
NT 10 – Daniel Humbled Himself

I have received some feedback and questions. I want to address a couple of the questions since others may have the same questions.

1. Is a reflexive a figure of speech?

A figure of speech is something that is not true to fact. A reflexive is a part of speech and it is true to fact.

For example, if someone in the family is walking along slowly you might say, “Come on! You are like a turtle!” This does not mean the person is a turtle, but he is moving slowly like a turtle. That would be the figure of speech, simile, using like or as to form a comparison.

If you say, “Come on, you turtle, keep up with the crew!” That would be a metaphor. The family member is not truly a turtle, but he is being compared to one without using “like” or “as” in the comparison—that is a bit stronger than the former example.

There are over 200 figures of speech. Many of them are beautifully explained by E.W. Bullinger in his book, *Figures of Speech in The Bible*.

In contrast, reflexives are true to fact. They express a reality in words where the subject and the object are the same person or persons, and the action of the verb is performed by the subject upon himself or herself.

I keep going back to this because people have posed questions and because it is so significant in the Word. We don’t often think about grammar when we come to the scriptures. However it is very important to understand grammar.

This question caused me to think back to the book written in 1955, *Why Johnny Can’t Read*. It deals with how education was dumbed down so that people didn’t really understand reading, grammar, or phonics. The focus of that book was that the educational system was moving away from phonics, and it was harming children in their ability to learn and to read.

We see in 2024 how that has continued. We see test scores in schools and the reading ability severely diminished because of not teaching children properly how to read. Think about how devilish that is! If someone can’t read, since God chose to communicate in Words, in the Scriptures, that person cannot read or understand what God is saying.

What a great ploy for the devil to employ in education to hinder people’s ability to understand. I had the opportunity, the privilege to go to Catholic grammar school and high school. We used to diagram sentences. We learned sentence structure and parts of speech. We learned what a noun was, a verb, an adjective, an adverb, a participle. We need to know grammar in order to study God’s Word in depth.

Simply said, there are nine reflexive pronouns. They reflect back to the noun/subject which is the same person acting upon himself or herself.

Noun/Subject	Reflexive Pronoun	Reflexive Sentence Example
I	myself	I humble myself.
You	yourself	You humble yourself.
He	Himself	He humbles himself.
She	Herself	She humbles herself.
We	Ourselves	We humble ourselves.
You (plural)	Yourselves	You humble yourselves.
They	Themselves	They humble themselves.
It	Itself	It cleans itself.
One	oneself	One purifies oneself.

So, where it says in the Scriptures, you train yourself, yourself refers back to you, an individual. You need to train yourself. You take the action of training yourself.

If there are any additional questions, you can let me know. I continue to think of examples to try to make this come alive.

For example, someone wants to learn to play the guitar. That person could get a teacher or a trainer, and the teacher would educate that person. Or that person may decide, “Hey, I want to teach myself. I will educate myself, or he educates himself.

This is important because it highlights the role and the responsibility of each individual in order to apply the Word. We must understand what our responsibility is in order to make it living and real, in order for us to be obedient and to be living epistles. There can be a tendency amongst people to say, “Okay, Christ did it all. Because of what he accomplished, I am now complete, I am equipped. I am righteous. I am sanctified. I am justified. I am holy because I have holy spirit. So, let’s move on with life because of what Christ accomplished.”

Christ did do all those things, and I do have all those things. We need to learn what they are in order for it to become a reality in our lives, God has given us instructions and commandments, and many of them are in the form of these reflexives, so that we can actually make it living and real.

I received another comment concerning what I taught a few sessions ago about Christ’s growth and development. He had studied and learned the Old Testament and realized that he needed to humble himself and be obedient because he looked at those in the Old Testament who were relying on him in order to receive the hope they had been promised.

Here is the comment:

To think he not only had to live to provide our eternal life for us in the future, but he also had to carry the weight of all those who came before him and looked to him to fulfill their

hope gives me a much greater appreciation for what my Lord was like and what he accomplished.”

Those are the kinds of things I like to hear regarding Christ as a youth! Another person commented, “I wish this teaching could be taught to every youth across the continent.”

As a youth, we need to be taught how it is to live selflessly and live our life for Christ. At one point I was a youth director for about 75 kids who were middle and high school age. One thing that always bothered me when I looked at other youth groups or went to youth specialty conferences, was the focus on trying to entertain and keep people happy and bring them in. What we should really be doing is teaching them the Word, teaching them the truth.

Questions About Humility to Answer

I mentioned we were going to answer questions.

- What is humility?
- Why is it such a big deal?
- How did Christ do it?
- How do we do it?
- What does humility look like?
- What is it not?
- Why is it such a challenge?
- What is the opposite?
- What is the fruit of humility?
- What are the consequences of pride?

We began by looking at Psalm 34 and then four examples of Old Testament kings who humbled themselves. Three of the four humbled themselves because of wrath and consequences that loomed before them.

We saw that Rehoboam, Manasseh and Ahab, when confronted with the dire consequences of their disobedience, had humbled themselves. We are glad that they humbled themselves, and so were they, to avoid further consequences.

The beautiful contrast with Christ though is that he humbled himself out of love for God and for others in order to accomplish what God had given him to do.

There is a great deal in the Old Testament about humility. Always remember that Christ learned about humility from studying the Old Testament. You can explore these scriptures fully on your own in the context. They show how important it is and how when he was learning and arming himself and training himself prior to the beginning of his public ministry, these were things he incorporated into his heart and lived out.

Psalm 18:27

[27](#) For you save a humble people, but the haughty eyes you bring down.

Psalm 25:9

[9](#) He leads the humble in what is right and teaches the humble his way.

He guides the humble in what is right because those who aren't humble aren't interested in listening to God or knowing what is right. They want to do their own thing.

Psalm 147:6

[6](#) The Lord lifts up the humble; [b](#) he casts the wicked to the ground. the Lord sustains the humble.

Psalm 149:4

[4](#) For the Lord takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with salvation.

Proverbs 3:34

[34](#) Toward the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor.[f](#)

In Isaiah it says, to all who are humble, they are the renowned of the earth.

Christ read Isaiah. He read the servant songs, and found out who he was, what his identity was. Being humble to the Word, he would fill that out and fulfill that.

Isaiah 66:1,2

[1](#) Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?"

[2](#) All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord.

But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

That should be our orientation as well, knowing that we are to be humble and contrite, tremble at God's Word, and those are the ones to whom God is going to look.

Christ knew how important it was to be humble. He knew that from the Old Testament. Then when we get to the Gospels, look what he said of himself:

Matthew 11:29

[29](#) Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Our tendency as human beings is not to be humble. We see it all around us in our culture. We see it within our own flesh. Being prideful is highlighted and encouraged in our culture. The prevailing attitude is to look out for self-interest and self-protection and self-aggrandizement. All these are contrary to and opposite of humbling oneself.

Humility is foundational to walking worthy of the Lord, to being pleasing to God, to giving honor to God, to glorifying God, to praising him, to being obedient, to bearing fruit.

Humility is submitting and subjecting. It is agreeing with God over our own ideas. It is recognizing and acknowledging God for who He is. It is recognizing who we are in relationship to Him. It is accepting his Word, not my own, not culture's, and saying, "Okay, I am going to do what God wants me to do."

If you were to take a piece of paper and in the middle just write humility, put a little circle around it, and from that, in all directions, all of these things stem from that.

- If you are humble, you will have fear of the Lord.

- If you are humble, you will have a great love for God.
- If you are humble, you can be obedient and glorify God.
- If you are humble, you can learn and accept your calling.
- If you are humble, you will be able to walk worthy and to bear fruit.

See how important it is? It is not simply an incident or an event. It needs to become a way of life. It can become who we are, which will enable us to stay faithful and faithful unto death.

We had a guest music director for the service last week. He hadn't been here before, but he stepped right into the role and he performed flawlessly. I went up to him afterwards and I said, "You know, you don't just do music; I can tell that you are music. That is your identity. That is who you are. And no matter where you are, you bring that with you."

That is how we are to be. We are to be humble at all time in all situations.

A Few More Old Testament Kings' Humility

Last session we looked at four Old Testament kings and why they humbled themselves. Three of them were brought to humility by the wrath and consequences that were looming. I want to look at a few more and then show even more about the stark contrast between them and Christ.

Everyone has a choice about when and how they humble themselves. It is either going to be now in this life or it is going to be later. As we have seen in Philippians 2 Christ humbled himself, right after that it says, every knee in heaven and earth shall bow to Christ.

In Ezra chapter eight, there is another example of people humbling themselves. This is regarding Ezra and the exiles in Babylon returning to Judah and Jerusalem.

Ezra 8:21

21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods.

Why were they humbling themselves in that situation? They're humbling themselves because they want God's help and assistance in providing a safe journey. Of course, that is another great reason to humble yourself before God to get his assistance.

Then, the hand of God, the hand of the Lord was with them, and he did protect them on that trip. This is another example of people in the Old Testament who humbled themselves. They did it, but there was self-interest involved here for their safety.

When you compare that with Christ in Philippians as he humbled himself out of love, there is a stark contrast. We can get to the place where we, out of love, are as Christ in what motivates us.

There is another example in Obadiah.

Obadiah 1:2-4

2 Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you shall be utterly despised. ^a

God is speaking to Edom. They were prideful. This shows again that we have a choice. People who don't humble themselves in this life will be humbled.

We read in Deuteronomy last time that God was the one that had to humble the children of Israel to teach them. They didn't humble themselves.

2 Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you shall be utterly despised.^a**3** The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock,^b in your lofty dwelling, who say in your heart, "Who will bring me down to the ground?"

4 Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the Lord.

You think you're safe because of your home, your gated community, your insurance, your security system. The pride of your heart has deceived you. Pride and humility are heart issues.

We know that when we get to the Gospels we're going to read, "He who humbles himself shall be exalted. He who exalts himself shall be humbled."

In Isaiah chapter two, speaking of the Day of the Lord, there is another great example of pride versus humility.

Isaiah 2:9

9 So man is humbled, and each one is brought low—do not forgive them!

11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

That should be enough there to get our attention! Think of the multitudes out there who aren't aware that their pride in going their own way and doing their own thing and exalting themselves and drawing attention to themselves has consequences.

12 For the Lord of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low;

17 And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

Christ read all this; he knew all this and incorporated it into his heart. We will see in his teaching in the Gospels the prominence of humility.

So, as I said, for the most part in the Old Testament we see examples of humbling oneself because of wrath or consequences, or humbling oneself because you need something from God. There are others who stand out who humbled themselves because of their recognition of who God was. We see enormous fruit as a result.

We know of the major prophet's humility. Isaiah being humble and Jeremiah being humble, and Ezekiel and then what God revealed to them.

Daniel's Humility

Look at Daniel Chapter 10 and what it says.

We know from Daniel chapter one, that he did not defile himself with the king's food. He chose not to. He took a stand and God blessed him for that. He interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream which God had revealed to him. Why did God reveal it to Daniel?

Keep these questions in mind as we get to Daniel.

In Daniel Chapter 1, it says that the mystery was revealed to Daniel. Ask yourself again why Daniel?

In the record of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel Chapter 3, there was a golden image set up. You have Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who refused to bow down to the image. Even though they did not bow, they did not burn.

Then, in Chapter 4, we read about Nebuchadnezzar's second dream, which again is interpreted. There is the handwriting on the wall in Chapter 5 when King Belshazzar is making a feast. Daniel interprets the handwriting. How did he know? Why did God choose him?

Then, in Chapter 6, there is the record of Daniel and the lion's den. Why was Daniel protected, preserved, his life, saved?

Then, incredible visions are given to Daniel. In Chapter 7, he has the vision of the four beasts. Daniel gets to see all of this history that is going to unfold in the days and the years ahead. He is given the visions and he interprets them.

In Chapter 8, he is given the vision of the ram and the goat. Then Gabriel actually comes to Daniel and makes him understand the vision. Wow, Gabriel! How many times does Gabriel show up in the Old Testament? Well, he shows up here for Daniel in Chapter 8, verse 15.

Daniel 8:15

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. **16** And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." **17** So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end."

Daniel is the one to whom the vision is given. Gabriel comes and explains it, and he understands all of time. He understands the kingdoms that are going to come. He understands the 70 weeks and the future, and he understands end times. He is given the picture of the Antichrist.

So why Daniel? Here, in response to another vision...

Daniel 10:10

10 And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. **11** And he said to me, "O Daniel, **man greatly loved**, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

Daniel is getting another heavenly visitor to explain to him the vision. Why Daniel amongst all these other people?

Daniel 10:12

12 Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for **from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.**

Now that is astounding! It should reverberate in our hearts and minds as we seek to understand the entire Old Testament. It should reverberate what Christ talked about. It should reverberate for our understanding of humility in the Epistles where it says, humble yourselves, humble yourselves, humble yourselves!

Don't be afraid, Daniel. You are getting a heavenly visitation here, a heavenly messenger. It is because you set your heart to understand, and you humbled yourself. Not only did you want to understand, but you humbled yourself to be obedient, to do what your God wanted you to do.

You humbled yourself before your God. Your Words have been heard. I've come because of your Words.

Look at the intense spiritual warfare taking place around Daniel because of his heart to understand and because of the incredible information and prophetic visions that God is giving to him, which he is going to share for all of time from this point forward.

The devil knows how significant and important this is, and the devil targets him because he knows that here is a man who is humble, seeks to understand, and God is going to reveal to him.

Daniel 10:13

13 The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia,

This heavenly messenger was opposed. The prince of the kingdom of Persia is not an actual prince, it is a devil spirit. There is spiritual warfare going on to prevent God's messenger from getting to Daniel.

This is a view into the spiritual warfare that takes place around people who are intent on understanding God's heart, humbling themselves and wanting to be obedient. Here we are seeing it in the Old Testament.

(Consider Paul, for example. No matter where Paul went, he was opposed, and it was a messenger from Satan, the thorn in the flesh, to buffet him, to prevent him no matter where he went. Spiritual warfare was going on because of the message that he carried, which had such significance to not only get people saved, but to enable them to live out the gospel.)

but **Michael, one of the chief princes**, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, **14** and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”

I don't know if I can properly articulate this, but because of Daniel's heart and his humility, humbling himself, he is given this vision of the kingdoms which are going to exist between now and Christ. He is even given the amount of time which is going to take place between now and the coming of Christ. The vision includes the end times and the Antichrist.

And why is all this given to Daniel? Because of his heart and his humility.

Now, think of ourselves today with the spirit of God in us, with what we know about what Christ accomplished for us, who he is in us, and what our calling is. If we imitate Christ, he humbled himself. (We humble ourselves.) If we imitate Daniel, and humble ourselves as he did, think of what God can do within our hearts and lives, what he will reveal to us about how to live this out, what our identity is.

Christ learned his identity from the Old Testament and lived it out because he humbled himself. We learn our identity from the Epistles, and by being humble, we can live it out and it becomes a physical reality in our lives and to others in the world around us.

That is why it says we can be living epistles. This is just so huge and such a great opportunity for each of us.

The reason this so important and why the reflexives are so important in terms of our role, our responsibility is because so many people learn about who they are in Christ and then sit back and say, "I am just sort of waiting for a sign from God. I am waiting for some lightning bolt for God to tell me what to do, or I'll just sort of follow the church crowd and be normal like everybody else."

We don't need a lightning bolt. The light already came, and the light is in the Word and the light of Christ is in us! We simply need to read it, be humble, and apply it. That is why it says, train yourself, humble yourself, clothe yourself, purify yourself, cleanse yourself, arm yourself. The reason this is so significant is so that those in the Christian world who are sitting back can actually get moving, get busy.

What Did Christ Say About Humility In The Gospels? Four Records

Now we move on to what Christ said about humility in the Gospels. There are four records I want to look at quickly in light of what he knew from the Old Testament and the significance of humility as foundational.

First Record

Matthew 18:1

1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

Ah, why are they asking that? Well, of course we know the disciples came to Christ and they were asking, "Who is going to sit on your right hand and your left hand? Who is going to have authority? Who is going to be the greatest?" Everyone is interested in themselves.

And think about this in light of our culture today and what is given acclaim. It is all about who is the greatest. Someone is going to be crowned national champion in football, someone is going to be crowned Superbowl champion, someone is going to be the most valuable player, and someone is going to win the Academy Award.

It is all about who is the best and who will get the accolades from culture and society.

2 And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them.

There are disciples there, and maybe there is a mom with a child or a couple with a child so Jesus calls a child over to himself.

3 and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and **become** like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Notice it says become. We have covered that Greek word, *ginomai*. You change and become. You could say repent or change. Unless you change and become like little children...because you’re not right now, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Those that are asking who is going to be the greatest need to change and become like children.

4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

You’ve got to do it. No one is going to do it for you. It is not going to come from some outside influence. It has to come from within. Whoever humbles himself like this child, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Second Record

Matthew 23:1

1 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, **2** “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, **3** so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.

Why? Because they’re speaking the Words, they preach but do not practice. They speak the Words, but their behavior, their hearts, their attitude do not align.

4 They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, ^a and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger. **5** They do all their deeds to be seen by others.

And isn’t that our culture today? People do things, go on vacation, accomplish something, see something. Immediately they have to post it on Facebook so that everybody else can see who is going where and what it is that they are doing. The focus is on me. It is the selfie generation.

5 They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, **6** and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues **7** and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi^b by others.

It is all about me. It is all about what other people think of me and elevating me.

8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers. ^c**9** And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. **10** Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ.

All that to say, verse 11.

11 The greatest among you shall be your servant. **12** Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Anyone who exalts himself, again, that is a reflexive; he exalts himself. Just think of people's energy, attention, focus, and goals on exalting themselves to being seen, to be recognized, to be praised, to be glorified, to be honored.

One day they are going to be humbled. This is why I read the Old Testament records, Isaiah, Chapter 2, and Obadiah, regarding Edom.

Exalt yourself now. You are going to be humbled one day. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled. Whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

That is motivation enough right there, but we're going to look at Luke 14.

Third Record

Luke 14:7-11

You may ask, "Why are you spending so much time on humility? Because it is so foundational to all the other reflexives, and all the other commands in the Epistles. We will certainly not spend that much time on each one of those.

I feel the need to highlight it because Christ humbled himself to the point of dying on the cross for mankind.

Consider David in the Old Testament. He humbled himself and look at the kind of revelation God gave him. We are going to take a look at Paul, Peter and James. They all speak of humility and humbling themselves. Look at what God did with their lives. I want to look at the circumstances surrounding that.

Luke 14:7

7 Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, **8** "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, **9** and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. **10** But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. **11** For **everyone** who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

That means no one is excluded! **Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled.** That is a promise that everybody should take heed to. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled. He who humbles himself will be exalted.

That should truly be motivation for us to be humble. What is it to be humble? We say, God is smarter than I am. He is God. I am not. His Word is true. I am going to listen to his Words and be obedient and do what it takes so that I can be obedient.

Fourth Record

Luke 18:9

9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and

treated others with contempt: [10](#) “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. [11](#) The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed ^a thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. [12](#) I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’

See the self-focus! This is the ultimate in selfies. Here in the life of the Pharisee, it is all about me. I am not like others. I fast, I give tithes.

[13](#) But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’

This man acknowledges and recognizes that he is a sinner, as opposed to the Pharisee who it said in verse 9, **he trusted himself, that he was righteous already.**

[14](#) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for the voluminous amount in the Word about pride versus humility and how we are to humble ourselves before you, recognizing that your Word is true, and that we can by your grace and mercy learn to be obedient, train ourselves to be godly, arm ourselves with the Word, and be living epistles and examples to others.

In Christ’s name I pray.

Amen.