**Humility - Stories and Illustrations**

**The “Second” avenues nationwide outnumber the “First” avenues. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Newscaster Tom Brokaw tells a good story on himself. He said that when he first went on the TODAY program as co-host, he felt he had reached the pinnacle of success. One day he was wandering around Bloomingdale’s in New York and he noticed a man watching him closely. The man kept staring at him and finally approached him. “Oh well,” thought Brokaw. “Such is the price of celebrity.” The man pointed a finger at him and said. “Tom Brokaw, right?” Brokaw answered, “Right.” The man continued. “You used to do the morning news on KMTV in Omaha, right?” Brokaw said, “That’s right.” Brokaw was kind of enjoying being recognized now as a national television celebrity. “I knew it the minute I spotted you,” the fellow said. Then he paused and added, “Say, whatever happened to you?”**

**Then Texas Governor George W. Bush has an oil painting on his office wall that was commissioned by one of his more famous predecessors, Sam Houston. It depicts a tunic-clad, somber-faced Houston, standing amid the ruins of Carthage. “The reason that’s on the wall,” Bush explained to a visitor, “is to remind me that there’s a fine line between being the governor of Texas and making a fool of yourself.” *(Sam Howe Verhovek, in New York Times)***

**Jim Miles, South Carolina’s secretary of state, admitted that campaigning for public office can be a humbling experience. He was in a small town waiting to be interviewed on radio. “When I got to the station,” said Miles, the newsman was running out the door. “You’ll have to come back later,” he said. “There’s an alligator crossing Highway 278.” *(Aiken, in South Carolina, Standard, as it appeared in Reader’s Digest, May, 1994)***

**Sir Winston Churchill, always the comic, once targeted a political colleague with this remark: “He is a modest man, and he has much to be modest about.” Although intended as a slam, Churchill had a point. Is it not true that all of us have much to be modest about? When you put yourself on a mighty pedestal and elevate yourself above the rest of the world, just keep in mind that the size of your funeral is going to depend a lot on the weather. Now that will help you keep things in perspective. *(Glenn Van Ekeren, in Speaker’s Sourcebook II, p. 197)***

**Thanks for the reminder that Earth is but a small grain of sand on the beach when compared with the size of the known universe. *(Vincent M. Carini, in Time magazine)***

**Explain, please, the origin of “to eat humble pie.” After a butchering, the gentry ate the steaks, the servants ate the innards, known then as the “humbles.” *(L. M. Boyd)***

**One of his neighbors, the mother of a ten-year-old girl, noticed that the child often visited Albert Einstein’s house. The woman wondered at this, and the child explained: “I had trouble with my homework in arithmetic. People said that at No. 112 there lives a very big mathematician, who he also a very good man. I asked him to help me. He was very willing, and explained everything very well. He said I should come whenever I find a problem too difficult.” Alarmed at the child’s boldness, the girl’s mother went to Einstein to apologize. Einstein said, “You don’t have to excuse yourself. I have learned more from the conversations with the child than she has from me.” *(Philipp Frank)***

**Football teams of two Kansas high schools, Haven and Sylvia, played a game in 1928 that ended: Haven 256, Sylvia 0. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Comedian Jeff Foxworthy, who stars in his own TV sitcom, quit a job at IBM in 1984 to try comedy full time. He credits his wife, Gregg, with helping him keep perspective: Not long ago, while I was washing dishes, I saw a commercial on television for a show called “Before They Were Stars IV.” There I was onscreen, from 1985, doing stand-up on amateur night in Eufalla, Alabama. “Honey,” I called to Gregg, “if I’m on this show, does that mean I’m a star now?” She handed me the crusty roast pan – a reality check, if ever there was one. *(From No Shirt, No Shoes … No Problem!)***

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**Benjamin Franklin is credited with a greater variety of accomplishments than any other American, I think. But you can tell what he was most proud of. On his tombstone, only this: “Benjamin Franklin, Printer.” *(L. M. Boyd)*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*As anyone who has ever attempted a garden knows, the payback for one's patient planning and chipped fingernails seems, finally, nothing short of a miracle. One sunny day, the satiny petals of the peony unfurl; the delphinium's blue outdoes the bluebird. Suddenly stiff backs and nursery bills are forgotten -- or, at least, forgiven. Amid the joy even the simplest annual border or backyard plot can give us, there's little risk in becoming overly proud of one's garden because gardening by its very nature is humbling. It has a way of keeping you on your knees. *(JoAnn R. Barwick, in House Beautiful)***

**Dad says to Rose: “When a heavy weight needs to be lifted, always remember to bend your knees!” *(Pat Brady, in Rose Is Rose comic strip)***

**Before spring becomes beautiful, it is ugly, nothing but mud and muck. I love the fact that the word “humus” -- the decayed vegetable matter that feeds plants -- comes from the same root that gives rise to the word “humility.” It helps me understand that the humiliating events of life, the events that leave “mud on my face” or that “make my name mud,” may create the fertile soil in which something new can grow. *(Parker J. Palmer, in Let Your Life Speak)***

**Scripture records only one time that Jesus Christ admitted that He was the Messiah, and that was in a private conversation. See St. John 4:26. *(E. C. McKenzie, in Tantalizing Facts, p. 63)***

**“God made me the kind of person who wanted to write stories,” Stephen King says. “There's really a simple and egotistical idea at the bottom of it all, one that has sustained artists from time immemorial. It's the feeling that ‘I'm great; they're going to love this; I'll be rich and famous and never suffer again.’ But that's only partly true. Nothing really changes. I'll still be told by my wife, ‘Steve, we need a loaf of bread,’ and so I'll go out shopping. If I forget and come back instead with an idea that I tell her will make us $2 million, she'll still say, ‘Steve, I'm delighted, but we need a loaf of bread.’” *(Bill Goldstein, in Publishers Weekly)***

 **Once, after Henry Kissinger was introduced at a speaking engagement, everyone in the audience rose and applauded him. At last the clapping subsided, and people sat down. "I want to thank you for stopping the applause," Kissinger said. "It is impossible for me to look humble for any period of time." *(J. M. A., in Reader's Digest)***

**Affection is the humblest love – it gives itself no airs. It lives with humble, private things: soft slippers, old clothes, old jokes, the thump of a sleepy dog’s tail on the kitchen floor. The glory of affection is that it can unite those who are not “made for one another,” people who, if not put down by fate in the same household or community, would have nothing to do with one another. Affection broadens our minds; of all natural loves it teaches us first to notice, then to smile at, then to enjoy, and finally to appreciate, the people who “happen to be there.” Made for us? Thank God, no. They are themselves, odder than you could have believed and worth far more than we guessed. *(C. S. Lewis, in The Four Loves)***

**When Thomas Mann was visiting America for the first time, one of Hollywood’s literati abased himself before the novelist, emphasizing that he was nothing, a mere hack, his work not to be mentioned in the same breath with that of the master. Mann listened with infinite patience and courtesy, but when the party was over, he turned to his host, an old friend, and said, “That man has no right to make himself so small. He is not that big.” *(Eric Butterworth, in Discover the Power Within You, p. 63)***

**Lord, when we are wrong, make us willing to change, and when we are right, make us easy to live with. *(Peter Marshall)***

 **“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
The root word that is translated “spirit" is more accurately and meaningfully translated “pride” – “poor in pride.” Jesus says, “theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” But keep in mind that “heaven,” as Jesus uses the term, is not a place in the sky or a reward for after life. The word “heaven” comes from a Greek root that means “expanding.” *(Eric Butterworth, in Discover the Power Within You, p. 58)***

**No one can make you feel more humble than the repairman who discovers you've been trying to fix it yourself. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Knute Rockne in 1923 made all his Notre Dame football players take dancing lessons. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Theodore Roosevelt was known by those closest to him as a nature lover. It is said that after an evening of talk with his friend, William Beebe, the two would take a walk together. As they explored the vastness of the darkened universe, each marveled at the Milky Way, the big and little dippers and the enormity of the number of visible stars, realizing the minuteness of their stature compared to the universe. Finally, Teddy Roosevelt would break the silence and say, “Now, I think we are small enough. Let’s call it a night.” *(Glenn Van Ekeren, in Speaker’s Sourcebook II, p. 197)***

An amazing example of humility is found in the person of Albert Schweitzer. With dignitaries awaiting the arrival of his flight, he was expected to disembark with the first-class passengers. However, as they soon discovered, he did not file out of the plane with the first-class passengers or even the second-class ones. Rather, he disembarked from the third-class seating, carrying his own suitcase. When asked why, he responded, “Because there was no fourth class.” *(Jam Brunette, in Portals of Prayer)*

**A student once went to a rabbi and said, "There were men in the olden days who saw the face of God. Why don't they see it anymore?" The rabbi responded, "Because nowadays no one can stoop so low." To experience God we must make a place for emptiness, for the great unknown. This means admitting our ignorance and our limitations, which always requires humility. *(Dr. Larry Dossey, in The Healing Process, p. 33)***

**Native American wood carvers say the most honored figure on the vertical wooden statue is, contrary to popular belief, at the bottom; i.e.: it's the low man on the totem pole. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**When you get to be President, there are the honors, the 21-gun salutes, all those things. You have to remember it isn’t for you. It’s for the Presidency. *(Harry Truman)***

**Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less. *(Rick Warren, in The Purpose-Driven Life: What On Earth Am I Here For?)***

**Of the nine presidents who owned slaves, only Washington freed his. He resisted efforts to make him a king and established the precedent that no one should serve more than two terms as president. He voluntarily yielded power. His enemy, George III, remarked in 1796, as Washington’s second term was coming to an end, “If George Washington goes back to his farm, he will be the greatest character of his age.” As George Will wrote, “the final component of Washington’s indispensability was the imperishable example he gave by proclaiming himself dispensable.” *(Stephen E. Ambrose, in Smithsonian magazine)***

**Baseball: You need the attitude of Carl Yastremski. In 1979, after the Boston Red Sox star collected his 3,000th hit, a reporter asked, “Hey, Yaz, aren’t you afraid all this attention will go to your head?” “Well,” Yastremski said, “in my career I’ve been up to bat over ten thousand times. That means I’ve been unsuccessful over seven thousand times. That fact alone keeps me from getting a swelled head.” *(Roger von Oech)*  \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***