

An Exercise To Discern Both Good and Evil (Hebrews 5:14)

The Most Humble Man I Know

Scenario:

One of the brethren is teaching a class. He is covering priorities in the life of a Christian. He is properly using passages such as Matthew 16:24-27, Colossians 3:1-4, and I John 2:15-17. He then begins teaching about priorities when it comes to the home. He starts with the roles in a godly home (Ephesians 5:22-6:4). He then moves on to how to balance serving God and being a provider for one's family without the two being in conflict with each other.

Statement That Arises From Our Scenario:

As this brother is teaching about physically providing for one's family while balancing spiritual priorities, he says this: "I am going to pat myself on the back up here. I have to say, I handle this balance better than anyone else I know. If you all would just do what I do then you wouldn't have any problems."

A Later Statement Is Made:

After the class several approach this brother to discuss his arrogant statement. As three brethren converge and begin talking, one of the brethren says this: "Okay. Okay. Give me a minute to talk here. I know everyone is a bit upset. I am the best one to handle this. I don't have a problem with humility. I am the most humble person I know."

For Discussion: What do you see in those statements?

- This scenario starts off good. It is important to balance working to provide (**Ephesians 4:28, II Thessalonians 3:6-15, and I Timothy 5:8**) with keeping faithful service to God as one's top priority (**Matthew 6:24-34 and Luke 14:25-33**). The Lord has to be our "first love" (**Revelation 2:1-7**).
- When it comes to patting oneself on the back: "*Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips*" (**Proverbs 27:2**). See also: **Proverbs 25:27 and Matthew 23:12**.
- The Lord has been clear throughout the Scriptures regarding pride, arrogance, haughtiness, etc. (**Psalms 12:3-4, Psalms 101:5, Psalms 138:6, Proverbs 6:16-19, Proverbs 8:13, Proverbs 11:2, Proverbs 15:25, Proverbs 16:5, Proverbs 16:18-19, Proverbs 21:4, Proverbs 29:23, Ecclesiastes 7:8, Isaiah 2:11-12, Isaiah 3:16-26, Romans 1:18-32, Romans 12:3, James 4:6-10, I Peter 5:5-6, and I John 2:15-17**).
- Even if a person is a highly capable individual (ex. **Matthew 25:15**); that person is still an "unprofitable servant" because he or she is only doing that which is his or her duty to do (**Luke 17:7-10**). We have to have the right mindset (**Philippians 2:1-8 and Philippians 3:3-21**).
- For a person to think that every decision he or she makes is the same everyone should make is really ignorant. God's expectations of people isn't the same (**Luke**

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12:41-48). Furthermore, what works for one person might not for another. Even when Paul, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, gave his counsel; he knew what was best and wise for himself didn't fit all (**I Corinthians 7:1-40**). Within the body of Christ there are people of different levels, works, etc. That was highlighted even in the age of miracles (**Romans 12:4-8** and **I Corinthians 12:3-31**). In carnal affairs, how can someone with an income of \$100,000 a year think someone who makes \$20,000 a year should make the same financial decisions they do? Only an unreasonable person would be incapable of understanding that. Think of the "Parable of the Talents" (**Matthew 25:14-30**).

- This is a problematic, false statement too: "If you all would just do what I do then you wouldn't have any problems." Faithful Christians WILL certainly have problems even if they follow the example of Jesus Christ (**John 16:33**, **II Timothy 3:12**, **I Peter 2:20-4:19**, etc.).
- It is not necessarily wrong to follow a saint who is a good example (**I Corinthians 4:16**, **I Timothy 4:12**, and **Titus 2:3-5**). One just has to be sure that person does pattern his or her life after Christ (**I Corinthians 11:1**).
- Like Paul said: "I have nothing to glory of" (**I Corinthians 9:16-17**). All glory, even in our good deeds, belongs to God (**Matthew 5:14-16** and **I Corinthians 10:31**).
- The arrogance behind this man exalting himself in "I handle this balance better..." is clearly a problem (**Luke 18:9-14** and **II Corinthians 10:12-18**).
- It is good this is being handled (**Proverbs 27:5-6** and **Ephesians 5:6-11**).
- Some things need addressed publicly (**Galatians 2:11-14** and **I Timothy 5:19-20**).
- Some things need address privately (**Acts 18:24-28**).
- Whether or not this should have been handled publicly or by taking him aside would require more information about the persons involved (**Proverbs 18:13**).
- The man that says he is the best to handle it, because he is the most humble person he knows, is an additional problem. First, it is a problem in that he suffers from the same problems the person he is addressing has. He cannot therefore be involved in correcting this (**Matthew 7:1-5**).
- In addition to that, think about those whom would follow such prideful individuals (**Psalms 40:4** and **III John 1:9-11**).
- The previous points about pride, arrogance, etc. apply here too.