

Dear friend,

You are receiving this series of Lenten devotionals on humility from Reverend Daniel Cohen, an ordained American Baptist minister and a self-proclaimed “humility expert” (LOL) who has written an audiobook called [It’s Not All About You! The Secret Joy of Practical Humility](#), which can be found at his website at danielaaroncohen.com.

It is Reverend Cohen’s sincerest hope that these Lenten devotions, which will be sent to you each weekday of Lent, will be of use to you in your walk with Christ.

Path to Humility for Ash Wednesday: Recognizing what sinners we are and what it cost God and Christ that we might be forgiven.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God -- Romans 3:23

While humility is not about beating ourselves up, I want to open up this Lenten series with a somewhat bitter pill to swallow. A bitter pill that is in keeping with Ash Wednesday, a day upon which we are to repent from our sins. We as saved Christians need to recognize precisely what sinners we are. Not by making some blanket admission of sin, such as “Oh yes, I’m a sinner because the Bible tells me so.” But by getting down and dirty and taking a thoughtful examination of just how we grieve the Holy Spirit who lives within us with our particular sins. Those that we’ve committed in the past and those that we haven’t let go of yet.

Above all, we as Christians need to recognize that, were it not for OUR sins (make it personal), Christ would never have had to go through the agony of the Cross. Not merely the crucifixion, which in itself was horrific enough, but the

moment when His Father had to look away from Him as Jesus took on all sin and sickness upon Himself. Owning up to our sin in this way is a humbling practice indeed.

Recognizing what sinners we are and the price it cost God and His Son is a great way to grow in humility and helps us to avoid the temptation of judging our brothers and sisters.

Today's challenge: Alcoholics Anonymous speaks of taking a “fearless moral inventory” of ourselves. Take time out today and write down the main things you've done to wrong God or others.

Path to Humility Day 2: Defining “humility”

Humility is 1) Putting yourself in perspective (that is, not thinking too high, too low or too often of oneself), 2) Accepting everything about life that you do not like but cannot change, and 3) Being thankful for everything you do like about life.

- *This Author*

Webster defines humility as: “The quality or state of not thinking you are better than other people.” Google calls it “a modest or low view of one's own importance.” Wikipedia says it is “variously seen as the act or posture of lowering oneself in relation to others, or conversely, having a clear perspective, and therefore respect, for one's place in context.” As we'll see, these definitions only scratch the surface.

As I studied humility, I came to find humility had numerous meanings, and that there were many paths to the humility I longed for. I was raised as a Jew and told that Judaism is both an ethnicity, a religion and a culture. Humility has even more definitions, but at its core humility is: 1. An inner attitude (a way of looking

at things), 2. The state of perfect peace that comes from that attitude, and 3. A way of dealing with the world based on our inner attitude. I like to define humility as “Giving up your right to yourself for the sake of others, and not resenting it.” “Being unable to take offense.” and “Putting God on the throne of your heart.”

I also discovered that the various paths to humility could be useful for solving different problems. That some paths were good for dealing with, say, anxiety, others for combatting depression and still others for dealing with a difficult spouse or your boss at work. Furthermore, I found that all of these dozens of paths could fall under three main categories. First there was what we might call “basic humility.” These are all the paths that help us recognize that it’s not all about us. That, in fact, the world does not revolve around us, no matter what our parents told us when we were young. The second main category involves accepting those things in Life that we do not like. This includes both everything we’ve been brooding on that has happened in the past and everything we are worrying about will happen in the future. The final category are paths that help us to be thankful for all the good in Life. This includes pleasing God by being humbly grateful rather than grumbly hateful.

Today’s Challenge: Think about what humility means to you and come up with your own definitions of humility that are most meaningful to you.

Path to humility Day 3: Recognizing the importance of humility to the Spiritual walk

Should you ask me: What is the first thing in religion? I should reply: the first, second and third thing therein is humility. -- St. Augustine

In his classic *Humility: The Journey Toward Holiness*, Andrew Murray states that “Humility is not so much a virtue along with the others, but is the root of all, because it alone takes the right attitude before God and allows Him, as God, to

do all.” Murray goes on to quote St. Augustine: “Should you ask me: What is the first thing in religion? I should reply: the first, second and third thing therein is humility.”

Why is humility so important to the Christian walk? Because only humility puts us in right relation to God and Christ. God put us on this Earth to be His humble servants, and Jesus was the perfect example of the self-sacrifice that is the key to humility.

Self-sacrifice may not sound fun, but it is the key to a peace that passes all understanding. For while humility may require us to do something we, at first, deem unpleasant – something that we do out of duty -- it leads to the greatest Spiritual gift of all. For when you are feeling humble, you are at peace with the world in way that cannot be described by words.

We as Christians have Jesus’ example of humility to follow as the ultimate self-sacrifice of all time. Jesus came down from glory for the expressed purpose of sacrificing Himself on the Cross so that we could be forgiven for our sins. Jesus never sought His own will but always sought to do the will of His Father.

Today’s challenge: Think upon your life and where you could show more humility. Then go out and do it.

Path to humility Day 4: The Good News: Humility can be learned

Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it -- Psalm 34:14

We all know that the gospel refers to the “good news” that Jesus saves. Well, when it comes to humility, there is more good news: Humility is not something you are born with, but something you can develop over time. Something you can *learn*.

While America is not a society that seems to value humility, there ARE places in our society where humility is highly valued. First, we tend to value

humility highly in our church families and among our friends and relatives. In addition to the humble people you know personally, there's one non-religious institution where humility is given its due. Can you guess where that is? If you said "Alcoholics Anonymous" you're right. The 12 step approach of AA is all about humility. In fact, AA founder Bill Wilson emphatically states, "The attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each of AA's twelve steps." AA is about fixing the underlying problems that lead alcoholics to drink and behave self-ishly. AA recognizes that beneath the addiction to alcohol lies an addiction to self. While this Lenten series isn't a 12 step program, to call it AA for the self-aholic would be high praise indeed.

As the success of 12-step programs suggests, humility can be learned. Mark Twain said that when he was 14 he considered his father a fool, but by the time he was 21 he was amazed to see how much his father had grown. As anyone who has ever been a teenager knows, humility is something we learn over time. And while you can take decades to learn the humility Life has to teach you, reading this series and practicing humility can make the path to a humbler, happier you quicker and easier than learning through the school of hard knocks alone.

Today's Challenge: Think back over your life. What experiences and teachings made you more humble? Try to get in touch with that humility today.

Path to humility Day 5: Seek God's approval, not man's

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness – Matthew 6:33

In an age where we're Keeping up with the Kardashians as well as the Joneses, Society has us asking ourselves two basic questions: "What can I get out of life – and am I getting enough?" and the related question "What do other people think of me?" These two questions lead to the self-centeredness that plagues modern Humankind, and are responsible for much of the misery in the world today.

The first question -- “What can I get out of life – and am I getting enough?” - is the root cause of all selfishness, and leads to war, crime, gluttony, greed, hate and adultery. The second question -- “What do other people think of me?” -- is the root of our self-consciousness, and leads to anxiety, pride, envy and depression. These two questions are constantly running through our minds whether we realize it or not. Old as society, they have taken on new meaning in modern times where our “self”-obsession has reached epidemic proportions.

The key to changing our attitude towards Life is to change these questions. This can be done by changing a few words here and there. Changing the first question to “What can I *give* to life – and am I *giving* enough?” puts us back on the right track, turning our selfishness into selflessness. Changing the second question to “What does GOD think of me?” helps us live life with integrity and keeps us from worrying about our “image” to men and women who may judge us unfairly. When you stop seeking other people’s approval, you are free from the self-consciousness that plagues our generation. Other people don’t know you the way God does, and if you believe – as I do – in a compassionate God, you won’t have to worry about being judge too harshly.

Today’s challenge: Go throughout your day noticing the temptation to question whether you are *getting* enough and how you worry about what others think of you. Then consciously think about how you can *give* more and only care what *God* thinks of you.

Path to humility Day 6: Compare yourself to those who gave more

It is more blessed to give than to receive - Acts 20:35

Today the global religion that exerts the most influence over many of us is not Christianity but “Consumerism.” That is, the religion of materialism. This “religion” puts Self on the throne. In so doing, it creates gods of those of us who,

consciously or unconsciously, worship Her. Gods who are constantly vying to improve our position in the pantheon by acquiring the fame and fortune Society says we must have.

I'm not suggesting some grand conspiracy hatched by a cadre of old white men smoking Cubans, swigging Jack Daniels and plotting our ultimate demise in a boardroom somewhere. No, I am suggesting something that came about as a matter of course. Consider: Two-thirds of our economy is driven by consumer spending. Consumerism's goal is to get us to buy new things. In order to do this, Society must convince us that we need more than we have. Advertisers "create a need" by a) making their products seem appealing ("What can I get out of life – and am I getting enough?") and b) making you feel inadequate with what you have ("What do other people think of me?"). Thus Society turns life into a competition where it's all about us.

One way to put your ego in check is to compare yourselves to the great men and women who have shaped history for the good of humankind. Comparing ourselves to spiritual giants like Jesus, Mohammed, the Buddha, Ghandi, Mother Teresa and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is truly a humbling experience. One that makes us more Christlike. For unlike comparing ourselves to those who *got* more, comparing ourselves to those who *gave* more challenges us to be better human beings.

Ultimately, however, one can only compare oneself to who we were yesterday or the year or decade before. A famous Rabbi once said that he didn't fear that when he went to heaven God would ask him why he hadn't done as much as this great rabbi or that one, but only that he hadn't done as well as he could have with the gifts God had given him.

Today's challenge: Compare yourselves to the Spiritual giants and ask yourself in what small way you could be more like them today.

Path to humility Day 7: Developing a Christlike attitude towards arrogance

When the ten heard about this [that James and John had requested to sit at Jesus' side in heaven], they became indignant with James and John -- Mark 10:41

There are three types of people when it comes to humility: Those who are arrogant, those who are upset by arrogant people, and those who are truly humble and aren't bothered by someone else's lack of humility.

Another way to illustrate humility is to look at the story in the Bible where two of Jesus' disciples asked if they could sit next to Him in heaven. When the other ten disciples heard about it, they got upset. Listen to how Jesus responded to them: *Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* (Mark 10: 42 – 45)

Note that there are three types of people in this story. James and John who are self-seeking and arrogant, the ten disciples who are upset by their audacity, and Jesus, who is not upset by it but uses the situation as a teaching moment, holding the disciples accountable as He counsels them in love.

While it's easy to see that arrogant people aren't humble, the extent to which their arrogance bothers us the way the ten disciples were bothered by John and James shows us where WE fall short when it comes to humility. That is, we become "player haters" instead of being at the highest level of humility which is to be like Jesus and not be disturbed by other people's arrogance.

Today's challenge: Make it a point today not to be bothered by other

people's selfish actions. If you find someone in your life being arrogant or selfish, remind yourself to be like Christ and resist the temptation to become annoyed.

Path to humility Day 8: Recognizing how little we know

If we become increasingly humble about how little we know, we may be more eager to search
— John Templeton

One of the paths to humility I find particularly useful is to stop and think about how little I truly *know*. Let me walk you through it. First of all, think about all the things you know you don't know. You don't know what's going to happen to you after you die (although you may subscribe to one belief or another, nobody I know has ever gone and come back to tell us about it). You don't know what's going to happen to you in the next moment. You don't know if you'll be alive to finish this sentence.

Now think of the things you think you *do* know. My wife likes to watch Ancient Aliens on the history channel. I get a kick out of this, especially when I see the guy whose hair looks like he just put his finger in a light socket! I laugh as the narrator in his deep, serious voice talks about the beliefs of “ancient alien theorists” -- who happen to be the same 5 guys who talk about a range of events that “prove” we've been visited by extra-terrestrials.

But when I stop laughing, it occurs to me that maybe, just maybe, these people are right. Maybe life on Earth DID begin from some alien being. Maybe they DID build the pyramids. When I humble myself in this way, I can almost accept the possibility that the guys on the ghost shows my wife watches (she has a much more open mind than I) are actually recording paranormal activity on the little Geiger counters they carry around to measure that stuff.

Almost.

Another way of realizing how little we know is to think about the stupid

stuff we used to believe. When I was 10, my friends and I would spend our time waiting for a tennis court engaged in scholarly debates over the various properties of Wilson tennis balls. We noted, for example, that Wilson 3s were less bouncy than Wilson 6s, and that the even-numbered balls lasted longer than the odd-numbered ones. The sons of scientists, we approached the topic with all of the brilliance and vigor you would expect of our big-brained fathers, holding a regular Algonquin Table on the subject. Yet it never occurred to us that the numbers MEANT ABSOLUTELY NOTHING AT ALL! Wilson simply put different numbers on their balls so that people on adjacent courts would know whose balls were whose.

Today's Challenge: Think back to your childhood and think of the things you used to hold as Gospel truth but you now know are patently false. If you didn't have ludicrous discussions about tennis balls, remember what you thought about Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy. Or where you thought babies came from.

Path to humility Day 9: Recognizing how little we know, Part II

I know that I know nothing -- Socrates

Yesterday's challenge was to think back to your childhood and think about what you thought was true but later found out wasn't. Today we'll focus on what we grownups thought we knew that turned out to be false.

For it's not just childhood myths that aren't true. We as adults are constantly finding out things we once believed as a society simply aren't true. When I was growing up my mother taught me to eat the yolk of the egg because it was better for you than the white. Now we are told just the opposite. That the yolk will give you cardiac disease. That the white is all good stuff.

I heard about a professor who was teaching a graduate course in quantum physics: "Half of what I'm about to teach you is going to turn out to be bullshit,"

he said, pointing to the fact that our knowledge of physics is still evolving. “The problem is we don't know which half that is!”

In ancient Greece, Socrates was told that the Oracle of Delphi had declared him the wisest man on the planet. His reply? “It must be because I know that I know nothing.” Others who were less wise apparently believed that they knew something.

In the 1600s the father of modern philosophy, a Frenchman named Rene Descartes, locked himself in a room for twenty years and concluded there were only two things he could know for certain: 1) “I think, therefore I am.” And 2) that “God exists because I can prove it.” Unfortunately for the rest of us, Descartes' proof of God turned out to be bogus. This led to a philosophical nervous breakdown, with everyone wondering if there was anything we could know. That is, until Immanuel Kant came along a century later and saved the day, pointing out that there had to be certain truths in order for sentient beings to exist. Still, even if we can say for a fact that $2 + 2$ must equal 4, there's so much we don't know – including the vast majority of what we take for “fact.”

When you look back over the centuries, there are many things which we take as gospel that are not. For the longest time, people thought the sun revolved around the earth. Now we think the people who believed this were idiots. It is humbling, is it not, to think that a hundred years from now people will think we were idiots for what we believe today? Won't it be something if we get the opportunity after we die to look back over our lives and realize exactly how much we thought we knew, and were wrong about?

Today's challenge: As you go through the day, think about those things we take for granted -- and recognize that much of it is going to turn out to be rubbish.

Path to humility Day 10: Recognizing how little we know, Part III

A man should be humble when he realizes how little he knows of all there is to know
- Irfan Mamoun

Yesterday we recognized that much of what we as a society take as gospel today is going to turn out to be untrue. That a hundred years from now, people will look back on us and laugh at some of the beliefs that we hold dear.

Now let's turn our attention to the things we think we know in our personal lives. First, let's look at what we think we know about the people we interact with. For when it comes right down to it, we don't know half as much about other people as we think we do. We look at the outward appearance and make judgments when we really have no idea what's going on inside the person -- something we'll talk about more when we get to the meditations about not judging others.

Finally – and most surprisingly of all -- we don't even know ourselves. You may think you know yourself well, but only God knows everything about why you are who you are. The genetics, the things your mother was going through while you were yet in the womb, the things that happened to you as a child before you were old enough to remember them, everything we've experienced that we've forgotten – all these things are lost to us.

In his book, *The Untethered Soul*, Michael Singer points out that defining ourselves is actually quite difficult. For example, are we the person who shows up when we are in a bad mood or when things are going well? Singer points out that we don't really know who we are. That we are not our name, our relationship, our history, our body (after all, our current body is not the same as it was when we were born – let alone when we were but a fertilized egg in our mother's womb). That ultimately all we are is consciousness – the “me” that's experiencing all the external events and inner emotions, the one aware of thoughts.

Today's Challenge: Think about what you know – and what you don't know – about yourself. Feel the humility that comes from letting go of false solidity.

Path to humility day 11: Recognizing others are “other me’s”

Humility is the proper estimate of oneself -- Charles Spurgeon

At first blush, thinking of ourselves makes all the sense in the world. We look out at the world around us through our own individual pair of eyes. We are the ones who hurt when our bodies are in pain. It is *our* stomach that gets hungry when we haven't had enough to eat. Our libido that gets excited when we see a person we find attractive. We each have our own history. Our own likes. Our own dislikes. We have our own responsibilities, our own liabilities, our own blessings. In short, we have our own consciousness tied particularly to a single body that is born, grows older and ultimately dies.

But looked at from a different perspective, *other people can be seen to be the same consciousness that just happens to have a different history.* In short, other people are “other me’s.” No, we don't all think alike, and part of putting yourself in perspective is recognizing and respecting other people's differences. For not only have we each been shaped by our own unique histories on planet Earth, we come to life with different genetic capabilities as well. When you think about someone whose behavior offends you, remember that, like it or not, if you had been given the same DNA, had the exact same upbringing and experienced everything they'd experienced up to this point, you too would be making the same bad choices they are making. Recognizing this leads to compassion – a quality the Dalai Lama suggests is the key to happiness.

Today's Challenge: Think about how other people – especially any you consider your “enemies” – are really other “you's” in different bodies. Reflect on the fact that if you were in their shoes, you would likely make the same bad

choices they make.

Path to humility Day 12: Putting everyday problems in perspective

Ask yourself the question, “Will this matter a year from now?”

-- from *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff .. And It's All Small Stuff*

- Richard Carlson, Ph. D.

There's a country song called “This ain't nothing” that speaks volumes about putting our problems in perspective. The song is about an old man who is being interviewed by a TV news reporter after a tornado leveled his home. The old man starts by telling the reporter that if he wants to see him break down and cry he is going to be disappointed. He goes on to tell the reporter that “this ain't nothing” as it can be replaced. Unlike his father who died in a coal mine cave-in when he was 8 years old. Unlike his brother, his best friend and his left hand which he lost in Vietnam. Unlike his wife of 50 years who passed away.

Reminding ourselves that our personal issues, no matter how serious they may seem to us at the time, are really small potatoes in the big scheme of things, is an excellent way to reduce the anxiety that comes from worrying too much about the small stuff. In fact, there was a bestseller some years back called *Don't sweat the small stuff ... and it's all small stuff*. The reason we DO sweat the small stuff so much is that today's society encourages us to think “It's all about me.” This leads to hypersensitive egos that react to the slightest perceived slight or inconvenience in a manner out of all proportion.

In his book, *The Untethered Soul*, Michael Singer suggests that virtually all of us in today's society suffer from an unhealthy level of self-consciousness. This self-consciousness comes from worrying too much about ourselves and what other people think of us. He says this is what the Buddha meant when he said that life was suffering.

Today's Challenge: Go through your day today noticing what gets you upset. Then ask yourself if it is worth getting upset about or if “this ain't nothing.”

Path to humility Day 13: Being amused by things that used to drive you mad

I used to be disgusted, and now I try to be amused

-- from Elvis Costello song “The angels wanna wear my red shoes”

One of my favorite strategies for dealing with difficult people comes from an Elvis Costello song. The line is “I used to be disgusted, and now I try to be amused.” That is, instead of getting angry at the negative things people do, try to find something humorous about them. For if you can rise above your anger and see the power plays people make as amusingly immature ways of getting their needs met, you are on your way to a healthier state of mind.

What's interesting about this strategy, is that there's a second component to it just in case it doesn't work at first. That is, when we find ourselves stewing about what someone else has done to us and just can't wrap our heads around finding any amusement in it, we can apply the principle to ourselves. We can look at our inability to forgive and let go of the anger as something about ourselves at which we can be amused instead of being our own worst critic.

Today's challenge: When someone – or something – tempts you to get angry today, remind yourself of the wisdom of Elvis Costello's “I used to be disgusted, and now I try to be amused.” If that doesn't work, look at your negative reaction with compassion and try to be amused at the fact that you weren't able to be amused in the first place. If that doesn't work, take a double shot of Jack Daniels (just kidding church folk! ;-)

Path to Humility Day 14: Letting go of a grudge

“Do I want to waste what potentially could be my last thought on planet Earth on this?”
- This author

When you find yourself stewing about something someone said or did to you earlier in the day, it’s a good time to ask yourself if you want to waste what potentially could be your last thought on Earth on this. In fact, it’s a good question to ask yourself whenever you are getting upset over something that happened in the past or worrying about something you are going to face in the future.

Simply put, we remind ourselves that no power on Earth can guarantee we will be alive to finish this sentence. That that negative thought you are having about your boss, your spouse, your teenager, or the jerk that just cut you off in traffic, could be your last. Do you really want to waste your last thought on something so negative and trivial? Wouldn’t you rather be thinking about how much you love God and the people He’s put in your life?

Today’s challenge: View the negative thoughts that go through your mind through the prism of your mortality, challenging yourself to live each moment as if it could be your last.

Path to humility Day 15: The Thrill of Humility: What to do when the big waves come

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you

-- 1 Peter 4:12

When the big waves come in your life there are two ways of handling them with humility. One is to humble yourself so that you submerge yourself below the

surface in the sea of God's love and let the wave pass over you, humbly accepting whatever God has in store for you, knowing it is for the building up of your strength and the edification of your soul.

The other way to deal with the big trials we face -- and I personally love this path -- is to look at the waves in our lives not as threats that are capable of drowning us, but as *challenges* which we are to ride to victory. The idea is to look at the trials in our lives the way a surfer looks at a big wave – the bigger the better. For it's those times that we look at the biggest "problem" we're facing and trust God that He will help us handle it that we give God the most joy.

If you are able to transform your problems into challenges which you are eager to face, you have conquered your fear. This of course will require constant effort, as each new wave seems designed to help us forget the previous one.

Today's challenge: If you are facing a big trial in your life, ride the wave with confidence, viewing the problem as a surfer views a mighty wave, knowing that you are pleasing the Lord with your faith.

Path to humility Day 16: Karma, no?

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

-- Galatians 6:7

One thing we can remind ourselves of when dealing with a difficult person's behavior is the Law of Karma. Known also as "You reap what you sow" in Christianity and "what goes around comes around" on the street, recognizing that someone else's bad karma is going to eventually catch up with them whether you act on it or not can be a comforting thought.

This path can also be used as a way of looking at ourselves and saying, in effect "I guess I must have had that coming." That I must have done something –

either in this life or a past life* – to cause the Law of Karma to bite me in the butt.” That said, for a saved Christian, suffering may not be caused by bad karma but by an attack of Satan, the endurance of which will be rewarded in heaven. Keeping this in mind restores our faith in a just universe and helps us feel a little less put upon when faced with someone else’s bad behavior.

*I know the Bible does not speak of reincarnation, but that this doctrine was almost included in the canon. That said, the law of karma, to which all Buddhists and Hindus subscribe, presupposes reincarnation.

Today’s Challenge: Look at whatever you are facing with peace, knowing that if someone has wronged you, you need not be the instrument of karma and return the favor, but rest assured that God will deal with the person. Also, recognize that any problem you are facing is the result of some past deed in this life or another – or an attack of Satan, your faithful endurance of which will be rewarded in heaven.

Path to humility Day 17: Stop judging your fellow church members

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

-- Romans 14:10

There is nothing wrong with evaluating others. We need to evaluate others in order to know who to trust and who not to trust. To know how much we should believe what they tell us. But that's different than judging as it is used in the negative sense in the Bible. Judging others as it is used in the Bible refers to condemning others in our minds. Deeming them less worthy than ourselves. We judge others because we are insecure and we want to make ourselves feel superior. Judging is an act of pride, and, as we know, pride was the original sin which cast Satan and 1/3rd of the angels out of heaven.

If we are honest with ourselves, we see that we are constantly judging others, not merely evaluating them, but placing them below ourselves in some form or fashion. We judge others at work, in our families, and, I hate to say it, in the Church. Judgment in the Church is the worst sort of judging of all as this is where we come to worship God with other men, women and children made in God's image. Our harsh judgmental attitudes can keep others from coming to church – which could lead to them never getting saved in the first place! Church is where we are taught to love not only our friends but our enemies. This morning's devotional is primarily aimed at the sin of judging our fellow church members, whether merely in our heads or, if we take it a step further, to spreading our ideas through gossip or acting on them by doing and saying things to disrespect one another.

Today's Challenge: Think about those people in the church who you have some complaint about. Then remind yourself that they are your brothers and sisters in Christ and that the temptation to judge them is just a trick of the Enemy.

Path to humility Day 18: Why we shouldn't judge others

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?

-- 1 Corinthians 2:11

The first reason we shouldn't judge others is that we don't know enough about them to make a judgment. We only see their outward appearance, not what's going on inside of them. We don't know what their lives are like when we're not with them. We don't know how they were raised. What trials they've been through. What potential they have.

Only God knows these things. The Bible says that He is the only righteous judge.

When you are judging men you are taking God's place. You are judging someone made in God's image. When you judge a fellow Christian you are judging your brothers and sisters in Christ. We are all different, as it takes all different members to make up the body of Christ. For us to criticize others because they don't do things exactly the way we would is like your foot complaining that the hand is worthless because you can't walk on it. Just because people do things different from the way you would like them to doesn't mean they are wrong.

When we judge others we are looking at the outward actions without knowing what's going on inside the person's heart. That's why we excuse ourselves based on our situations, but attribute others' miscues to character defects.

Today's Challenge: As you are tempted to judge others throughout the course of your day, remind yourself that you don't know enough about that person to judge them. That only God knows fully who that person is and why they do the things they do.

Path to humility Day 19: Why we shouldn't judge reason #2: The Bible forbids it

He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone

-- John 8:7

The second reason we shouldn't judge others is that the Bible expressly forbids it. *Let he who is without sin cast the first stone. Judge not lest ye be judged.* And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Romans 2:1 states *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.* Psalms 1 states that we should not "sit in the seat of the scornful." The book of James tells us not to praise God with our mouths but curse man who was made in God's image with the same mouth.

Why is the Bible so dead set against judgment? Because, when you break it down, that is the main message of scripture. Jesus came so that we could be forgiven for our sins INSTEAD of being judged. And that, my fellow brothers and sisters, is what we call the Good News, otherwise known as the gospel.

My mother, God bless her, was a wonderful person and someone who prided herself on her Jewish heritage. Outside of the apartment where she lived near the end of her life she had a multicolored lithograph with Hebrew writing and the English translation: “Justice, justice shalt thou pursue.”

As my mother was someone who devoted herself to being a lawyer who crusaded for the rights of people in nursing homes, I understand where she was coming from. However, I’m reminded of the story that someone asked God if He ever prayed, and God replied, “Yes, I pray every day that my need for justice is overshadowed by my desire for mercy.”

Today’s Challenge: As you go through your day, let your need for justice be overshadowed by your desire for mercy, remembering the Bible verses against judging others.

Path to humility Day 20: The 3rd reason to stop judging: We do the same thing

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

-- Romans 2:1

I had a client I worked with at the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, a woman who was complaining about her wife. “All she does is take take take,” she said. “And she takes no responsibility for any of her actions. Everything that happens to her is someone else's fault.” When I gently suggested

that sometimes the things we despise in others are the same things we do ourselves, she didn't make the connection *at all*. What I really wanted to say was, “Look, you do the exact same things you complain about your wife doing! Take take take but taking NO responsibility for your own actions? That's a perfect description of *you!*” But I didn't say that because it would have been unprofessional.

Being non-judgmental is one key to developing humility. When we stop judging others, we stop being as critical of ourselves. How many of you know that IT'S OK TO MAKE MISTAKES? This is true for leaders as well as those who have no fancy titles. Leaders should be understanding when those who they lead make mistakes, and those of us who are not in leadership should offer them the same grace. If we don't want to be held to the standard of perfect sheep, we shouldn't expect perfection of our shepherds either.

I personally, had a problem with a certain basketball player who I considered to be one of the most arrogant people on the planet. That said, I realize that I wouldn't have had a problem with said player's arrogance if I didn't have a little arrogance too. This points to another reason not to judge others.

The Sermon on the Mount talks about the mistake of trying to pull a splinter out of your brother's eye when a beam is in your own. The extent to which someone else's arrogance bothers you only shows your own lack of humility.

Today's Challenge: When someone's behavior irritates you today, ask yourself how you may be guilty of the same thing. Then forgive them and let the ill-effects of their behavior roll off of you like water off a duck's back.

Path to humility Day 21: The 4th reason we shouldn't judge others: They may be living up to their potential more than we are

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

-- Psalm 1:1

The fourth reason we shouldn't judge others is that, even if we're correct in our assessment of them that they are less advanced in their spiritual walk than we are, they might be living up to their potential more than we are living up to ours.

As we discussed in the previous devotional, it's clear that we shouldn't judge others because we don't know enough about who they are to judge fairly. But what if we are right? What if that other person is not at our level spiritually? That they haven't matured to the degree we have? We STILL shouldn't judge them! Why? Because, for all we know, they are living up to their potential more than we are.

Let's say we're a "7" when it comes to our humility and they're a "4". We could look down on them, but then we would fall to a "6". For surely we would be more humble if we didn't judge them. Besides, they could be performing to their potential better than we are. Given who they are and what they've been exposed to, a "4" could be OVER achieving for that individual and a "7" could be UNDER achieving for you. Maybe they should be a "2" and you should be a "9"? The point is, just because you're more advanced than someone doesn't mean your living up to your potential more than they are.

Today's Challenge: Look at the people who you judge as being spiritually immature. Now remember that those same people 1) may be more mature than you think, and 2) may be living up to their potential more than you -- even if you are right about them being less mature than you are.

Path to humility Day 22: The 5th reason to stop judging others: Because you don't want to be judged

Judge not lest ye be judged

– Matthew 7:1

We shouldn't judge others harshly because we don't want to be judged harshly, either by God, ourselves, or by others.

It's a psychological fact that the harsher we judge others, the harsher we will tend to judge ourselves. The more you use that little voice inside your head to judge others, the more harshly that little voice inside your head will judge you. The more you judge others, the greater will the judgment be on you.

Likewise, it is also true that the more you go around judging others, the more others will find fault with you. This is just a variation on the theme of karma, or what the Apostle Paul refers to in the sixth chapter of Galatians that we will "reap what we sow."

But beyond being judged by ourselves and others, none of us wants to face judgment when we die. That's because we'd all be found guilty. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus made it plain that even to think badly of others was a sin. And Jesus also points out that breaking one part of the law makes us guilty of breaking the whole Law. If you get pulled over for speeding, it won't do you any good to say "Well, officer, I haven't murdered anyone."*

The point is, we are all guilty of sin, and would all be condemned by the Law. That's why Jesus had to die for us on a cross. So that we could be forgiven.

*That said, it might help to ask him if he's offering to sell you tickets to the State Trooper's ball. Funny story. A woman gets pulled over by a state trooper and tells him "I know, you want to sell me two tickets to that state trooper's ball." To which the trooper replies "Lady, state troopers don't have balls." When the trooper realizes how his comment could be interpreted, he is so embarrassed he gets in his cruiser and drives away.

Today's Challenge: Whenever you are tempted to judge someone, remind yourself that you don't want to be judged harshly and that the less you judge others, the less you will be judged.

Path to humility Day 23: The path of thinking about how events are good for others instead of how they affect you

Humility does not mean thinking less of yourself than of other people, nor does it mean having a low opinion of your own gifts. It means freedom from thinking about yourself at all.

-- William Temple

Those of us who are self-aholics are constantly worried about how our own and other people's actions affect us. We base our decisions on how to deal with situations and other people on what we calculate will bring us the maximum benefit. We are repeatedly asking ourselves "How will this affect me?" When we stop focusing on ourselves and think about how our actions will affect others rather than worrying about how they will affect us – and how our actions will please the Lord rather than our selves -- we are on the road to a healthier psyche and a holier life.

When we become other- and God-focused, we transcend our need to have life revolve around us and we discover anew the plentiful blessings which God has showered upon us but that we were blind to when we were caught up in self. That's because when you are living under the tyranny of self, you are caught up with worrying about a) your "problems" (which, properly viewed, are "challenges") and b) your desire to have everything and everybody in your world line up with the way you want things to go.

It is only natural to think of ourselves. Society reinforces this in unhealthy ways, leading to the self-obsessed generation we are today. We are part of the "me" generation and we live in a world so self-absorbed we even have a popular

magazine called *Self*. All of this self-centeredness leads not to happiness, but unhappiness, as we fight the flow of Life and try to make it fit our needs and wants.

Thankfully, humility solves this problem for us, giving us the freedom to stop obsessing about ourselves. In his book *The Untethered Soul*, Michael Singer writes “Your inner growth is completely dependent upon the realization that the only way to find peace and contentment is to stop thinking about yourself.” As English theologian William Temple put it: “Humility does not mean thinking less of yourself than of other people, nor does it mean having a low opinion of your own gifts. It means freedom from thinking about yourself at all.”

Today’s Challenge: Think about those areas of your life where you’ve let “self” creep in. Now go through your day staying other- and God-focused, applying the humility that allows you not to think of yourself at all.

Path to humility Day 24: The path of putting self in perspective – little “i”s in a great big universe

You are living on a planet spinning around the middle of outer space

-- **The Untethered Soul by Michael Singer**

There’s a country song that says “I hope you still feel small when you stand beside the ocean.” As we’ve seen, we are but one small drop in an ocean of consciousness. Another way to put ourselves in perspective is to realize how small we are compared to the Universe. We all know that we are one of billions of people on planet Earth. But did you know that you could fit over one million three hundred thousand planets the size of the Earth inside of the sun? And that's just for starters. For there's a star called Antares that could fit 64 million stars the size of our sun inside of it. And then there's a star in the constellation of Hercules that is

100 million times as big as Antares! And - you guessed it - there's another star called Epsilon that could easily swallow up several million stars the size of the one in Hercules! It has been calculated that there are more stars in the universe than there are grains of sand in all of the beaches on the planet. All of this not to mention the vast expanse of space between these stars.

As Michael Singer puts it in *The Untethered Soul*, “You are living on a planet spinning around the middle of outer space, and you're either worrying about your blemishes, the scratch on your new car or the fact that you burped in public. It's not healthy. If your physical body were that sensitive, you would say you were sick. But our society considers psychological sensitivities normal.”

Today's Challenge: As you go through your day remind yourself that you are but one of billions of people living on a small planet in the middle of outer space. Use this to help you put your problems (I mean “challenges”) in perspective.

Path to humility Day 25 -- The path of forgiving our enemies

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

-- Matthew 5:44

The Dalai Lama, the religious leader of Tibet who now lives in exile in India, talks about the importance of forgiving and loving our enemies. This from a man whose country has been decimated by the Chinese, who have taken over his native land and killed 1.2 million of his people, including thousands of his fellow monks.

A concentration camp victim in Nazi Germany left the following message behind: “O Lord, Remember not only the men and women of good will but all

those of ill will. But do not remember all the suffering they have inflicted upon us; remember the fruits we have bought thanks to this suffering – our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility, our courage, our generosity, the greatness of heart which has grown out of all this; and when they come to judgment, let all the fruits we have borne be their forgiveness.”

And then of course there's Jesus. If he could forgive the people who mocked Him while crucifying Him, who are we to be judging? Remember Jesus on the Cross. He didn't say “Lord, reward them according to their works.” He said “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” If the Dalai Lama could forgive the Chinese for killing his brothers, if the concentration camp victim could forgive the Nazis who tortured and murdered her comrades, if Jesus could forgive those who crucified Him, who are we not to forgive somebody who said or did something we don't like?

This is especially heinous when we refuse to forgive our fellow church members. Our brothers and sisters in Christ who we see as “enemies.” When we fail to forgive a fellow Christian, we are crucifying Christ all over again! Jesus was judged and found wanting by the religious establishment and the Roman occupation of His day. Yet even when He was being crucified, Jesus didn't judge back. Jesus' legacy is forgiveness, not condemnation. When he said “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone,” no one threw a stone at the woman caught in adultery. Likewise, we ought not to be throwing stones at each other. We, as sinners saved by grace, ought not to be judging one another, trying to remove the splinters in our brothers' and sisters' eyes while a beam is in our own.

Today's Challenge: Think of all the people in your life who you consider an “enemy.” Then pray for them as if they were your closest friend, remembering Christ's words and the example of the Dalai Lama, the concentration camp victim and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Path to humility Day 26: Two paths to stop judging others

First, remove the beam out of your own eye, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye.

- *Matthew 7:5*

One way to stop judging our brothers and sister in Christ is to get busy for the Lord.

The famous theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer who was executed for trying to assassinate Adolph Hitler, said that soldiers who aren't at war will always wind up fighting each other. If you are busy judging everyone else's ministry, it's probably because you aren't out there doing kingdom work of your own. When you're on the front lines working for Christ, you don't have time to worry about who's getting the credit for one ministry or another. Look inside your heart right now and decide where you could grow in ministry, whether in the church or in the community.

A second way to stop judging others is to follow the golden rule. Jesus said that if you loved God with all your might and loved your neighbor as yourself and did so perfectly, you would wind up keeping all the commandments. The golden rule states “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” This, of course, is not as easy as it sounds. The secret to achieving this is by completely letting Christ reign in us. For while will-power will take us part of the way, the only way to love those we find unlovable is to lean on Christ and let Him have His way in us.

Today's Challenge: Think of how you can become more involved in ministry. Also do your best today to treat others as you would want to be treated – unless, of course, you are a masochist!

Path to humility Day 27: Forgive because the Bible commands it – and because you want to be forgiven

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us... FOR [emphasis added] if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

- **Matthew 6:12, 14-15**

Because we don't want to be judged, we need forgiveness. Forgiveness is the key to the Christian religion. It is the reason Jesus came down from Glory, so that we could be forgiven for our sins.

The Bible emphasizes two things more than anything else: Love and forgiveness. Forgiveness is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. After all, Jesus died on the cross specifically so that you and I could be forgiven our sins. Also the model prayer (otherwise known as the “Our Father” prayer) that Jesus taught his disciples to pray not only includes the line “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,” it is immediately followed by the phrase “FOR if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

The point here is that the “for” which comes after the “Amen” indicates that forgiveness is the most important part of the prayer. We Christians are to forgive others, NOT because they deserve it, but because we’ve been forgiven so much ourselves.

If it's a law of the universe that everything you do comes back to you, don't you want to put a little forgiveness out there? After all, you may be clicking on all cylinders today, but the day will come when you will slip and you will want someone to forgive you. Also, you may well be blind to the sins you commit. Remember that Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount that merely thinking bad thoughts was a sin. He didn't say this to make us feel bad, but because He wanted us to realize how much we all need the forgiveness that is only available to us through Jesus' work on the Cross.

Today's Challenge: Dust off the "fearless moral inventory" you did on Ash Wednesday as your daily challenge on the first day of these Lenten devotionals. (Or take one now if you failed to do it then.) Remind yourself of all your failings as Child of God and then think about the people in your life who you have not forgiven. Then forgive them, reminding yourself of all that you've been forgiven for.

Path to humility Day 28: The three keys to putting yourself in perspective

Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking about yourself less.

- C.S. Lewis

There are three keys to putting ourselves in perspective: 1) We should not think too highly of ourselves, 2) we should not think too low of ourselves, and 3) we should not think of ourselves too often. C.S. Lewis stated: "Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking about yourself less." While it is obvious that humility helps keep us from thinking of ourselves too highly or too often, it also inspires a healthy self-respect. When we are thinking about ourselves from a place of humility, we realize that we, like everything else God has created, have a vital role to play in His universe.

Once we realize we are not the center of the universe, we are free to enjoy the wonder of it all. Life is then seen as the great gift it is. Something to be cherished and shared with our friends and families. Knowing that we are able to have a relationship with the Creator of such a vast and mysterious universe should fill us with a sense of awe and gratitude. When we accept our place in the universe, we feel thankful for the part God has chosen us to play in His creation.

Today's challenge: Go through your day being thankful for all the blessings Almighty God has bestowed upon you. Remember that, while you are not the center of the universe, God has given you a great role to play in His creation.

Path to humility Day 29: The path of healthy self-esteem Part I.

I will praise You because I have been fearfully and wonderfully made.

- *Psalm 139:14*

While humility is an important lesson for those of us who think too highly of ourselves, some of us have the opposite problem: We suffer from a low self-esteem that causes us to think negatively about ourselves. While this may not seem to be a humility issue, it is, in that it involves thinking of oneself too much (albeit negatively). There are several paths to put your life in perspective if this is your problem.

The one we will concentrate on today is the path of recognizing you are the product of champion sperm.

You are a champion. You are the product of a champion sperm so successful he beat out up to 1.2 *billion* other sperm in the race to fertilize your mother's egg. The product of two people who God put in each other's paths so that they could come together out of all the billions of people on the planet.

And if the fact that you are the product of a one-in-a-billion sperm isn't enough of a miracle for you (a birth that would not have happened at all if, for instance, your father had gotten up to get a glass of water or your parents were practicing safe sex), just do the math and you'll realize how miraculous your birth truly was. For as improbable as that may have been, for *your* miraculous birth to have occurred, both of your parents had to have been born the same miraculous way!

Now I'm not a math wizard, but it doesn't take Albert Einstein to figure out that this same improbable scenario had to play itself out not just with your parents, but with all four of your grandparents, who had to meet at the exactly right time, with all eight of your great-grandparents, with all 16 of your great-great-grandparents, with all 32 of your great-great-great-grandparents, and so on into the unknowable past. That, in fact, if just ONE of your ancestors going back to the dawn of mankind had failed to follow the divine plan – because who could argue in the face of these astronomical odds that your birth was anything less than God's divine plan – you would not be reading these words as you were so obviously predestined to do.

Today's Challenge: If you find yourself feeling down at any point today, remind yourself that you are a miracle. A one in a zillion product of a long line of champion sperm. Then remind yourself that everyone you meet today is just such a champion as well -- and treat them that way.

**Path to humility Day 30: The path of healthy esteem Part II --
recognizing your value to God**

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

-- Matthew 10:29-31

The Bible says God has numbered the very hairs on our heads. The Bible also says that we are the pinnacle of creation. That God created humankind in His image on the sixth day of creation. God wrote the Bible through humans and for humans. That in itself speaks volumes about how much He cares for us. As does the fact that He sent down His only begotten Son to die on a cross for us so that we could be forgiven our sins. To say nothing of the gift of the Holy Spirit which is available to no other creature on this Earth.

From a scientific perspective, you and I are the pinnacle of evolution. It took God literally billions of years of evolution to produce a being capable of worshipping (and, in some cases, rejecting) a Higher Power.

Buddhists in general and the Dalai Lama in particular talk about being thankful for our human birth as it affords us the opportunity to attain enlightenment. We humans take it for granted that we are at the top of the food chain, the most highly evolved species on the planet. We have all kinds of benefits that come from our ability to cooperate and share our gifts with one another. Our homes, our automobiles, our technology -- even our clothes which are often made in other lands -- are all examples of the benefits we 21st century humans enjoy.

Of course we also suffer in ways that no other species does. Our ability to choose to worship God also affords us the opportunity to reject Him. And without a proper sense of humility, our self-consciousness can cause us to suffer unnecessarily.

Today's challenge: Remind yourself how much God loves you. Then put on the garment of humility and enjoy all of the benefits that come from being a Holy-Ghost-filled Child of God, all the while looking to share the Good News with those who have yet to be saved.

Path to humility Day 31: Humility To The Rescue

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

- *James 4:10*

We talked back on Day 6 about “Consumerism.” How it is the religion of materialism, and how the two questions it has us asking ourselves (“What can I get out of life – and am I getting enough?” and “What do other people think of me?”) lead to so much unhappiness.

If Consumerism is to blame for making us so selfish and self-conscious, humility is the antidote, as it attacks the root cause of both of these self-diseases: The pre-Copernican notion that the world revolves around us. As you'll recall from world history class, Nicolas Copernicus broke the news that the Earth revolves around the Sun back in 1616 when he published *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*.

As you may also recall, this news was not well received by the Catholic Church, who banned it for the next two centuries. Yet today no one would argue that the Sun revolves around the Earth. Still, when it comes to how we live our lives, we act as if Copernicus was a dolt, ignoring a lesson so obvious it screams: “If the Sun does not revolve around the Earth, THE WORLD DOES NOT REVOLVE AROUND US!”

Thinking the world revolves around us causes major problems for many reasons, not the least of them being that we are mortal, and if the world revolves around us, then the world is going to end when we die.

What we need to do is put ourselves in perspective. The world does not revolve around us. We are not the center of the universe. No matter what our mothers may have told us when we were little. While this may seem harsh to our narcissistic ears, it is actually quite freeing. Not having to be the center of the universe takes a great weight off of our shoulders, and we are free to go through our days without having to make Life fit into our own personal agenda. Free to allow ourselves to experience Life in all its fullness without trying to protect ourselves from the natural flow of events.

Today's challenge: Use your humility to keep from fighting Life today. Instead of being two people – the self who needs protection and the one who is protecting your self image – allow yourself just to experience Life with gratitude, not worrying about having to defend yourself at all. Allow yourself the freedom just to accept Life as it comes.

Path to humility for Maundy Thursday: The path of serving others

After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.... -- John 13:5

So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

-- John 13:12-15

Perhaps the most famous example of humility in the New Testament is Jesus washing the disciples' feet. One of the most powerful paths to humility is to perform some humble act of self-sacrifice. By lowering oneself to the level of a humble servant, you rise higher in the kingdom. Jesus said that in His kingdom the servant is greatest. That's because Christ's kingdom flips the values of our earthly kingdoms on their head. Society tells us that the masters are greater than the servants. Christ reminds us that in His kingdom it is the other way around. Christian humility is not merely a form of meditation as it might be in other religions, but requires action.

Back in Bible times, foot washing was a necessity. The streets were dusty and folk walked around in sandals without socks or stockings. So washing them meant getting your hands dirty. Wives often washed their husband's feet. Children washed their parents' feet. Servants washed their masters' feet. For Jesus to wash the disciples' feet was a profound role-reversal. Hence Peter's reaction in verse 8 that "Thou shalt never wash my feet."

In verse 15 Jesus says He washes the disciples' feet as an "example," a word which is translated from the Greek *hypodeigma* which means "pattern." Jesus wasn't concerned about foot fungus or shiny toenails. It was the inner humility required to get down and dirty that He was highlighting. Humbling oneself in this way may not seem attractive to us, but it will be rewarded with the kind of inner peace that passes all understanding.

Today's challenge: "Wash someone's feet" today by serving them in whatever way you can find.

Path to humility Good Friday: The path of reminding ourselves of the price Jesus paid for OUR sins on the cross

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do -- Luke 23:34

We Christians are blessed to have at our disposal one of the greatest ways to humble ourselves that members of other faith traditions don't have. That is to remind ourselves what sinners we are and how our sin (your sin, not someone else's) cost Jesus the ultimate price on the cross 2000 years ago.

Right now I'd like you to take a moment and focus on what Christ did for you on the cross. Note the nails in his wrists and ankles. Think of the tremendous pain he went through as the crowd mocked him. The very sinners who Christ was dying for, jeering him and laughing at his agony. Remember His words "Forgive them Lord, for they know not what they do." Now remember that those words are directed to you personally every time you sin.

While it is humbling to remind ourselves that our sin cost Jesus the ultimate price on the Cross -- not merely the pain of crucifixion but the awful moment when God had to look away from Him as Jesus took on all sin and disease -- it is vital to remember that through Christ's work on the Cross we have forgiveness for all of those sins we have committed. For the story of Jesus on the Cross is not one of tragedy, but of triumph!

Today's Challenge: As you go through your day, humble yourself by remembering what your sin cost Christ on the Cross. Then rejoice, knowing that through His redeeming work you are forgiven for your sins and have everlasting life!