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit and the virtuous momentum that only comes from processed biblical truth.

Our application of humility is seen in our voluntary submission to legitimate authority.

When we display this genuine humility, we experience the ultimate virtue of grace-orientation through the application of biblical truth.

But be careful, humility is not humiliation; humility is freedom from arrogance; humiliation is to reduce your view of self to a lower status in your own eyes or in the eyes of others generally to gain others’ attention. Humiliation is underhanded self-promotion, while true humility is being oriented to the grace of God. Since the Bible is the mind of Christ, submission to the authority of our Lord is directly related to our consistent post-salvation biblical rehabilitation.

When we expressed faith alone in Christ alone from His grace alone, we voluntarily decreased ourselves to a state of total humility as we recognized that our Lord MUST increase in our lives.

And this new biblical humility we have expressed is neither derogatory nor self-aggrandizing, it’s simply authority-oriented.

James 4:10 ‘Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will lift you up’ teaches us that humility is a system of divine viewpoint thinking related to our being grace-oriented from our consistent occupation with Jesus Christ.

This means humility is a system that recognizes the authority of Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church Who has delegated all authority in the Church Age to His Word, especially the mystery doctrine found in the New Testament epistles and also that the pastor-teacher is God’s delegated authority to teach His Word.

SOME THOUGHTS FROM LAST TIME:If the ministry of Jesus is increasing and John's is decreasing, that's God's business!

John's responsibility, like ours, is to remain faithful in adversity as well as prosperity.

The successful believer listens to the Lord Jesus Christ for his cues in spite of circumstances.

Q: What is the result of listening to the Bridegroom (the Lord Jesus Christ)?

Inner peace from the principles and promises of God in our souls, producing stability in all types of circumstances.