

A Heart With No Pride



SABBATH—AUGUST 27

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Ezekiel 24:15–27; Exodus 32:1–14; Matthew 5:43–48; 1 Peter 2:18–25; Psalm 62:1–8.

MEMORY VERSE: “ ‘Those who have no pride in their hearts are happy, because the earth will be given to them’ ” (Matthew 5:5, NLV).



Humble people are patient when other people hurt them.

DO YOU NOTICE that people don't use the word “humble” much these days in conversation? It's not hard to figure out why. The word “humble” means to “not feel that you are better than other people.” It also means “not wanting to fight or argue with other people” and “having a quiet and loving spirit.” No wonder we don't hear much about the word “humble”! Not many people respect persons with a humble spirit today. Sometimes the Bible writes the word “humble” as “patient” or “meek.” A meek person is quiet, loving, and always ready to help other people. Again, we don't see many humble or meek people walking around these days!

Humble people are patient when other people hurt them. Humble people don't lose their tempers. They don't get angry at people who wrong them. Humble people don't wish to hurt other people who hurt them. Jesus was humble and patient. His followers learned to be the same as Jesus was. Being humble or patient can be a powerful tool or weapon. This weapon can help us fight against the pain that comes from suffering. Our troubles and suffering are wonderful experiences for learning about how to have a humble and patient heart. A heart with no pride and a humble life can be a powerful way to show Jesus to other people.

**BROKEN BREAD AND POURED-OUT WINE
(Ezekiel 24:15–27)**

Oswald Chambers wrote that we must become the same as “broken bread and poured-out wine” for other people. What do you think Oswald Chambers meant by this word picture?

All through the Bible, we read stories about “broken” people. God allowed these people to become “broken” in heart and spirit so that they can better serve other people. Moses is one example. The Israelites said mean and nasty things about Moses when he was their leader. But Moses led God’s people to the Promised Land anyway. Joseph was sold as a slave and later sent to prison. Then he became the second most powerful leader in Egypt. God allowed these terrible things to happen to Moses and Joseph. God used their troubles to show people His love. God also used these troubles to bless Moses and Joseph and His people. God may use us in the same way. Sure, we can feel angry or hurt when bad things happen. But as we saw yesterday, we must be patient. We must have a heart empty of any pride. Then we can serve God while we are suffering. We will bring a blessing to the people around us.

Read Ezekiel 24:15–27. What’s happening in these verses? Why does God give Ezekiel this hard test?

In Ezekiel 24:24, NIV, God says, “What Ezekiel has done will show you what is going to happen to you. You will do just as he has done. Then you will know that I am the LORD and King.” Ezekiel’s behavior will show God’s people that God controls everything in heaven and on earth. Ezekiel’s example of suffering also will show the people the punishment they will suffer. Who knows how many people will see that God is “the LORD and King” because of our own suffering, too?

Sooner or later, life “breaks” us or causes us to suffer. What has your experience been with being “broken” or suffering much pain? How can the Lord use your own “broken” spirit to help other people?



The Israelites said mean and nasty things about Moses when he was their leader.

ASKING FOR GOD'S MERCY (Exodus 32:1–14)

What does Moses do after his people worship the gold cow? Read Exodus 32:1–14 for the answer.



Moses asked God for mercy for people who sinned against Him and should die.

The people worship the gold cow. God decides that the people have done an awful sin. So, God announces that He will destroy the people. Then God offers to make Moses the father of a new people group. But Moses refuses to accept God's offer. Moses asks God to forgive His people. So, God decides not to destroy Israel.

Exodus 32:1–14 shows us two important Bible truths. First, God's offer to destroy the Israelites and bless Moses is a test. God wants Moses to show just how much love he feels for sinners. Moses passes the test. Moses asks God to show mercy to Israel. Jesus does this work, too. This part of the story shows us something very interesting. Sometimes God may let us suffer so that everyone in heaven can see how much love we have for sinners.

Moses gives the Lord reasons why He should not destroy Israel. What are these reasons?

The second Bible truth that Exodus 32:1–14 teaches us is that God shows us His mercy when we fail. People need mercy the most when they have behaved the worst. But we don't really want to give mercy to people who behave badly. When Moses' sister Miriam said mean and nasty things about him, what did Moses do? He showed her mercy. Moses asked God to heal her from her terrible skin disease (Numbers 12). When God was angry with Korah and his followers, God wanted to destroy them all. What did Moses do? He fell on his face and asked God to let Korah and his followers live. The next day, Israel complained against Moses. They blamed Moses for killing Korah and his followers. Again, God wanted to destroy the people. What did Moses do? Moses fell on his face again. He told Aaron to act quickly to save the people (Numbers 16). Moses is a man with no pride in his heart. He is patient and not selfish during difficult tests. Moses asked God for mercy for people who sinned against Him and should die.

Think about the people around you who have hurt you. They need mercy and forgiveness. How can you show God's mercy and forgiveness to them?

LOVING THE ONES WHO HURT US (Matthew 5:43–48)

Someone said: “How do we love our enemies? Here’s how. Let’s say that our enemies are the same as pearls in dirt. The dirt is a word picture for everything your enemy did to hurt you. Does loving our enemies (‘the pearls’) mean we must love the “dirt”? No. Loving our enemies means we love the “pearl” when they are dirty. God does not love us because we are easy to love. We become loving because God loves us.”

When you look at your “enemies,” what do you see? The “pearl”? Or the “dirt” around it?

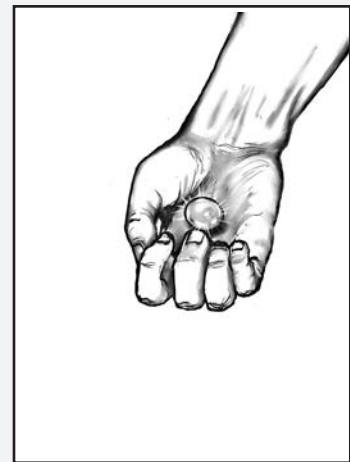
Jesus asks us to love our enemies and pray for them. What example from nature does Jesus give us in Matthew 5:43–48 that helps us understand why we should love our enemies? What Bible truth does Jesus want us to learn?

In Matthew 5:45, Jesus uses the example of His Father in heaven to show us how we should love the ones who hurt us. Maybe they hurt us and caused a lot of suffering. Jesus says that His Father sends the blessing of rain to both good people and evil people. If God gives rain to evil people, what should we do for them, too?

Jesus isn’t saying that we should always have a happy feeling in our hearts for everyone who causes us trouble. Love for our enemies is not a feeling. Love for our enemies is a behavior. We show our enemies love when we care for them.

Jesus ends His talk about mercy with these words: “ ‘You must be good in every way, as your Father in heaven is good in every way’ ” (Matthew 5:48, WE). How can we behave the same way that God behaves? We can show love to our enemies just as God shows love to His enemies. Then we will be “perfect” in God’s eyes. We can love our enemies only if we have humble hearts. A humble heart is a heart empty of all pride. A humble person is patient. A humble person does not hurt the one who hurts him or her.

Do you want a humble heart? What changes must you make? Make a list of these changes. Ask God to help you change so that you can love your “enemies.”



Our enemies are the same as pearls that lie in dirt.

NOT SAYING ANYTHING TO DEFEND YOURSELF (1 Peter 2:18–25)



We must accept that God may not always save us from suffering.

As we have learned, a humble person has no pride in his or her heart. A humble person is patient and kind to the people who hurt him or her. Jesus is the most powerful Example we have of a humble person. Jesus says, “ ‘Do what I tell you. Learn what I teach you. I am gentle [loving and tender]. I am not proud. Then your hearts will rest’ ” (Matthew 11:29, WE).

Read 1 Peter 2:18–25. Peter offers some surprising advice to Christian slaves. Peter tells them how Jesus behaved when people were mean to Him. Jesus “gave you an example to follow. He suffered for you. So you should do the same as he did” (1 Peter 2:21, ERV). How does Jesus show us a “humble heart”? How can we be humble while we suffer?

We feel bad when we watch someone hurt another person for no good reason. We feel worse when we are the ones being hurt. We want to make things right because we want things to be fair in life. So, we get angry when we see the pain that innocent people suffer when other people hurt them.

We suffer when we carry anger in our hearts. So, what must we do? We must believe that our Father in heaven is in control. He will help us when doing so will bless other people and bring honor to His name. We must accept that God may not always keep us from suffering. In the same way, God did not keep Jesus from dying on the cross. We may suffer things that are not fair. But we must always remember that our Father in heaven is with us and is in control.

Peter’s advice to us is surprising. Why? Because when we do not fight back against the ones who blame us and cause our suffering, we show powerful proof of God’s love. Just look at Jesus. When Caiaphas and Pilate asked Jesus questions in court, how did Jesus answer? Did He defend Himself? No, He didn’t. Jesus said nothing. His silence was a witness that showed His humble heart.

How do you behave when people are not fair or loving to you? How can you better show in your own life some of the important rules we learned today?

JESUS, OUR ROCK AND OUR SAFE PLACE (Psalm 62:1–8)

So often the people who have the most pride in their hearts don't really like who they are. Their pride is the same as a mask. These people use this "mask" of pride to hide. Or worse, they use it to cover the pride in their hearts. They hope no one will see that they are missing something important inside. What these people need is something we all need: to feel safe and to feel that they have worth and are accepted. We really need these things when we are suffering. In short, a humble heart, or heart with no pride, is powerful proof that someone is connected to Jesus. He is the same as a strong Rock. We can stand on this Rock and not be afraid. Jesus our Rock will protect us, too.

Read Psalm 62:1–8. What is the reason that David wrote this psalm? What important rules is David teaching us? Most important, how can you follow these rules in your own life?

"People will become our enemies for no good reason or cause. People will misunderstand why God's people do things. People who don't believe in God will believe the worst of God's people. So, will other Christians who don't really know the Lord. The Lord's servants will be given hard tests. Men will blame God's people for little things and make their mistakes seem bigger than they really are. Why will they do this? So, they can use the mistakes as an excuse for doing evil. . . . Evil men will accuse God's people of not being honest. Other people will believe these lies. Then no one will trust the servants of God. Church members will make up the lies. During these times, God's servants must do the same as Jesus. They must think the way Jesus thought. They must not expect to escape insult. They will be judged falsely. People will accuse them of being too holy. But God's servants must not lose hope. God is in control. He guides His work. He will bring glory to His name."—Ellen G. White, *The Upward Look*, page 267, adapted.

Do you feel hurt when people insult you? God loved you so much that He died for your sins. How can this Bible truth help you understand your value? Also, how can the Bible protect you against insults?



The people who have the most pride in their hearts don't really like who they are. Their pride is the same as a mask.



“When our hearts are humble, we show that we are connected to God in heaven.”

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Read Ellen G. White, “The Importance of Seeking True Knowledge,” pages 453, 454, in *The Ministry of Healing*; “The Sermon on the Mount,” pages 298–314, in *The Desire of Ages*; and “The Worker and His Qualifications,” page 630, in *Evangelism*.

“We will have troubles and hard tests in this life. These tests may be made easier if we have humble hearts. [A humble heart is a heart with no pride.] This is the same heart Jesus had on this earth. If we are the same as Jesus, then we will not be hurt when people insult us. Their insults will not make us sad. What is the one thing that shows that we are Christians most of all? Self-control. If someone hurts you, trust in God. Stay calm. If you fail to stay calm, then you ‘rob’ God. How do you ‘rob’ Him? You steal from Him the chance to show that His perfect Spirit lives inside you. A humble heart makes us strong. A humble heart helps us win our fights. When our hearts are humble, we show that we are connected to God in heaven.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 301, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① How does a humble heart help us to stay strong when people insult us? How does a humble heart help us to heal from hurts and insults?
- ② What do the people around you think about having a humble heart? Do they think it is a good thing? Or do they think it makes you weak?
- ③ Can you think of any modern examples of people with humble hearts? If yes, who are they? How do these people show that they have no pride in their hearts? What can you learn from their examples?
- ④ Why do you think we so often feel that having a humble heart makes you a weak person?
- ⑤ We saw how David went to God for strength and safety from danger. How does God make us feel safe today? What dangers does He free us from? How can we, as a church, help other people feel safe, too? What more can you do to make your church a safe place for the people who need it?

PART 10: THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME

Unseen hands wrapped around Father's throat while he slept. The hands drew tight. Father woke up to pull the hands off his neck. He cried, "Lord, please help me!" But the hands started to choke him. When Father lost all hope, he heard a voice say, "Ask Jesus to help. Say the name of Jesus."

"Jesus, save me!" Father cried. The unseen hands released his neck. In that moment, Father understood that the name of Jesus was very powerful. Father lay on his bed in surprise at what happened. He breathed hard and fast, but his heart filled with joy. "I am saved by Jesus' name. I am saved by Jesus' blood and His death on the cross." From that day, Father asked Jesus to help him whenever evil spirits bothered him.

Father continued to study the Bible. In Deuteronomy 18:9–12, Father read: "Don't learn to do the terrible things the people of the other nations [countries] there do. Don't sacrifice [offer] your sons or daughters in the fires on your altars. Don't try to learn what will happen in the future by talking to a fortuneteller or by going to a magician, a witch, or a sorcerer [magician; witch]. Don't let anyone try to put magic spells on other people. Don't let any of your people become a medium [fortuneteller] or a wizard. And no one should try to talk with someone who has died. The LORD hates anyone who does these things' " (ERV). Father read in Exodus 20:3: "You must not worship any other gods except me' " (ERV). Father thought, "I worshiped other gods." Father kept reading. He saw that God did not let His people carve statues and worship them. Father told himself, "I did everything God said not to do." When Father read about the seventh-day Sabbath commandment, he told Mother, "I got the wrong day. The spirits told me to keep another day holy."

In Revelation 21:8, Father read about the people who will be thrown into the lake of fire. When Father read that verse, he understood that Jesus saved him from this punishment.

Father also read about what happens after people die. The Bible teaches that people go to sleep. "The body dies. And that's the end," he told Mother with surprise. The evil spirits taught that people's spirits continued to live and float around after their bodies died. The spirits said that some of these dead spirits followed the Candomblé leaders.

Evil spirits continued to bother Father. But when they attacked Father, Father asked Jesus to save him. Soon, Father wanted to lead other people to Jesus. "I used to teach people the way of evil. Now I want to lead people to Bible truth."

Your 13th Sabbath Offering will help build eight churches in South America. Four of these churches will be built in Brazil, where Father (Eduardo Ferreira dos Santos) and his family live.

INSIDE
Story
by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



**"Jesus, save me!"
Father cried.**