**PRIDE AND HUMILITY LEADER’S GUIDE**

**OPTIONAL INTRODUCTION WEEK**

1) Ask for prayer requests and spend some time in prayer.

2) Hand out the books and welcome the members of the class.

3) Explain how there is a portion of the study to do each day of the week, except the day when the group meets, and that each day’s portion will take 5-10 minutes.

4) Point out that this is a study that will challenge the participants not only to learn new concepts, but to examine their soul and even their personality to look for ways in which God is working or maybe where He needs to work. It is a study where the group will grow closer as well.

**THE FOLLOWING QUOTES ARE IN THE INTRODUCTION TO PRIDE:**

5) C.S. Lewis wrote that “*There is one vice of which no man in the world is free…Pride leads to every other vice…Pride is spiritual cancer*.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

* What are some examples of “vices”? *(think of repetitive sins)*
* How does pride lead to greed, for example? Lust? Envy?
* How can pride be like spiritual cancer?
* What does cancer do to the body?
* What happens when we do not let the doctors operate on or treat the cancer? *We die, fast or slowly, but our body will die. If we hold onto and nurture pride in our hearts, we will die spiritually. Maybe not right away, but it will happen.*
* *The purpose of this study is to create an awareness of pride in those around us and most importantly in ourselves. Only then can it be diagnosed and treated so that it does not grow destructively in our spirits just as cancer can grow in our bodies*.

6) Andrew Murray wrote that “*Christians may see clearly the blessed promises of perfect peace and rest, of overflowing love and joy, of abiding communion and fruitfulness, and yet feel that there was something between (themselves and God), hindering the true possession. And what might that be? Nothing but pride.*”[[2]](#footnote-2) He went on to say that “*Pride must die in you, or nothing of heaven can live in you*.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

* Why might a person hold onto pride, when seeing all that God has for them: peace, rest, love, joy, communion, fruitfulness, etc.?

7) What did Jesus say were the two greatest commandments?

8) The second paragraph of the introduction talks about pride being viewed in the Roman Catholic tradition as the most serious of the seven deadly sins.

* Why do you think the Catholics decided that pride was the worst of the 7 deadly sins? *(lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, pride)*
* How is pride worse than lust? Than wrath?
* Explain pushing away others and God. (*I think pride is at the root of every instance when we push away God or the people around us. The greatest commandments according to Jesus are to love God and to love our neighbor. Pride interferes and interrupts our doing both of these*.) Example: criticism (*how a critical spirit is in actuality pushing our neighbor away*) Do you agree?

9) Even our virtues, or good qualities, can become corrupted by pride.

* What are some virtues? *(some good things that people say about another person – NOT church words – think about a job application – nice, hard-working, reliable)*
* Now look at those virtues and discuss how they would look submitted to God vs. not submitted to God. (*Think about the Pharisees in the Bible and how sincere they were in their faith, but how they were, on the whole, not submitting their virtue to God.*)

10) The truth is that It is extremely difficult to do anything virtuous without being tempted to become prideful. If one reads one's Bible every day it is tempting to point out the benefits to others. That in and of itself is not bad, but at some point one might succumb to feeling superior to one's neighbor. I have seen this happen in people who have lost weight. They begin to look down on those who haven't. The essential point is: **Pride is competitive. It makes everything in life into a comparison between you and someone else.** Even if one feels inferior in a particular area, pride can still creep in and teach a person to think him/herself better because they aren't rich or educated, etc. One can be better by being lesser. Week 3 will deal with this aspect of pride.

* Explain that the statement in bold print (in the previous paragraph) will be delved into further in the coming weeks.

**HAVE EACH PERSON IN THE GROUP WHO IS WILLING SHARE HOW AND WHEN HE OR SHE ACCEPTED CHRIST AND WHAT THE TURNING POINT WAS.**

**PRIDE – WEEK 1 – THE PRIDE THAT IS NOT A SIN**

**This Leader’s Guide is meant to contain suggestions of how to go about leading a small group using the Pride and Humility study. Feel free to choose other questions, quotes, and Bible passages from the week’s readings to focus on in your group. Each group is different and will relate to different aspects of the study. Your group may wish to discuss one concept for the entire session, or may wish to talk about a wide variety of the questions posed.**  **Some groups have spent several weeks discussing each “week” of the study. Feel free to take it at your own pace. Certain “days” do not have any additional questions or directions.**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

Remind everyone of the rules of a small group. Sharing is encouraged and what is shared is to remain confidential. Also, we will respect, love and encourage one another.

*What stood out to you from this week’s lesson? Was there anything that particularly made you think?* *(this question will be asked each week)*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* *There was a family in one of our churches that would not share the wonderful achievements of their child, for fear of seeming to be bragging. We encouraged them to share with the small group in order to allow us to rejoice with them.*
* *What have you or your children done that you are proud of?*

Day 2 – Too far or not?

* 2 Corinthians 7:4 “***I have great confidence in you; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds***.” (Apostle Paul to the church in Corinth)
* (question 8) Do you think the Corinthian believers were proud that Paul thought highly of them?
* (question 10) Where might the danger lie?
* *There was an older men’s Sunday School class at one of our churches that was annoyed by the praise band and their loud drums. We were so proud of everyone concerned: the men chose to support the praise band anyway, and the band tried to find ways to tone down their volume.*

Day 3 – Proper pride

* Have someone read the introduction to the C.S. Lewis quote after question 13 and the quote itself. The next page has another quote from the same book: “*By this method thousands of humans have been brought to think that humility means pretty women trying to believer they are ugly and clever men trying to believe they are fools*.”[[4]](#footnote-4)
* *How do you put yourself down?*
* *How could this be changed so you could view yourself like you would view someone else?*
* *Do you ever put other people down so you will feel better about yourself?* (This is very common and I have personally been tempted to do it. When we feel insecure, we think we will feel better by bringing others down, although we generally do not realize that is why we are doing it.)
* *Are you able to praise someone else without feeling inferior?*

Day 4 – False humility

* Have someone read the first paragraph of Day 4.
* (question 19) What should your reaction be, when you are complimented?
* Questions 22 and 23 ask each participant to come up with a list of their own strengths and weaknesses. This is a very important exercise, so please do not omit it. Have each person share one of their strengths and one of their weaknesses.

Day 5 – Accentuating the positive

* Read the first paragraph on Day 5.
* (question 24) Have you ever been criticized, where it made an impact on you? *(Try not to spend a lot of time rehashing, but it is good to think about this for a moment.)*
* Question 25 asks each person to come up with little words of encouragement or praise of one another. Have people share their answers, as they are willing. Also encourage them to keep doing this as the weeks go on and as they get to know one another better. Far too often we *think* positive thoughts about other people and do not voice them.

Day 6 – The marriage of humility and pride

* Have someone read the two paragraphs directly preceding question 32.

Close with the closing prayer at the end of Week 1.

**PRIDE – WEEK 2 – THE PRIDE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything in particular speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* *How many of you have ever turned down help that was offered?*

 *What reasons did you give?*

* *Do you agree or disagree with the premise that this is one variety of pride?*

Day 2 – To give or to receive

* *How comfortable are you with the idea that one day someone might have to help you carry things, make meals, etc.?*
* (question 7) Why do you believe that God would create a world in which we are not entirely self-sufficient but are forced to rely on one another?

Day 3 – Success and forgetting God

* Have someone read Deuteronomy 8:11-14 from the start of Day 3.
* (question 9) When everything is going well, what is the danger?
* (question 10) How can we find a balance between the rightful pride of achievement and the wrongful pride of self-sufficiency?

Day 4 – Living without God

* *Some people do not know God and suffer from this variety of pride and it keeps them from seeking God*.
* Have someone read Psalm 10:4-6 from Day 4 (right after question 13).
* (question 14) How is the thinking of the people in this passage naïve?
* Have someone read Psalm 73:5-11, found right after question 14. (*The first half of this passage reminds me of Hollywood.*)
* (question 17) How is it possible to share Christ with people who don’t know him yet and who are suffering from the pride of self-sufficiency?

Day 5 - It all relies on me.

* Read the four examples of this concept (at the start of Day 5), one at a time, and ask people to raise their hand if this: a) ever applied to them; b) applies to them now.
* (question 19) What is the problem with this attitude?
* (question 20) Who is the focus of that thinking?
* (question 21) Who should the focus be on?
* (question 22) Do you feel responsible for the actions of another adult?
* (question 24) Is it possible that there is NO combination of words and actions on your part that would change the other person? *How does that make you feel?*
* (question 25) Who knows and loves that person far better than you?
* (question 27) What should your attitude be when bad choices are made by the other person? What should you do?

Day 6 – We all need God.

* Have someone read Romans 9:16 and the paragraph that follows, found at the start of Day 6.
* (question 28) How and when do you need God’s mercy?
* (question 29) How and when do those around you need God’s mercy?
* (question 30) Is there a difference between you and them? (*this is asking if we hold ourself to a higher standard than the people around us; if we allow the other person to interact with God on their own, etc.*)
* “*The core of sin is our making ourselves the center of life, rather than accepting the holy God as the center*.”[[5]](#footnote-5) (quote after question 30) Realizing that we are not perfect or able to solve all of the problems of the people around us frees us to love them more fully.
* (question 31) Who is actually at the center when we think “It all relies on me?”
* Have someone read the paragraph right after question 31.
* (question 32) What happens when we voice our criticism and discontent in those situations?
* (question 33) How should we handle it when the new leader does poorly in some way? *(jump for joy? High five?)* When they do well? *(pout?)*
* (question 34) What should the goal be, as we participate in ministries?
* *Can you give an example of when you did this well or poorly? When have you been on the receiving end of it being done well or poorly?*
* Have someone read the paragraph and the Luke passage found after question 34.
* (question 35) After tempting Jesus, what were Satan’s plans?
* (question 36) How many times do you expect Satan to tempt you?
* (question 37) If you succeed in resisting temptation a few times, will Satan leave you alone? *(look at the end of the Luke passage)*
* (question 38) What level of spirituality must you achieve before Satan will no longer be a factor?

Read the conclusion right before the closing prayer and close with the closing prayer at the end of Week 2.

**PRIDE – WEEK 3 – THE PRIDE OF INFERIORITY**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* *How many boxes did you check on Day 1?*
* *Do you ever look down on people who cannot check those boxes?*
* *What would that sound like, looking down on someone for that reason?*

**IF YOUR GROUP IS LARGER THAN 12, IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA TO DIVIDE INTO SMALLER GROUPS FOR THE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS.**

* Have someone read the quote directly before question 1.
* (question 1) Who do you think is better than you in some respect?
* (question 2) How does that make you feel?

Day 2 - Insecurity

* Have someone read the Bible passage right before question 5.
* (question 5) Why was Saul feeling insecure?
* (question 6) How did he try to save the day?
* (question 7) How does this story exhibit pride?
* (question 8) How patient are you when you are in charge and things are going poorly?

Day 3 – Feelings of inferiority

* Read the examples at the start of Day 3.
* (question 13) What qualities about us matter to God?
* (question 14) How do you try to encourage people when they are feeling inferior?
* *If that person is you, what do you do?*
* Have someone read the paragraph right before question 16.
* *Do you agree?*
* *Have you ever tried to talk to someone who has to one-up everything you say?*
* *What makes those conversations frustrating?*
* Have someone read the quote right after question 20.
* (question 21) When have you been willing to play second fiddle?
* (question 22) Did you feel good about it, or have a bad attitude?

Day 5 – Pride of poverty

* Mention the Brother Andrew story from Day 5 and how he was reprimanded by a supporter for the pride of poverty.
* Brainstorm some statements that a person suffering from the pride of inferiority, insecurity or poverty might say, then have people come up with possible ways to respond to the person. For example, “You feel sick? Last week I was so sick, I couldn’t move.” Or “If I go to church looking like this, everyone will look down on me.” Or “I’m not going on that mission trip because I don’t have the money.” (Remember: pride is any time we push away God or the people around us.)
* *Would your instinct be to argue with the person?*
* *How could you respond gently and with humility?*
* *How could you gently reprimand the person?*

Day 6 – God’s way

* Have someone read the 1st paragraph from Day 6.
* *Do you ever feel afraid when following God?*
* *Have you followed Him when it has been hard?*
* (question 44) What is the end result of following God in the challenging moments?
* Have someone read the quote directly following question 44.
* Discuss the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) and how it might relate to what you have been discussing.

Close with the closing prayer at the end of Week 3.

**PRIDE – WEEK 4 – THE PRIDE OF STUBBORNNESS**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* *Which boxes did you check?*
* *What does that tell you about yourself?*

Day 2 - Heritage

* Have someone read Jeremiah 7:24-28 from the start of Day 2.
* (question 1) In what direction were the stubborn people going?
* (question 2) What word is used to describe one’s heart at those times?
* *What do you think of that?*
* (question 3) What other word is used to describe the people?
* (question 5) When we are stiff-necked, going backwards, with an evil heart, what are we risking if we do not change?
* *Why do people not change when that is the risk?*
* *What do they consider more important?*
* 2 Chronicles 30:8a “***Do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers were; submit to the Lord***.”
* *Have any of your relatives ever been stiff-necked?*
* *What if they say “We’re a stubborn family. We always stick to our guns. No one messes with us.”?*
* *What are we supposed to do if our relatives act this way?*

Day 3 – Openness to others

* Have someone read Zechariah 7:8-13 from the start of Day 3.
* (question 8) How are the stubborn people described here?
* (question 9) How are we supposed to react when we see a need?
* (question 11) What was God’s reaction to the stubborn people?
* *Does this strike you as harsh? Isn’t God supposed to love and support His people?*
* (question 12) Does this mean we can never say no when asked for help?

Day 4 – Jesus sees the heart

* Have someone read Mark 3:1-6 from the start of Day 4.
* (question 15) What did it reveal about the Pharisees that they wanted to kill Jesus even after they had seen him heal a man?
* *Have you seen this happen, that even when someone is being kind and loving, the other person is determined to reject and hate?*
* *What is coming between the stubborn person and God in those situations?*
* *What needs to happen?*

Day 6 – The end result

* Have someone read the first two paragraphs at the start of Day 6, plus the following two Bible passages.
* (question 19) Why do you believe that the Bible so often links stubborn pride with becoming a lost soul?
* (question 20) Do you believe this is fair?
* Read the paragraph directly following question 20 and have someone read the long story about Margaret Slattery.
* *What keeps people from doing this if it is simple?*
* (question 22) Do you believe that following the ways of Christ can really make a difference in your mental health as described in the story?

Close with the closing prayer at the end of Week 4.

**PRIDE - WEEK 5 – THE PRIDE OF REBELLION**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* Have someone read the four-paragraph intro on Day 1.
* *Without getting political, how might the popularity of Trump and Sanders in the 2016 election have been due to the attractiveness of rebellion?*
* (question 1) In what ways did you rebel against your parents?
* Read Hebrews 3:15 “***As has just been said: Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion***.”
* (question 3) According to this verse, what is a requirement for rebellion?
* (question 4) What does it mean to “harden your heart”?

Day 2 – I know better than God.

* Either read the introduction to the 1 Samuel Bible passage at the start of Day 2 or summarize it. Then have someone read or summarize the Bible passage.
* *Was this Bible passage disturbing to any of you?*
* (question 6) What did the Israelites do wrong?
* (question 8) What did God want from Saul and what does He want from us?
* *How is “rebellion like the sin of divination”? (from the Bible passage)*  Divination = channeling an evil spirit to see the future.
* Have someone read the concluding paragraph after question 9.

Day 3 – I know better than my spiritual leaders.

* *The next passage from the Bible happened between the liberation of the Israelites from slavery and their entry into the promised land. Moses and Aaron were leading them. They were the spiritual leaders, the judges between disputes and were also like George Washington and Abraham Lincoln to them*. *Unfortunately, with power comes both responsibility and enemies.*
* Have someone read Numbers 16:1-3 from Day 3.
* (question 10) What was the complaint of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, On and the 250 others?
* (question 11) Were they probably right, since there were so many in agreement?
* Have someone read Numbers 16:31-35 and Numbers 16:41.
* *Did God take the complaints seriously?*
* *What was God’s view of the matter?*
* (question 13) What was the reaction of the rest of the Israelites?
* *Have you ever found it difficult to get the truth of a situation known and accepted?*
* *Why is this so often the case?*
* Have someone read the two paragraphs directly after question 14.
* (question 15) What do you need to change in order to better follow the lead of your pastor and other church leaders? Or, if you are the leader, what would help you?
* (question 16) How could you help when people grumble against those who lead?
* Have someone read the conclusion directly after question 16.

Day 4 – Rebellion of the clergy

* *There are times when it is the leadership that is rebelling against God.*
* *Have you known pastors or church leaders to lead people astray?*
* *How much damage is done when leaders go bad?*
* (question 20) How important is it for pastors and church leaders to remain faithful to God?

Day 5 – Only listening to happy thoughts

* Have someone read the Isaiah passage from the start of Day 5.
* (question 21) In this passage, what sorts of things did the people want to hear?
* (question 22) How were the people described?
* *What is the problem with the Prosperity Gospel?* (A description of this doctrine is found after question 22.)
* (question 23) Do you find yourself drawn to teachers who make you feel good but offer little spiritual challenge?
* *Do you expect following God to be fun and easy?*
* *Is it a deal-breaker if it is hard at times?*

Day 6 – The remedy

* Have someone read the passage from James at the start of Day 6.
* Read the story about David that is found after question 26.
* (question 28) What can you learn from David?
* (question 29) How does one “David” encourage the rest of the church?
* Read the final summary paragraph from Day 6 and the Isaiah passage.

Close with the closing prayer for Week 5.

**PRIDE - WEEK 6 – THE PRIDE OF SUPERIORITY**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* *Did you check any of the boxes on Day 1?*
* *Are there any of them where you cannot imagine pride creeping in?*

The Pride of Superiority is divided into four sections: wealth, age, perceived spirituality, and the Inner Circle.

Day 2 - The Superiority of Wealth

* *How can wealth lead to pride?*
* Have someone read the Corrie Ten Boom story at the start of Day 2.
* Have someone summarize the story of the rich young ruler from Matthew 19:16-24 or read the passage.
* (questions 3 + 4) How are these two stories similar and how are they different?
* Read Revelation 3:17 (directly before question 5).
* (question 8) Are possessions bad in and of themselves?
* Have someone read the paragraph that concludes the story of the rich young ruler and Matthew 19:24 (between questions 9 & 10).
* (question 10) Why is it hard for the rich to be saved?
* (question 11) Does it make you happy or sad to think of the rich going to hell?
* (question 14) How should this affect our attitude towards accumulating possessions?

Day 3 - The Superiority of Age

* Have someone read 2 Chronicles 26:16-21 from Day 3.
* (question 17) Who was brave enough to confront the king?
* (question 19) What was Uzziah’s reaction?
* (question 20) How did God intervene?
* *No one is above God’s correction. Uzziah was one of the good kings. Until he grew older, he was faithful to God*.
* *Corrie Ten Boom had to face her weaknesses as well.* Have someone read Corrie’s quote that is located after question 20.
* (question 22) Do temptations such as Corrie described assail us in greater intensity as we age? Why or why not? (*We might get sloppy and neglect relationships, including our one with God*.)

Days 4 & 5 - *The Superiority of Perceived Spirituality may consist in a person looking inward and thinking himself or herself special in God’s eyes, or it may consist in a person looking outward and thinking that other people are no good in God’s eyes.*

* (questions 23 + 24) How did the Pharisee and tax collector pray differently?
* Have someone read the quote after question 27.
* *How much damage does this attitude do to our witness?*
* Have someone read the Keith Green quote at the start of Day 5.
* (question 30) How should we act when people, under the guise of being genuine and honest, are unkind, harsh and even hate-filled? *(Is it perhaps a case of someone trying to remove the splinter from someone else’s eye when they have a log in their own eye?)*
* (question 33) What does God look for in His followers?

Day 6 - The Superiority of the Inner Circle

* Have someone read the 3rd paragraph of Day 6.
* Have someone read the C.S. Lewis quote directly following that paragraph.
* (question 35) How is an Inner Circle different from a group of friends who simply enjoy spending time together?
* *Is this a temptation of yours, to be flattered by a charismatic, critical person who likes you, while disliking pretty much everyone else?*
* *What do you say when confronted with a similar situation?*

Remember: even if you have a bit of an inferiority complex, it does not mean that you do not sometimes struggle with the pride of superiority. The temptation of pride comes and goes. Satan attacks, then waits for a better opportunity, then attacks again, and he can be very subtle.

Close with the Wesley Covenant Prayer at the end of Week 6.

**AT THIS POINT IN THE STUDY, YOUR GROUP MAY WANT TO HAVE ONE WEEK “OFF”, WHEN REFRESHMENTS ARE BROUGHT IN AND THE GROUP LOOKS AT ONLY THE INTRODUCTION TO HUMILITY. THE ADVANTAGE TO THIS APPROACH IS TO FIGURATIVELY “CLEANSE THE PALATE” FROM THE STUDY OF PRIDE, BEFORE BEGINNING TO THINK ABOUT HUMILITY.**

**INTRODUCTION TO HUMILITY**

1. Have someone read the first four paragraphs of the Introduction to Humility.
2. *How willing are you to admit your weaknesses?*
3. *Do you try to hide your weaknesses, so no one will know?*
4. *Why are we so unwilling to be transparent?*
5. *What are the benefits to openly speaking of where we fall short?* *(People can relate to us better. We do not need to remember what we are hiding.)*

**HUMILITY – WEEK 1 – HUMILITY, NOT HUMILIATION**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* Have someone read the first two paragraphs of Day 1.
* *Have you thought about humility vs. humiliation before? What do you think?*
* (question 2) Have you ever crashed and burned when doing a job at church? How did you feel?
* *After you failed, did you quit or try again?*
* *Have you ever felt humiliated or embarrassed?*

Day 2 – Eating crow

* Have someone read Matthew 26:31-35 from the start of Day 2.
* *What inspires you most about Peter? That he had brief good moments or that he had colossal bad moments and was humble enough (after being humbled) to grow and continue?*
* (question 9) Peter looked into Jesus’ eyes at the moment of his worst humiliation. What do you imagine he saw in Jesus’ expression?
* *What if you were to look at Jesus during your humiliation? What do you think you would see?*

Day 3 – Grasping honor

* Have someone read the Andrew Murray quote after question 13.
* (question 14) How are Christians NOT to act?
* (question 15) How is true humility described?
* (question 13) What are some guidelines to follow to avoid being humiliated?

Day 4 – Treating others equally

* Have someone read Luke 8:19-21 at the start of Day 4.
* (question 20) What did Jesus care about more than family relationships?
* (question 21) How can His example guide us?

Day 5 – Division in the body of Christ

* Have someone read Matthew 20:20-28 from the start of Day 5.
* (question 24) After Jesus denied special treatment to two of His disciples, what was the reaction from the others? *(indignant)*
* *Have you ever been in a situation where someone thought they should get special treatment and where this caused bad feelings in others?*
* (question 26) How did you feel about it? How did you act? What did you say?
* (question 27) What did Jesus say, when it happened to Him?
* (question 29) How are all of us to act toward one another no matter our position in the church?

Day 6 – Humiliation becoming humility

* From the start of Day 6, have someone read the introduction to the Bible passage as well as the Daniel passage.
* (question 31) What did the King do wrong? *(did not follow advice, was proud)*
* (question 33) What did the King do right?
* Read Isaiah 5:15-16, found right after question 35.
* *Who will be humbled by God?*
* Have someone read the last two paragraphs of Day 6.

Close with the closing prayer for Week 1.

**HUMILITY – WEEK 2 – THE HUMILITY OF HONESTY AND REPENTANCE**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* Today we will be looking at how honesty fits in with humility. Our first task is to go around the room and to name what you see as your best quality. (question 1)
* (question 2) What would you say is your worst weakness?
* *Has God ever pointed out areas in your life that needed work?*
* *Is every area of your life open to His input?*
* Have someone read the C.S. Lewis quote found right after question 2.
* *Do you agree?*

Day 2 – Honesty about and toward others

* Have someone read the first paragraph of Day 2.
* Have someone read Deuteronomy 34:10-12.
* (question 5) What was Joshua implying about himself?
* (question 6) Did Joshua sound jealous or as though he was putting himself down?
* *How might he have sounded if he was feeling snarky about taking over from Moses?* *(*Criticism: *“Well, we all know how Moses micromanaged and stuck his nose everywhere. Now things will be done better.”* Pity Party: *“I know everyone just LOVED Moses. No one will think I’m any good. I’m just a regular person and he was special.”)*
* Have someone read the summary of Joshua’s life and ministry (after question 6).
* Have someone read the Bible passage about John the Baptist, found right before question 7.
* (question 7) Was John competing with Jesus?
* (question 8) What was his conclusion about himself?
* *How might John have sounded if he was having trouble with his pride? (“Don’t go over there. Stay with me. He thinks he’s something special, but we’re the ones REALLY serving God.”*
* *How is his struggle like the one parents have, as their children grow up, marry and leave home?*
* Read Ephesians 4:15 “***Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ***.”
* (question 10) What do you believe is the key to confronting others? What does that look like?

Day 3 – Honesty about ourselves

* There are two stories here of Christian leaders being humble. Sadhu Sundar Singh compared himself to the donkey that carried Jesus into Jerusalem and Corrie Ten Boom admitted that there were times when she was “lazy, selfish and filled with ego”.
* *Have you ever realized with brutal honesty how not great you really are, perhaps when doing something pretty good, like ministering or serving?*  (Once a family stopped by the church, which was also next to our house. They needed help and food. I just happened to have several things in the freezer that worked to feed the family for the next two days. I found myself thanking God for the provisions in the freezer and truly did not feel like it was me helping them at all.)
* Have someone read James 1:13-15, found directly after question 16.
* *How can these verses keep us honest?*
* Read Luke 17:9-10 found right before question 18.
* (question 18) When you serve God, how much credit or recognition do you expect? How much should you expect? *(a thank-you note, a mention in the bulletin, a word from the pastor)*

Day 4 – The ugly, hard work

* Have someone read the quote from the start of Day 4 and the long passage from 1 John. *(One fun activity is to have everyone else interrupt the reader every time question 22 is answered.)*
* (question 22) How is a believer to show that he/she is following God?
* God’s promise is this: Read 2 Chronicles 34:27 from the end of Day 4.

Day 5 – Repentance leading to freedom

* Read the first paragraph of Day 5.
* *How was King David a good example of this?*
* Have someone read the quote before question 30 and the short quote by George MacDonald after question 30.
* *How can we be most free?*
* *Do you see how sin enslaves us?* (Remember the long chain that Marley was dragging around in The Christmas Carol? And how Scrooge was dancing around after repenting?)
* Have someone read the quote directly before question 31.
* *How much can we correct on our own?*

Day 6 – God’s way

* *If you have read the Chronicle of Narnia called The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, do you remember when Eustace had changed into a dragon and was trying on his own to get the dragon skin off? He succeeded at getting a few layers off, but what had to happen for it all to come off? What has to happen for us to truly have spiritual surgery on our bad areas?*
* Read the Corrie Ten Boom quote after question 33 and the summary after question 35.

Close with the closing prayer for Week 2.

**HUMILITY – WEEK 3 –HUMILITY TOWARD GOD**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* *Acknowledging God and giving Him His rightful place is key to truly living in humility.*
* Have someone read the quote right before question 2.
* (question 2) What did Brother Langston recommend as a way to be kept from sin?
* Have someone read the Andrew Murray quote right before question 3.
* (question 3) What is Andrew Murray’s definition of humility?
* (question 4) What keeps you from being able to trust others?
* (question 5) How does pride get in the way of trust?
* *Do you ever sit and quietly ask God to speak to you?*

Day 2 - The perfect example of Jesus

* Have someone read John 13:1-11 from Day 2.
* (question 8) We usually think about Peter when reading this passage, but what about Judas?
* Have you ever considered the fact that Jesus washed the feet of Judas, knowing full well that Judas would soon betray Him?
* What does this mean to you when you encounter (or minister with) people that you do not like (or who do not like you)?
* Put yourself in the place of Jesus first, then Judas.

Day 3 - The “fear of God”

* *What is the fear of God?*
* Have someone read the 2 verses before question 13.
* (question 13) What does God “esteem” and “delight” in?
* Have someone read the Jerry Bridges quote after question 13.
* (question 14) How should we follow the examples of Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, John and the others?
* (question 15) Do you agree that humility before God is necessary before it can be achieved in any other relationship?
* Have someone read the Lewis quote before question 16.
* (question 16) How well can you know God without the fear of God?

Day 4 – We are nothing in comparison.

* *Sometimes we get it into our heads that we will do something great for God. David in the Old Testament thought this – he wanted to build a great church for God. Wouldn’t you think this was a wonderful idea? Here is God’s response:* Have someone read the 1 Chronicles passage from Day 4.
* *How did God turn everything around?*
* (question 21) How should we view ourselves and what we do?
* *Should we sit around and do nothing, since God does it all better and He wants to give to us?*

Day 5 – Equality before God

* *The Jews were told not to associate with non-Jews, or Gentiles, until after Jesus rose from the dead. Peter was told how much God cared about the Gentiles and that He wanted Peter to minister to them. The last sentence of the Acts 10 passage captures God’s message to Peter (and to all of us): “****I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right****.”*
* (question 29) Are you pleased or displeased when God accepts others? What about a racist? An abuser? A murderer?
* Would you be happier if certain people were left out of God’s offer of salvation? **DISCUSS JONAH.**
* Have someone read Deuteronomy 32:48-52, found right before question 30.
* (question 30) Is anyone above being corrected by God?
* Have people read the 5 Bible passages after question 30.
* (question 32) Who is more important to God: the person washing the dishes or the one leading worship?
* Read 2 Chronicles 16:9 “***For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him***.” *Is there a “but only if” in that verse?*

Day 6 - The Glory of Humility and the Grace of God

* Have someone read the introduction to the Job passage and Job 42:1-11, both found after question 34.
* (question 35) What did God call Job, after Job had humbled himself before God?
* (question 36) How did God treat Job’s faithless friends?
* Read the paragraph about Andrew Murray and the Isaiah passage, both found after question 38.

Close with the closing prayer for Week 3.

**HUMILITY – WEEK 4 –HUMILITY TOWARD OTHERS**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* Have someone read the first three paragraphs of the Andrew Murray quote.
* *How can we: “Count others better than ourselves when we see that they are far below us in wisdom and holiness, in natural gifts, or in grace received”?[[6]](#footnote-6)*
* *What would it look like?* (*Perhaps a star athlete takes the time to teach a newcomer, cheering him/her on. Perhaps a great singer pats the other person who did their best on the back. Perhaps Corrie Ten Boom takes the time to listen to someone*.)
* (question 1) How often do you find yourself comparing yourself to others?
* (question 2) Are you able to praise God when others are blessed or preferred? How about when you both did the project and only the other person gets recognized? (*I had this happen once. After I came up with the idea for our church to feed the homeless in Paris on Friday nights and worked at it every week, another young woman who also worked with the program was given all the credit and I was overlooked*.)
* Have someone read the quote found before question 5.
* *Have you known women who struggled for years to get pregnant, while their friends had baby after baby?*
* *What can we learn from the example of Elizabeth?*

Day 2 - Our need for one another

* Have someone read the first paragraph of Day 2.
* Have someone read Romans 12:10-21, found right before question 9.
* (question 9) How are you to treat fellow believers?
* (question 10) How are you to treat someone with whom you have a conflict?
* (question 11) How is it possible to do right in the eyes of everyone?
* (question 12) What is the good in treating your enemy well?
* *It is impossible to totally avoid conflict, but as far as it depends on us, we are to do right or to make it right afterwards.*

Day 3 - No hero worship and no prejudice

* *It is very natural to want to think well of our spiritual leaders and we might tend to put these people on a pedestal, thinking they can do no wrong*.
* *Who do you think most highly of?*
* *The opposite can also be true, that with some people, there is nothing they could do to make us think well of them. Maybe you have been on the receiving end of this.*
* *Have any of you had to suffer through the prejudice of someone?*
* *How does that get in the way of having a healthy relationship?*
* Corrie Ten Boom, after being in a concentration camp, hated Germans. She told God she was willing to go anywhere in the world for Him, except to Germany. She had every reason to hate Germans. Her sister and father had died at their hands. She was mistreated.
* (question 17) Do you think she would have been justified in not having anything to do with Germans or Germany after WWII?
* (question 18) Was God asking too much of Corrie to want her to minister in Germany?
* (question 19) Why was it necessary for her prejudice to be confronted?
* (question 21) Does that make God heartless and cruel, not caring about our pain? Share your thoughts.
* *If you have been the recipient of prejudice, what would you say if God asked you to minister to those people?*
* Have someone read 1 Corinthians 16:13-18, found before question 22.
* How was Paul emphasizing this concept when he praised Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus? *(they were all Gentiles)*
* (question 23, sort of) Is there anyone that you would not like to hear God praising? Who is the person you think most ill of? President Trump? President Biden? What if God said: “I was glad when Donald Trump/Joe Biden arrived, because he supplied what was lacking from you”? Would you still serve and follow God?
* Have someone read the introduction to the Brother Andrew story and then the story itself, both found after question 24.
* (question 26) What could you learn from this?
* *Who initiated them praying together? How could that have made it harder for Brother Andrew to accept and grow in faith?*

Day 4 - Submission to the authority figures in our life.

* *How well do you do this?*
* *Have you ever been given a traffic ticket? How did you react?*
* Read Titus 3:1-2, found before question 32.
* *If the authority figure is our boss, or the leader of the ministry we are helping with, or the PTA president, etc., what should be our guiding rule?*
* Discuss Joseph from the Old Testament. He was mistreated, lied about, and thrown in jail. *Was he off the hook because of how he was treated? What did God expect of him?*

Day 5 - Hate must die.

* Have someone read 1 John 4:16b-21, found before question 38.
* (question 38) Can a person hate someone and still love God?
* (question 41) When (if ever) is it okay to love God and also hate someone?
* Corrie Ten Boom did humble herself and followed God to Germany, but that wasn’t all that God asked of her. One of the places where she spoke of forgiveness had, in the audience, one of the worst guards from the concentration camp where she had been imprisoned. She and her sister had had to walk past him naked at one point. This guard approached her after her talk and asked her to forgive him and wanted to shake her hand as a sign of that forgiveness.
* Have someone read the Corrie quote after question 41.
* *What did Corrie offer to God in this story?* *(putting forth her arm)*

Day 6 - Love no matter what

* Have someone read Psalm 35:12-19, found at the start of Day 6.
* (question 44) When you act well and love your neighbors, do they necessarily follow suit?
* Have someone read Colossians 3:12-14, found before question 45.
* (question 45) Why should we forgive? *(Note: For those who have suffered abuse, forgiveness is the last step of a long journey.)*
* Have people read the last four Bible passages from Day 6, found after question 46.
* (question 47) How important is it to love one another, according to Paul, John, Peter, and the writer of Hebrews?

Close with the closing prayer for Week 4.

**HUMILITY – WEEK 5 – THE HUMILITY OF ENDURING HARDSHIPS**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 - Warm-up

* *How many boxes did you check on Day 1?*
* Have someone read 2 Corinthians 6:3-10.
* (question 1) What hardships were the disciples enduring?
* (question 2) Which of those do you fear the most?
* *Did people in Bible times who followed God have it easy?*
* *Why did they keep following Him?*

Day 2 – The Choice

* Have someone read Hebrews 11:24-26, found before question 5.
* (question 5) Why do you think Moses chose a life of poverty, hardship and persecution over a life of wealth and honor?
* *The prophet Habakkuk was given a particularly hard word to proclaim.* Read Habakkuk 3:16-19, found after question 5.
* (question 6) Was Habakkuk feeling strong and fearless?
* (question 7) What did he decide to do?
* Read paragraph after question 8.

Day 3 – The Preparation

* *What should we do to prepare for hard times?*
* Have someone read Ephesians 6:10-18.
* (question 9) Who is the struggle against?
* (question 10) What are you to do *when* the day of evil comes?
* (question 11) After you have done everything in your power, what are you told to do?
* (questions 13-17) What are the different pieces of our armor?
* (question 19) Which is your weakest area? Your strongest?
* (question 20) What could you begin to do today to become stronger in your weak area?

Day 4 – Godly Stubbornness

* Have someone read the first paragraph of Day 4 and discuss how difficult abstinence is when the culture lives to brag and congratulate people doing the opposite.
* Brother Andrew encountered many Christians during his travels whom he admired for their perseverance and stubbornness in the midst of troubles. In Romania, the Communist regime used the technique of consolidation to reduce the quantity of churches. If there were two churches, they made them into just one. If there were empty pews, they merged churches together. Two church services were allowed each week: one on Saturday and one on Sunday, but since Saturday was a full work day, not enough people went to that service to satisfy the Communists, so that, in effect, worship had been consolidated into a single meeting. Given this environment, Brother Andrew encountered much fear in the Christian community in Romania. Even church leaders were scared to speak with him and refused to accept Bibles.
* Have someone read the quote found right before question 23.
* (question 23) What is admirable about these farmers?
* *Why would satan use tactics like this?*
* Have someone read the long quote before question 25.
* (question 25) How did the Catholics do well?
* *Can you understand why people would leave their country and why churches would retreat? Which reaction do you think you would have?*
* (question 22) What similar issues do we face in the United States which slowly erode the strength of Christians and the church?

Day 5 – Joy in the midst of troubles

* Have someone read the first paragraph of Day 5.
* (question 30) What blessings have you noticed, while enduring trials?
* Have someone read Ruth 2:10-12, found before question 31.
* (question 31) Ruth was penniless, childless, and husbandless. What joy did she find?
* Have someone read the Corrie quote after question 32.
* (question 33) What joy did Corrie find?
* Brother Andrew once addressed a group of discouraged East German Christians who were complaining about their inability to do missions, since they were not free to leave the country. Read Brother Andrew’s response to them after question 33.
* (question 35) How did Paul demonstrate God’s way of looking at our situations?
* *Should we pray for release from our situation?*
* *What should our attitude be toward trials?*

Day 6 - The Promise

* Have someone read Jesus’ promise in Mark 10:29-30 from Day 6.
* (question 37) What are the promises in these verses?
* Have someone read the quote before question 38.
* (question 38) What does everything in our lives become, if we surrender it to God?

Read the introduction to the closing prayer and pray the song that is the closing prayer for Week 5.

**HUMILITY – WEEK 6 – THE HUMILITY OF WILLINGNESS**

Open with prayer requests and prayer.

*Did anything speak to you this week?*

Day 1 – Warm-up

* Have someone read the first paragraph of Day 1.
* Sadly, people who claim the name of the Lord are not always willing to go along with God’s plan. Jesus confronted this reality as he approached Jerusalem and his death.Read Matthew 23:37, found before question 2.
* (question 2) What saddened Jesus?
* Sometimes we feel inspired to do something and do nothing to act on the feeling. Other times we feel tired and dead inside, but we choose to do what needs to be done. At times, our feelings and our will go hand in hand. This next passage was one of those times for the Israelites.
* Have someone read Exodus 35:20-29, found right before question 4.
* (question 4) What happened when the Israelites’ hearts were willing?
* Have someone read the paragraph before question 6.
* (question 6) What other examples from the Bible can you think of, when people were willing to simply offer what they had?
* *What can YOU offer?*

Day 2 – Willing to follow God

* Read the first paragraph of Day 2.
* (question 7) In order to grow in our faith, what is necessary, even more than intellectual belief?
* (question 8) Are you more like an obedient dog or an independent cat in your walk with God?
* Abraham was 75 years old when God told him to leave his country, his people and his father’s household. Without hesitation, he did what God asked, even though it meant living out of tents for years, plus encountering some violent people.
* Have someone read the paragraph about Brother Andrew found after question 10, plus the quote immediately afterwards.
* (question 11) What did Brother Andrew willingly offer to God?
* Have someone read the Corrie quote after question 11.
* (question 12) What did this lady willingly offer?
* (question 13) What else did God ask her to do?
* Corrie Ten Boom was invited to an apartment for a cup of coffee after she spoke one day. She willingly accepted but did not realize that ten flights of stairs were between her and that cup of coffee. She was nearly 80 years of age but managed the climb by resting periodically. The unbelieving parents of one of the ladies who invited her where there and by the time Corrie left, they had prayed to receive Christ. In the end, she thanked God for all those stairs and asked the Lord to help her to be willing to go wherever He led.
* (question 16) Are you willing to do whatever He might ask you to do even if it is inconvenient or causes you extra work?
* *What has God asked you to do that has been hard?*

Day 3 – Willing to run the race to the end

* Have someone read the first paragraph of Day 3.
* Have someone read the paragraph after question 20.
* Have someone read the quote before question 21.
* (question 21) What can we learn from Edison about serving God?
* (question 22) What can we learn from Opal and the Libereks?

Day 4 – Willing to listen and learn

* Have someone read the introduction to the Bible passage and Exodus 18:13-24 from the start of Day 4.
* *What was Moses’ reaction to his father-in-law’s advice?*
* (question 31) What are the benefits of humbly listening and learning from others?
* Have someone read the quote found after question 31.
* *Do you agree that humility and contentment are learned?*
* Charles Finney wrote about how sometimes our hearts are like fallow ground and need to be broken up and tilled.
* Read the paragraph about shale found after question 37.
* *What can be examples of big chunks that need to be removed?* *(walls we have built up in relationships, chips on shoulder, pride)*

Day 5 – Willing to take responsibility for one’s sin

* So far, we have been talking about the willingness to follow and to offer God what we are. Now we will deal with sin.
* Have someone read the first paragraph of Day 5.
* We have looked at Joseph other weeks. Remember how he was sold into slavery by his brothers. His brothers were hard-hearted and had not cared about the grief they would cause their father. Later, though, when their father was reluctant to let Joseph’s only full brother Benjamin make the journey to Egypt with his brothers, this is what two of the brothers said:
* Have someone read the two Genesis passages before question 39.
* (question 40) How is this different from how they treated Joseph?
* *What were the brothers really doing here? (atoning for past sin)*
* *What does this teach you about how you deal with sin in your own life?*
* Pretend you have done or said something that has hurt another person. *What are the different ways of dealing with the broken relationship? (drop the relationship, ignore your sin and hope the other person gets over it, apologize and make it right)*
* *How much are you loving someone if you cannot be bothered to apologize?*
* *How much are you loving someone if they are out of line and you say nothing?*
* When we care enough to put someone ahead of our pride, we are treating them as Jesus told us to.

Day 6 – Willing to be nothing

* Have someone read the story from Laos found at the start of Day 6.
* (question 44) Why do you think they were willing to bury their pride and be called slaves?
* *What would be the equivalent for us?*
* John Wesley, who loved the existing church and didn’t particularly like preaching outside, once used a tombstone for a pulpit. Chuck Colson, who once was a bigwig in politics, ended up sharing Christ in prisons for most of his adult life. Mother Teresa showed God’s love to the poorest of the poor in India. We have so many comforts and so much freedom in our country.
* *Is there anything you are unwilling to sacrifice for God?*
* *If you are on vacation, are you willing to be used of God there?*
* *If you are outside walking and a neighbor wants to talk, are you willing?*
* *What gifts, talents, or possessions have you offered to God? How has He used them?*

Read the last paragraph of Day 6 and close with the closing prayer for Week 6.

1. C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1952), 121-122,125 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Andrew Murray, *Humility* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2005), 41 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Andrew Murray, *Humility* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2005), 58 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (New York, NY: HarperOne Publishers, 2009), 70-71 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rev. Donald Reed Hummel, Sr. ThM, B.S., *Timeless Truths* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), 191 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Andrew Murray, *Humility* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2005), 26-27 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)