

Humility

Self-Seeking was Satan's Downfall

Sin originated in self-seeking. Lucifer, the covering cherub, desired to be first in heaven. He sought to gain CONTROL of heavenly beings, to draw them away from their Creator, and to win their homage to himself. Therefore he misrepresented God, attributing to Him, the desire for self-exaltation. With his own evil characteristics he sought to invest the loving Creator. (White, *Desire of Ages* 22).

The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan (White, *Desire of Ages* 21).

Lucifer was envious of Christ, and gradually assumed command which devolved on Christ alone . . . (Very gradually Lucifer was taking over Christ's position in heaven. God the Father had to do something about this. Christ never tried to defend His turf.) . . . *The Father made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal to Him. His Son He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host...His Son would carry out His will and His purpose . . .* Lucifer was envious and jealous of Christ. Christ had been taken into the special counsel of God in regard to His plans, while Lucifer was unacquainted with them . . . Lucifer thought that he was himself a favorite in heaven among the angels. He gloried in his loftiness . . . He thought how angels had obeyed his command with pleasurable alacrity. Why should Christ be honored before himself? . . . *Concealing his real purpose, he assembled the angelic host.* He introduced his subject, which was himself. As one aggrieved, he related the preference God had given Jesus to the neglect of himself. He told them that henceforth all the sweet liberty the angels had enjoyed was at an end. For had not a ruler been appointed over them, to whom they from henceforth must yield servile honor? He stated to them that he had called them together to assure them that he no longer would submit to this invasion of his rights and theirs; that never again would he bow down to Christ; *that he would take upon himself the honor which should be the commander of all who would submit to follow him and obey his voice.* Angels that were loyal and true sought to reconcile this mighty, rebellious angel to will of his Creator. They justified the act of God in conferring honor upon Christ, and with forcible reasoning sought to convince Lucifer. They clearly set forth that Christ was the Son of God and that *His mild, loving authority* had not heretofore been questioned; and that

He had given no commands but what it was joy for the heavenly host to execute (White, *Story of Redemption* 13-15).

God the Father brought the issue of Lucifer's struggle with the need for control and self honor to a head by giving His Son control and honor in front of all of heaven. That brought out the rebellious nature of Lucifer and he made it known that he was seeking power and control and honor from the angels. God empowered and honored His Son. Lucifer did the same for self.

Lucifer refused to listen. Then he turned from the loyal angels, denouncing them as slaves. These angels, true to God, stood in amazement as they saw that Lucifer was successful in his effort to incite rebellion. He promised them a new and better government than they had had, in which all would be freedom . . . The loyal angels hastened speedily to the Son of God and acquainted Him with what was taking place among the angels. They found the Father in conference with His beloved Son, to determine the means by which, for the best good of the loyal angels, the assumed authority of Satan could be forever put down (White, *The Story of Redemption* 16-17).

This was the first time gossip is recorded in the scriptures. It originated with Lucifer and continues to be a tool he uses even today.

Satan was warring against the law of God, because ambitious to *exalt himself* and *unwilling to submit to the authority of God's Son*, heaven's great commander. All the heavenly host was summoned to appear before the Father, to have each case determined. God informed Satan, that to His Son alone He would reveal His secret purposes, and He required all the family in heaven, even Satan, to yield Him implicit, unquestioned obedience; but he [Satan] had proven himself unworthy of a place in heaven . . . Satan declared that he was prepared to resist the authority of Christ and to defend his place in heaven by force of might, strength against strength (White, *Story of Redemption* 18).

Christ: Model of Humility

*Lucifer had said, "I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14: 13,14). But Christ, being in the form of God, counted it not a thing to be grasped to be on a equality with God, but this was a voluntary sacrifice. Jesus might have remained at the Father's side. He might have retained the glory of heaven, and the homage of angels. But He chose to give back the scepter into the Father's hands, and to step down from the throne of the universe, that He might bring light to the benighted, and life to the perishing (White, *Desire of Ages* 21).*

In the eyes of the world, He possessed no beauty that they should desire Him (*Desire of Ages* 21). Jesus wasn't given any physical attractiveness—beauty or stature or strength, that he could use to attract people to Him. The only thing Christ had that we don't was a very close walk with His Father. And that was all He needed.

No self-assertion mingled with His life. The homage which the world gives to position, wealth, or talent was foreign to the Son of man. NONE of the means that men employ to win allegiance or command homage did Jesus use...The Pharisees sought distinction by their scrupulous ceremonialism and the ostentation of worship and their charities...In marked contrast to all this was the life of Jesus. In that life no noisy disputation, no ostentatious worship, no act to gain applause, was ever witnessed. Christ was hid in God, and God was revealed in the character of the Son. To this revelation Jesus desired the minds of the people to be directed (*White, Ministry of Healing* 32).

Had Christ come in the majesty of a king, with the pomp which attends the great men of earth, many would have accepted Him . But *Jesus of Nazareth did not dazzle the senses with a display of outward glory and make this the foundation of their reverence*. He came as a humble man to be the Teacher and Exemplar as well as the Redeemer of the race. Had he encouraged pomp, had He come followed by a retinue of the great men of earth, how could He have taught humility? How could He have presented such burning truths as in His Sermon upon the Mount? *His example was such as He wished all His followers to imitate. Where would have been the hope of the lowly in life had He come in exaltation and dwelt as a king upon the earth?* (*White, Reflecting Christ* 40)

The humility of Christ—to become nothing so that His Father could be all—was one of His greatest qualities. It is the most difficult to duplicate in our lives and can only exist when I am so close to Him that He guides my every thought and action. When you see people trying to promote themselves in words and actions, know that they are living outside of Christ in them.

Jesus, the brightness of the Father's glory, thought "it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:6, 7). Through all the lowly experiences of life He consented to pass, walking among the children of men, not as a king, to demand homage, but as one whose mission it was to serve others...United with His divine majesty were meekness and humility that attracted all to Him (*White, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* 14).

Satan's Efforts

A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be a peaceful restful trust. Your hope is not in your self; it is in Christ . . . It is by loving Him, copying Him, depending wholly upon Him, that you are to be transformed into His likeness . . . When the mind dwells upon self, it is turned away from Christ. Hence, it is Satan's constant effort to keep the attention diverted from the Savior , and thus prevent the union and communion of the soul with Christ . The pleasures of this world, life's cares and perplexities and sorrows, the faults of others, or your own faults and imperfections—t of any or all of these he will seek to divert the mind. Do not be misled by his devices (White, *Steps to Christ* 72-73).

Losing Focus

When I am called to help others, do I turn to the source of power and seek God's direction or do I just take care of the matter on my own? When I start looking at what others are doing, it usually comes back to my position that I am protecting. The disciples didn't even know they had lost the power to help others until they tried to use it and it was not there. The same thing happens to me. By focusing on the faults of others, my own faults, the cares and perplexities of this life, or the pleasures of the world, I lose contact with my source of direction and strength.

Humility and Reaching Out to Others

Not until you feel that you could sacrifice your own self-dignity, and even lay down your life to save an erring brother, have you cast the beam out of your own eye so that you are prepared to help your brother. Then you can approach him and touch his heart. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many have thus driven from Christ and led to seal their hearts against conviction (White, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* 128, 129).

Remember that you cannot read hearts. You do not know the motives which prompt the actions that to you look wrong (White, *Ministry of Healing* 494).

Beware of Self

Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them (Matthew 6:1).

We cannot afford to let our spirits chafe over any real or supposed wrong done to ourselves. Self is the enemy we most need to fear...No other

victory we can gain will be so precious as the victory gained over self...We should: 1) not allow our feelings to be easily wounded. We are to live, not to guard our feelings or our reputation, but to save souls. 2) As we become interested in the salvation of should we cease to mind the little differences that so often arise in our association with one another. 3) Whatever others may think of us or do to us, it need not disturb our oneness with Christ, the fellowship of the Spirit . . . 4) Do not retaliate. So far as you can, remove all cause for misapprehension (White, *Ministry of Healing* 485).

Glory in Giving

Looking unto Jesus we see that it is the glory of our God to give. "I do nothing of Myself, the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." "I seek not My own glory, but the glory of Him that sent Me (John 8:28, 6:57, 8:50, and 7:18). All things Christ received from God, but He took to give (White, *Desire of Ages* 21).

There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself . . . There is no leaf of the forest, or lowly blade of grass, but has its ministry . . . *The angels of glory find their joy in giving—giving love and tireless watchcare to souls that are fallen and unholy.* (White, *Desire of Ages* 21).

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).

He who beholds Christ in His self-denial, His lowliness of heart, will be constrained to say, as did Daniel, when he beheld One like the sons of men, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption" (Daniel 10:8). The independence and self-supremacy in which we glory are seen in their true vileness as tokens of servitude to Satan. Human nature is ever struggling for expression, ready for contest: but *he who learns of Christ is emptied of self, of pride, of love of supremacy, and there is silence in the soul. Self is yielded to the disposal of the Holy Spirit. Then we are not anxious to have the highest place. We have no ambition to crowd and elbow ourselves into notice; but we feel that our highest place is at the feet of our Savior. We look to Jesus, waiting for His hand to lead, listening for His voice to guide.* (White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* 15).