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謙卑與喜樂

我更喜歡誇自己的軟弱，好叫基督的能力覆庇我。我以軟弱為可喜樂的，
因我什麼時候軟弱！什麼時候就剛強了。(林後十二 9、10)

保羅所得的啓示甚大，惟恐他因而過於自高，有一根刺加在他肉體上，使他能持守謙卑。起先保羅盼望主能挪開這刺，三次為此求告主。主給他的答復是：這試煉是祝福；因它所帶來的軟弱與謙卑，能使基督的恩典和能力更加彰顯出來。保羅與試煉的關係遂立即踏入新的階段：不再只是忍受這刺，而是更喜歡以此為誇口；不再要求解脫，而是以此為可喜樂的。他領悟到謙卑的地位就是得著祝福、能力與喜樂的地位。

實際上，每一個基督徒在追求謙卑的過程裏都會經過兩個階段。第一個階段，他害怕、逃避並想辦法免去一切使他降卑的事，他還未學會付上一切代價來追求謙卑。他雖然接受“要謙卑”這命令，也努力去遵行，卻只發現自己實在是一敗塗地。他為謙卑這事禱告，有時也顯得很迫切，但心靈深處卻更多偷偷企求免去一切叫他降卑的事，如果不是透露於言語中，就是存於願望中。他還不是那麼深深愛慕謙卑，視之為神羔羊的榮美、天上的喜樂，因而樂意變賣一切來得著它；在他的追求和禱告裏，仍然帶點背重擔、有捆綁的味道，自卑尚未成為生命的自然表現與基本性情，也還不是他的喜樂與唯一的滿足。他還不能說：“我更喜歡誇自己的軟弱，也以任何使我降卑的事為樂。”

我們是否能希冀達到這階段呢？當然可以！那麼怎樣達到呢？保羅是藉著主耶穌的新啓示。惟有神的同在能顯出己並逐出己。保羅清楚地看見了這深奧的真理——耶穌的同在將掃除一切為自己有所求的願望，使我們以每一種降卑為樂，並預備我們能領受它更豐滿的顯現。因著耶穌的同在和權能，我們所受的羞辱將引領我們去選擇謙卑作為最高的福祉。讓我們來學習保羅的經歷所教我們的功課。

教會裏可能會有一些長進的信徒、傑出的教師、有屬天經歷的人，卻尚未充分學會完全謙卑、喜歡拿自己的軟弱誇口的功課。在保羅身上我們看見了這樣的事。自高的危險離他非常近，他還不完全知道什麼是成為一無所有並完全死掉，讓基督活在他裏面，以所有使他降卑之事為樂。這似乎是他必須學的最高功課：倒空自己，完全與主聯合，誇自己的軟弱，好讓神成為一切。

一個信徒學習的最高功課就是謙卑。但願凡追求聖潔、想在聖潔上有長進的基督徒要謹記這一點。這些人已熱切地奉獻自己、心裏火熱，也有屬靈經歷，但若不是主的對付與保守，這一切會不知不覺地混雜著自高的成分。但願我們明白最高的聖潔即最深的謙卑，我們要記住一件事：謙卑不會自動來臨，而是來自於我們與主之間的合作。

就著這個經歷來看看我們是否喜歡誇自己的軟弱，像保羅一樣以傷害、急難、困苦為可喜悅的。是的，讓我們問自己是否已學會把公平或不公平的譴責、來自朋友或敵人的非難、別人加給我們的傷害、麻煩與艱難當作一個上好的機會去證實“耶穌是我們的一切”，我們自己的快樂與榮譽算不得什麼，我們實在以屈辱為可喜之事。這確實是天上最有福、最深的喜樂，完全脫離己的羈絆，不管別人怎麼說我們或對我們做了什麼，都被“耶穌就是一切”的思想所吞沒了。

我們確信那位曾作工在保羅身上的也必作工在我們身上。保羅必需接受特殊的訓練與教導，學習比他在樂園所聽見那不可說之事更為寶貴的功課——以軟弱、卑微為誇口。這是我們需要學習的，而且是非常迫切需要的。眷顧他的那一位也必眷顧我們；祂以忌邪的愛與關切看守著我們，免得我們自高。當我們自高時，祂就想辦法揭露這項罪惡，並把我們從中解救出來。祂一直藉著試煉、軟弱、困苦降卑我們，直到我們真知道祂的恩典即是一切，因而引我們到低處、使我們以持守謙卑之事為可喜樂的。祂的能力在我們的軟弱上顯為完全。祂的同在要充塞並滿足倒空的器皿，這是永遠保持謙卑的秘訣。

“我更喜歡誇自己的軟弱，好叫基督的能力覆庇我。我以軟弱為可喜樂的。”謙卑人已學會常常喜樂的秘訣。他愈覺軟弱，就愈降卑，就愈經驗到基督的能力與同在，直到他說出“我算不了什麼”時，主所說的話帶給了他未曾有過之喜樂——“我的恩典夠你用的”。

我覺得必須把以上所說的總結於兩個教訓：驕傲的危險比我們所想到的更大、更近，而神為著謙卑所賜的恩典也比我們所想到的更大、更近。

驕傲的危險比我們所想到的更大、更近，特別是在我們進入最高經歷的時候。一個講員在仰慕他的一大群會眾中傳講屬靈真理，一個傳講聖潔、有恩賜的講員在臺上闡揚屬天生命的奧秘，基督徒見證一項有福的經歷，佈道家在凱歌中前進，帶給別人快樂，成為群眾的祝福——沒有人知道這一切正暴露在那隱藏的、未為人察覺的危險之中。保羅也落入這危險中而不自知，故經上記下耶穌為他所作的事以警告我們，使我們得知自己所面臨的危險與唯一的安全之所。如果有人曾說——某某專門傳講聖潔的教師那麼充滿己，或說他並不操練自己所傳講的，他所得著的祝福並沒有使他變得更謙卑、更溫柔——但願這樣的話不再被聽見。我們所信靠的耶穌，能夠使我們變得謙卑。

而謙卑的恩賜比我們所想到的更大、更近。耶穌的謙卑成了我們的救恩，耶穌自己就是我們的謙卑。我們的謙卑是因著祂的保守、是祂所作的工；即使在遇見驕傲的試探時，祂的恩典也一樣夠我們用的，祂的能力要在我們的軟弱上顯為完全。讓我們選擇軟弱、卑微、一無所有，讓謙卑成為我們的歡喜快樂。讓我們在一切使人降卑且保持謙卑的情況裏，歡喜誇自己的軟弱，以軟弱為可喜樂的，好叫基督的能力覆庇我。基督降卑自己，因此神將祂升高。基督也要降卑我們，使我們保持謙卑，但願我們由衷地認同、充滿信心、且歡歡喜喜地接受一切降卑我們的事，好叫基督的能力覆庇我。我們將發現謙卑乃得著最真實之喜樂的秘訣。（慕安得烈）

謙卑與升高

凡自卑的必升為高。(路十四 11；十八 14)

神賜恩給謙卑的人。...務要在主面前自卑，主就必叫你們升高。(雅各四 6、10)

所以你們要自卑，服在神大能的手下，到了時候祂必叫你們升高。(彼前五 6)

有人問我：如何克服驕傲？答案很簡單他只需做兩件事，第一是去做神要你做的事--自卑，第二是信靠神祂會做祂說要做的事--祂必叫你升高。

神的命令很清楚：自卑。這並不意謂著你的工作就是去治服並趕出你驕傲的天性，使聖者耶穌的謙卑成形在你裏面。不是這樣，那是神的工作，是祂來提升你進入愛子的形像裏--這正是升高的本質。因此神的命令真正的意思是：抓住每一個在神和人面前自卑的機會。要相信恩典已作工在你裏面，並確信擺在前面的恩典更多，足能得勝；每一次當心中的驕傲和其工作掠過良心時，要順從主的光照，縱使身上有失敗和墮落，仍要堅持這永不變更的命令：自卑。存著感恩的心接受裏裏外外神允許發生的一切事，不管是來自朋友或敵人，出於自然的或恩典的原因，都是神在提醒你需要謙卑，並藉這些事幫助你得著它。要真正視謙卑為德行之本，在神面前之首要責任，是靈魂永久的保障，要專心視此為萬福之源頭。神這項應許既神聖又堅穩：凡自卑的必升為高。要留心去做神所要求的：自卑。神必親見祂所應許的事成就，祂要賜下更多的恩典，在適當的時候將你升高。

所有神與人的互動關係上，可以從兩個階段來看。第一個階段是預備期，器皿接受了神的命令和應許，經驗上混合了努力與無能的感覺，有失敗也有部分的成功，因而喚醒裏面神聖的盼望，期待那更美的事，這一切都在訓練人進入一個更高的階段--成全期。當成全期來到時，信心承受了應許，在以往常常徒然掙扎之處歡喜快樂。這律可以有效地應用在基督徒生活的每一部分和每一樣不同之德行的追求上，因為這律是基於萬物的本質而有的。在一切關乎我們救贖的事上，是由神起頭的。當神作完初步工作後，就輪到人做他該做的部份。他努力地順服，為要達成目標，他必須藉著這過程發現自己無能為力，以致在絕望中向己死，因而自動且讓神來成全最後的工作，其實他早已不知不覺地接受了神最初的工作。因此神是創始者，而人在尚未正確地認識祂，也不完全瞭解祂計畫之前，就可以充滿盼望且歡喜迎接祂作成終者，作一切的一切。

在追求謙卑的事上亦是如此。神從祂的寶座向每個基督徒發出這命令--自卑。凡熱切聽從、力圖遵行者將獲得這獎賞(實在是一種獎賞)：痛苦地發現兩件事。第一，他發現自己的驕傲極其深，不願意承認自己算不了什麼，也不願別人這樣看待他，而且不肯絕對順從神，這是他自己以前所未曾知道的。第二，為了殲滅隱藏之惡魔所作的一切努力，與祈求神幫助之禱告，卻顯明自己完全無能。這時，若這人知道寄望於神，不願在他裏面一切驕傲的權勢，仍繼續不斷地在神和人面前操練謙卑，他就有福了。人性的律是：動作生出習慣，習慣培育意向，意向形成意志，而正確模塑的意志即是人的個性，這不外乎是神恩典所作的工。恒久重複一個動作，就生出習慣和意向，因而加強了意志力，於是神帶著聖靈的大能大力而來，使人立志行事都照著這靈的運行。悔改驕傲之心的聖徒，常常謙卑地將自己傾倒在神面前，因而得著更大的恩典為獎賞，這獎賞就是謙卑之心，耶穌的靈在這心中已得勝，要培育這新性情臻於成熟，如今柔和謙卑的那一位已永住其中。

務要在神眼前自卑，祂就將你升高。在哪一點上升高呢？受造者的最高榮耀就是單單成爲一個空器皿，來承受、享有並彰顯神的榮耀。這件事的成就完全在乎受造者本身願意成爲一無所有，好叫神成爲一切。水總是先充滿最低的地方。一個人在神面前愈低伏、愈倒空，神的榮耀就愈快速、愈豐滿地流進來。神所應許的升高不是祂自己以外的任何外在事物：祂所給的，以及祂所能給的一切，僅是更多賜下祂自己，祂自己要愈來愈完全地佔有這個人。這種升高不像地上的獎賞，隨人任意獎賞，與被褒揚的行爲無直接關聯。天上賞賜的本質，正是自卑所帶來的果效。故此賞賜不是別的，就是神賜下神聖的、內住的謙卑，使人被模成神羔羊的形像，並充滿神羔羊的謙卑，而更能領受神豐滿的內住。

凡自卑的必升爲高。耶穌親自證實了這真理，藉此向我們保證這句話必然字字應驗。讓我們來負祂的軛，學祂的樣式，祂心裏柔和謙卑。如果我們不願屈從祂，像祂俯就我們一樣(祂過去怎樣做，將來仍是如此)，則我們不能與祂同負一軛。當我們更多進入祂的謙卑--不管是自卑或接受從人來的屈辱時，我們可以期待著靈裏的升高--"神榮耀的靈"將覆庇我們。得榮耀之基督的同在與能力，將臨到那些靈裏謙卑的人。當神能夠在我們裏面再度得著祂應有的地位時，祂必將我們升爲高。願你因著關切祂的榮耀而自卑，祂將顧念你的榮耀而成全你的謙卑，把祂兒子的靈吹入你裏面，成爲常存的生命。當那充滿萬有的神生命佔有你的全人時，沒有比成爲一無所有更自然、更甘甜的事了，再沒有一點自己的想法和願望，因爲一切都被那充滿萬有者所充滿。"所以我更喜歡誇自己的軟弱，好叫基督的能力覆庇我。"

弟兄們！我們的奉獻與信心，在追求聖潔的事上產生不了什麼果效，原因是否如下所述呢？我們靠己和己之力成聖，然後把己的工作冠以信心的名義；爲著己的緣故、己的快樂而把神召來；然後不知不覺間(但卻是千真萬確)以己和己的聖潔爲樂。我們從不知道何爲謙卑--那種絕對、持久不變、像基督那樣的謙卑，隱藏自己而不愛顯露，與神和人交接的一切生活裏都滲透且標示出謙卑--這才是追求聖潔生活最基本的要素。

惟有被神充滿時，己才會消失。惟有在陽光長闊高深的榮光裏，才會看見微小的塵埃戲耍於光線中。謙卑也是這樣，在神的同在裏我們什麼都不是，不過是一粒塵埃居住在他愛的陽光中罷了。

大哉主神！吾微渺！
愛海吞沒，己沉消，
惟獨見神，不見我。

願神教導我們相信在祂的同在裏成爲一無所有、謙卑下來，乃基督徒生命所能達到的最高點，也是最全備的祝福。祂對我們說："我住在至高至聖的所在，也與心靈痛悔謙卑的人同居；要使謙卑人的靈甦醒，也使痛悔人的心甦醒。"(賽五十七 15)願這福份屬於我們！(慕安得烈)

HUMILITY AND HAPPINESS

"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weakness: for when I am weak then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:9, 10)

Lest Paul should exalt himself, by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was sent him to keep him humble. Paul's first desire was to have it removed, and he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart. The answer came that the trial was a blessing; that, in the weakness and humiliation it brought, the grace and strength of the Lord could be the better manifested. Paul at once entered upon a new stage in his relation to the trial: instead of simply enduring it, he most gladly gloried in it; instead of asking for deliverance, he took pleasure in it. He had learned that the place of humiliation is the place of blessing, of power, of joy.

Every Christian virtually passes through these two stages in his pursuit of humility. In the first he fears and flees and seeks deliverance from all that can humble him. He has not yet learnt to seek humility at any cost. He has accepted the command to be humble, and seeks to obey it, though only to find how utterly he fails. He prays for humility, at times very earnestly; but in his secret heart he prays more, if not in word, then in wish, to be kept from the very things that will make him humble. He is not yet so in love with humility as the beauty of the Lamb of God, and the joy of heaven, that he would sell all to procure it. In his pursuit of it, and his prayer for it, there is still somewhat of a sense of burden and of bondage; to humble himself has not yet become the spontaneous expression of a life and a nature that is essentially humble. It has not yet become his joy and only pleasure. He cannot yet say, "Most gladly do I glory in weakness, I take pleasure in whatever humbles me."

But can we hope to reach the stage in which this will be the case? Undoubtedly. And what will it be that brings us there? That which brought Paul there - a new revelation of the Lord Jesus. Nothing but the presence of God can reveal and expel self. A clearer insight was to be given to Paul into the deep truth that the presence of Jesus will banish every desire to seek anything in ourselves, and will make us delight in every humiliation that prepares us for His fuller manifestation. Our humiliations lead us, in the experience of the presence and power of Jesus, to choose humility as our highest blessing. Let us try to learn the lessons the story of Paul teaches us.

We may have advanced believers, eminent teachers, and men of heavenly experiences, who have not yet fully learnt the lesson of perfect humility, gladly glorying in weakness. We see this in Paul. The danger of exalting himself was coming very near. He knew not yet perfectly what it was to be nothing; to die, that Christ alone might live in him; to take pleasure in all that brought him low. It appears as if this were the highest lesson that he had to learn, full conformity to his Lord in that self-emptying where he gloried in weakness that God might be all.

The highest lesson a believer has to learn is humility. O that every Christian who seek to advance in holiness may remember this well! There may be intense consecration, and fervent zeal and heavenly experience, and yet, if it is not prevented by very special dealings of the Lord, there may be an unconscious self exaltation with it all. Let us learn the lesson,--the highest holiness is the deepest humility; and let us remember that comes not of itself, but only as it is made matter of special dealing on the part of our faithful Lord and His faithful servant.

Let us look at our lives in the light of this experience, and see whether we gladly glory in weakness, whether we take pleasure, as Paul did, in injuries, in necessities, in distresses. Yes, let us ask whether we have learnt to regard a reproof, just or unjust, a reproach from friend or enemy, an injury, or trouble, or difficulty into which others bring us, as above all an opportunity of proving Jesus is all to us, how our own pleasure or honor are nothing, and how humiliation is in very truth what we take pleasure in. It is indeed blessed, the deep happiness of heaven, to be so free from self that whatever is said of us or done to us is lost and swallowed up, in the thought that Jesus is all.

Let us trust Him who took charge of Paul to take charge of us too. Paul needed special discipline, and with it special instruction, to learn, what was more precious than even the unutterable things he had heard in heaven what it is to glory in weakness and lowliness. We need it, too, O so much. He who cared for him will care for us too. He watches over us with a jealous, loving care, "lest we exalt ourselves". When we are doing so, He seeks to discover to us the evil, and deliver us from it. In trial and weakness and trouble He seeks to bring us low, until we so learn that His grace is all, as to take pleasure in the very thing that brings us and keeps us low. His strength made perfect in our weakness, His presence filling and satisfying our emptiness, becomes the secret of a humility that need never fail.

"Most gladly will I glory in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may rest upon me; wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses." The humble man has learnt the secret of abiding gladness. The weaker he feels, the lower he sinks; the more the power and the presence of Christ are his portion, until, as he says, "I am nothing," the word of his Lord brings ever deeper joy: "My grace is sufficient for you."

I feel as if I must once again gather up all in the two lessons: the danger of pride is greater and nearer than we think, and the grace for humility too.

The danger of pride is greater and nearer than we think, and that especially at the time of our highest experiences. The preacher of spiritual truth with an admiring congregation hanging on his lips, the gifted speaker on a Holiness platform expounding the secrets of the heavenly life, the Christian giving testimony to a blessed experience, the evangelist moving on as in triumph, and made a blessing to rejoicing multitudes, no man knows the hidden, the unconscious danger to which these are exposed. Paul was in danger without knowing it; what Jesus did for him is written for our admonition, that we may know our danger and know our only safety. If ever it has been said of a teacher or professor of holiness, he is so full of self; or, he does not practice what he preaches; or, his blessing has not made him humbler or gentler, let it be said no more. Jesus, in whom we trust, can make us humble.

Yes, the grace for humility is greater and nearer, too, than we think. The humility of Jesus is our salvation. Jesus Himself is our humility. Our humility is His care and His work. His grace is sufficient for us, to meet the temptation of pride too. His strength will be perfected in our weakness. Let us choose to be weak, to be low, and to be nothing. Let humility be to us joy and gladness. Let us gladly glory and take pleasure in weakness, in all that can humble us and keep us low; the power of Christ will rest upon us. Christ humbled Himself, therefore God exalted Him. Christ will humble us, and keep us humble; let us heartily consent, let us trustfully and joyfully accept all that humbles; the power of Christ will rest upon us. We shall find that the deepest humility is the secret of the truest happiness, of a joy that nothing can destroy. (Andrew Murray)

HUMILITY AND EXALTATION

"He that humbles himself shall be exalted." (Luke 14:11, 18:14)
*"God gives grace to the humble. Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord,
and He shall exalt you." (Jas. 4:10)*
*"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God,
that He may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet.5:6)*

Just yesterday I was asked the question. How am I to conquer this pride? The answer; was simple. Two things are needed. Do what God says is your work: humble yourself. Trust Him to do what He says is His work: He will exalt you.

The command is clear: humble yourself. That does not mean that it is your work to conquer and cast out the pride of your nature, and to form within yourself the lowliness of the holy Jesus. No, this is God's work; the very essence of that exaltation, wherein He lifts you up into the real likeness of the beloved Son. What the command does mean is this: take every opportunity of humbling yourself before God and man. In the faith of the grace that is already working in you; in the assurance of the more grace for victory that is coming; up to the light that conscience each time flashes upon the pride of the heart and its workings; notwithstanding all there may be of failure and falling, stand persistently as under the unchanging command: humble yourself. Accept with gratitude everything that God allows from within or without, from friend or enemy, in nature or in grace, to remind you of your need of humbling, and to help you to it. Reckon humility to be indeed the mother-virtue, your very first duty before God, the one perpetual safeguard of the soul, and set your heart upon it as the source of all blessing. The promise is divine and sure: He that humbles himself shall be exalted. See that you do the one thing God asks: humble yourself. God will see that he does the one thing He has promised. He will give more grace; He will exalt you in due time.

All God's dealings with man are characterized by two stages. There is the time of preparation, when command and promise, with the mingled experience of effort and impotence, of failure and partial success, with the holy expectancy of something better which these waken, train and discipline men for a higher stage. Then comes the time of fulfillment, when faith inherits the promise, and enjoys what it had so often struggled for in vain. This law holds good in every part of the Christian life, and in the pursuit of every separate virtue. And that because it is grounded in the very nature of things. In all that concerns our redemption, God must need take the initiative. When that has been done, man's turn comes. In the effort after obedience and attainment, he must learn to know his impotence, in self-despair to die to himself, and so be fitted voluntarily and intelligently to receive from God the end, the completion of that of which he had accepted the beginning in ignorance. So, God who had been the Beginning, ere man rightly knew Him, or fully understood what His purpose was, is longed for and welcomed as the End, as the All in All.

It is even thus, too, in the pursuit of humility. To every Christian the command comes from the throne of God Himself: humble yourself. The earnest attempt to listen and obey will be rewarded yes, rewarded-with the painful discovery of two things. The one, what depth of pride that is of unwillingness to count oneself and to be counted nothing, to submit absolutely to God, there was, that one never knew. The other, what utter impotence there is in all our efforts, and in all our prayers too for God's help, to destroy the hideous monster. Blessed the man who now learns to put his hope in God, and to persevere, notwithstanding all the power of pride within him, in acts of humiliation before God and Men. We know the law of human nature: acts produce habits, habits breed dispositions, dispositions form the will, and the rightly-formed will is character. It is no otherwise in the work of

grace. As acts, persistently repeated, beget habits and dispositions, and these strengthened the will, He who works both to will and to do comes with His mighty power and Spirit; and the humbling of the proud heart with which the penitent saint cast himself so often before God, is rewarded with the "more grace" of the humble heart, in which the Spirit of Jesus has conquered, and brought the new nature to its maturity, and He the meek and lowly One now dwells forever.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will exalt you. And wherein does the exaltation consist? The highest glory of the creature is in being only a vessel, to receive and enjoy and show forth the glory of God. It can do this only as it is willing to be nothing in itself, that God may be all. Water always fills first the lowest places. The lower, the emptier a man lies before God, the speedier and the fuller will be the inflow of the divine glory. The exaltation God promises is not, cannot be, any external thing apart from Himself: all that He has to give or can give is only more of Himself, Himself to take more complete possession. The exaltation is not, like an earthly prize, something arbitrary, in no necessary connection with the conduct to be rewarded. No, but it is in its very nature the effect and result of the humbling of ourselves. It is nothing but the gift of such a divine indwelling humility, such a conformity to and possession of the humility of the Lamb of God, as fits us for receiving fully the indwelling of God.

He that humbles himself shall be exalted. Of the truth of these words Jesus Himself is the proof; of the certainty of their fulfillment to us He is the pledge. Let us take His yoke upon us and learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart. If we are but willing to stoop to Him, as He has stooped to us, He will yet stoop to each one of us again, and we shall find ourselves not unequally yoked with Him. As we enter deeper into the fellowship of His humiliation, and either humble ourselves or bear the humbling of men, we can count upon it that the Spirit of His exaltation, "the Spirit of God and of glory," will rest upon us. The presence and the power of the glorified Christ will come to them that are of a humble spirit. When God can again have His rightful place in us, He will lift us up. Make His glory your care in humbling yourself; He will make your glory His care in perfecting your humility, and breathing into you, as your abiding life, the very Spirit of His Son. As the all-pervading life of God possesses you, you will be nothing so natural, and nothing so sweet, as to be nothing, with not a thought or wish for self, because all is occupied with Him who fills all. "Most gladly will I glory in my weakness that the strength of Christ may rest upon me."

Brother, have we not here the reason that our consecration and our faith have availed so little in the pursuit of holiness? It was by self and its strength that the work was done under the name of faith; it was for self and its happiness that God was called in; it was, unconsciously, but still truly, in self and its holiness that the soul rejoiced. We never knew that humility, absolute, abiding, Christ-like humility and self-effacement, pervading and marking our whole life with God and man, was the most essential element of the life of the holiness we sought for.

It is only in the possession of God that I lose myself. As it is in the height and breadth and glory of the sunshine that the littleness of the mote playing in its beams is seen, even so humility is the taking our place in God's presence to be nothing but a mote dwelling in the sunlight of His love.

"How great is God! How small am I! Lost, swallowed up in Love's immensity! God only there, not I."

May God teach us to believe that to be humble, to be nothing in His presence, is the highest attainment, and the fullest blessing of the Christian life. He speaks to us: "I dwell in the high and holy [place], and with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isaiah 57:15) Be this our portion! (Andrew Murray)