



The Virtues and Character Development Project

The One who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.

I Thessalonians 5:24

Humility – Humble – Post-Activity Curriculum

Note – before reading the content in this module, it is important that the *Humility Pre-Activity Curriculum* and the *Humilities Activities* have been reviewed.

Once humility is developed, i.e., it is second nature or part of one's character, it must be lived out in the community. This appears as service to others. Jesus is our model, as Paul described in Philippians 2:5-8. Here, we learn that Jesus *chose to be humble and offered himself as a servant in human form*. In like manner, the person who has developed humility will serve others. Jesus told His disciples in John 14:9, *...Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father....* Hebrews 1:3 explains this by stating that Jesus is *the exact representation of God's being*. In Matthew 11:29, Jesus said, *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls*. So, if Jesus is a servant in His nature, that shows that God is a servant in His nature. Therefore, as a believer grows in humility, the Holy Spirit will transform one's nature so that the outcome will be a life of serving others.

Studies on the changes that occur in the brain during learning show that learning requires periodic repetition. If this is not done, the circuits that were established begin to lose their function, and memory fades. This is why it is necessary to repeat the learning exercise weekly, then monthly, then 3-4 times a year, and then annually. You know from your own experience that there are some things that you knew well in the past, but no longer are able to recall them because you have not thought about them recently. However, if you review that material, it comes back to your memory very quickly.

In the same way, life habits must be reviewed periodically to prevent them from declining and even disappearing from our character. (Remember that character continues to develop throughout one's lifetime. This may be moving toward godly character, or it might mean moving toward bad character.) The paper by Michael Lamb, Jonathan Brant, and Edward Brooks (see the list of *Articles and Papers in Resources*) points out 7 strategies to use in developing virtues: practice, reflection, examples, discussion, awareness, reminders, and friendships. Some of these might be found in the following suggestions.

It is important to repeat some of the activities on occasion. This may mean actually doing the same activities as were used in the initial formation. It also might mean spending time in reflection about humility. For example, you might think about your abilities and those of others. It might be helpful to listen to other's ideas, knowing you are able to learn from them. Take the time to notice the strengths of others. Listen to others and consider their perspectives. Reading biographies of people who demonstrate humility will provide helpful examples. Also, practicing humility with friends is important for everyone. In summary, continuing to learn is important as you recall that you are still growing and have not reached a final point of humility.

One exercise that will help maintain this mindset is allowing others to speak first. This is more than merely allowing others to start a conversation. In this exercise, you are to avoid speaking about yourself first. Often when speaking with someone, you are looking for an opportunity to share about yourself, maybe something you did. Instead, for a few days, do not mention yourself unless directly asked. Of course, if someone asks a direct question, it is appropriate to answer the question. You will find that this is difficult when pride is present, but becomes easier when humility is growing. As you practice this, you will find it no longer is an exercise, but a way of living. You will find that you are becoming more interested in learning about others and helping them than sharing what you have been accomplishing.

Again, applying the virtue of humility in the community means serving others. While you might have engaged in some form of service while forming this virtue, it becomes vital to continue to serve as you maintain the virtue over time, as it has become part of your character. Remember that Jesus modeled this through His life. Look for opportunities to serve others. This might be in very simple, unassuming tasks that might not be noticed. This is especially important in maintaining humility. When one engages in activities that draws attention, recognition often follows. This makes it more challenging to remain humble.

In the coming months, begin to generate two lists that you will continue to lengthen. First, create a list of folks who have contributed to your personal growth. Second, create a list of folks you would be able to serve. As you continue to add names to these lists, you will be reminded that your life is to be one of serving others.

Continue to learn about humility by reading books and papers, listening to talks, and joining discussions. Some recommendations are available on the website (<https://www.virtuesandcharacterdevelopment.org/>). If you have resources that you find helpful, please share them with us.