

#Reflection Questions for Individuals or Groups¹

INSTRUCTIONS: Please feel free to pick and choose what to discuss with your group or trusted believing friends. There is more than enough questions and topics discussed in these pages than most groups will have time to discuss. However, make every effort to ponder over them personally in your time with God this week.

Warm-Up:

1. Do you like surprised?
 - 1.1 What is one of your favorite occasions where you were surprised or encountered something unexpected?
2. The Disciples encountered a few unexpected and surprising conversations at this point in their journey with Jesus.

Into The Word...

Let's **read** and remind ourselves of **Mark 9:30-41**.

1. Some skeptics contend that the disciples made up the resurrection story. How does 9:31-32 argue against this notion?
2. How is pride viewed in our current culture? Is this the same kind of pride that is condemned in the Bible, or is it different?
3. How does Jesus redefine aspiring to greatness and seeking a reward? How does this fit together with Him condemning pride and encouraging sacrificial service?
4. The Apostle Paul obviously understood the principle of "For whoever is not against us is for us" (Mark 9:40) when he wrote,

Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former proclaim Christ out of rivalry, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. (Phil 1:15-18)

- How might 9:39-40 support cooperation among Christian churches of various denominations? Do you tend to resist such ideas? Why?

¹ Most of this content is from Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Mark*. (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014).

5. What are some examples of giving a cup of water? How does doing it in Jesus' name and belonging to the Messiah further define this good deed?

What Is Humility?

1. People have various ideas of what virtues like humility are or aren't. How might people in the world generally define humility?
 - List some examples the cultural 's understand of humility from entertainment of social media?
2. What aspects of their understanding of humility are close to the truth?
3. Finish this sentence, "Humility is not ."
4. In what ways do you notice humility in Mark 9:30-41?
5. How might we define humility, Biblically?
6. What *evidence* is manifest in our current culture that, before redemption, we are *addicted to ourselves*? How does that temptation *persist even after we are saved*?

Getting Personal

In Mark 9:30-41, the disciples had debated "with one another about who was the greatest" (v. 34). Matters of **rank and recognition** were important to the Jews of Jesus' day. The nature of man and the times have not changed all that much. Pride and the cult of personality arise even among the people who follow after the lowly Jesus.

The "painful pride" test.

Skim through the following questions. Which ones stand out to you?

- Am I upset if I am not praised for my work?
- Do I like and even long to sit at the head table in the seat of honor?
- Do I seek credit for what others have done?
- Do honorary titles pump me up?
- Is popularity crucial to my sense of self-worth?
- Am I a name dropper of those I know (or pretend to know?!)?
- Do I think I have something valuable to say about almost everything?

The Pursuit of Godly Humility can easily be swept aside. How do the following verses give weight to character trait?

Proverbs 11:2 "When pride comes, disgrace follows, but with humility comes wisdom."

James 4:6 "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

How is the following quote applicable to all believers?

A. T. Pierson said, "The ideal missionary must have four passions: A passion for the truth; a passion for Christ; a passion for the souls of men; and a passion for self-sacrificing" (Pierson, "Speech," 122).

- What was the last time you had an opportunity to tell some one about Christ? Did you take the opportunity? How did it go?
- Who can you share the gospel with this coming week?