

Step 5: "He Humbled Himself"

Isaiah 64:8–9

8 Yet now Yahweh, you are our father;
**we are the clay and you are our potter,
and we all are the work of your hand.**

9 You must not be exceedingly angry, Yahweh,
and you must not remember iniquity forever!
Look! Behold, now!
We all are your people!

- **"I am clay,"** wrote Missionary author **Elisabeth Elliot** as she mused over **Isaiah 64**, the passage that pictures us as vessels in the Potter's hand. **"The word "humble" comes from the root word humus, earth, clay," she wrote.** ¹
- **We are encouraged to turn to the HUMBLE for our comfort and truth.**

Psalm 40:title–8

For the music director. Of David. A psalm.

1 I waited patiently for Yahweh,

And he inclined to me and heard my cry for help.

2 And so he brought me up from the roaring pit, from the miry clay.

And he put my feet upon a rock; he made my steps steady.

3 Then he put a new song in my mouth, a praise to our God.

Many will see and fear,

and will trust Yahweh.

4 Blessed is the man who makes Yahweh his trust

and does not turn to the proud and to those who fall away to a lie.

5 Many things, O Yahweh my God, you have done—

your wonderful deeds and your thoughts toward us.

There is none to compare with you. If I tried to proclaim and tell of them, they would be too numerous to count.

6 A sacrifice and offering you do not desire.

My ears you have opened.

Burnt offering and sin offering you have not demanded.

7 Then I said, "Look, I come.

In the scroll of the book it is written concerning me:

8 'I delight to do your will,

O my God, and your law is deep within me.' "

8 And being found in appearance as a man,

¹ Robert J. Morgan, *Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes*, electronic ed., 458 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000).

He humbled Himself

and became obedient to the point of death,
even the death of the cross.

Note the descending progression:

“A most Holy, Eternal, Beautiful, God – a plain, homely, common man – a mortal man – a framed, condemned, cursed man – a dying a cursed, lowest degree death.” (RWP)

He humbled Himself and became

- **5013. ταπεινῶ tapeinōō**; contracted *tapeinōō*, fut. *tapeinōōsō*, from *tapeinōs* (5011), humble. To humble, bring low: ²
 - **Humbled (5013) = low, not high, figuratively of one's attitude/social position) literally means to level, to cause something to be lower or to make low.**
 - **Tapeinoo means to bow down, to make low, to humble.**
- Becoming a man was humbling
- Becoming “in appearance as a man” – very humbling
 - “Couldn't I have been a good looking man at least?”
- Taking the lowest station of mankind – a slave - most humbling
- And no one believed Him

John 1:10–11

10 He was in the world,
and the world was made through Him,
and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own,
and His own did not receive Him.

John 7:5 For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

Isaiah 53:1–4 (LEB)

1 Who has believed our message,
and to whom has the arm of Yahweh been revealed?

2 For he went up like a shoot before him,
and like a root from dry ground.

He had no form and no majesty

that we should see him,
and no appearance

that we should take pleasure in him.

3 He was despised and rejected by men,

a man of suffering,

and acquainted with sickness,

and like one from whom others hide their faces,

he was despised,

and we did not hold him in high regard.

4 However, he was the one who lifted up our sicknesses,

and he carried our pain,

yet we ourselves assumed him stricken,

struck down by God and afflicted. ³

- **Note please:**

- **It is a voluntary humiliation on the part of Christ** and for this reason Paul is pressing the example of Christ upon the Philippians, this supreme example of renunciation. ⁴

Proverbs 15:33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, And before honor is humility.

“Humility does not consist simply in thinking cheaply of oneself, so much as in not thinking of oneself at all—and of Christ more and more.”

—Keith Brooks ⁵

“The humble man feels no jealousy or envy. He can praise God when others are preferred and blessed before him. He can bear to hear others praised while he is forgotten because... he has received the spirit of Jesus who pleased not himself, and who sought not His own honor.”

—Andrew Murray ⁶

Humbled or humiliated?

- People will often say they have been **humiliated**
 - Usually at the hands of another person.
 - Only people will ever humiliate another person.
 - God NEVER humiliates His children.

³ W. Hall Harris III et al., eds., *The Lexham English Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Is 53:1–4.

⁴ A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Php 2:8 (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933).

⁵ Robert J. Morgan, *Nelson’s Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes*, electronic ed., 455 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000).

⁶ Robert J. Morgan, *Nelson’s Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes*, electronic ed., 456 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000).

We are called to humble ourselves!

- Jesus humbled Himself! – did you note that?
 - **He humbled Himself** - We read later that God exalted Him but here it is clear that this was Jesus' voluntary choice. He willingly and graciously did this Himself. He was not forced. He offered Himself to death! While believers cannot humble themselves in the same way, they can humble themselves by dying to self. ⁷

James 4:10 **Humble yourselves before the Lord,**
and he will exalt you.

1 Peter 5:5–7

5 In the same way, younger men, be subject to the elders,
and all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another,
because God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

6 **Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God,**

so that he may exalt you at the right time,

7 casting all your cares on him, because he cares for you.

Choosing the lower station in order to serve others

Choosing to stay a lower rank until other promote you, not yourself.

Choosing the back seat

Choosing for others to get the recognition, the trophy, the medals of honor.

Choosing others to precede you in line

Sharing what you have even if it means you give it all away

Giving out of your lack

- Seats on the railway, the subway, the bus

Lacking BECAUSE of your giving

- Identity born out of what God calls you, not out of what others call you!
- Strength in your Godly identity.
 - That fights a mob mentality
 - That stands when others kneel
 - That kneels when others stand
 - Prays out loud when others pray silently

- **J. Vernon McGee:** “One of the finest things I ever heard about John Wesley was concerning an incident when he was about to cross a brook over which was a very narrow bridge, just wide enough for one person. As

he was starting over, he met a liberal preacher of that day. This preacher swelled up and said, “I never give way to a fool.” John Wesley looked at him for a moment, smiled, and began to back off, saying, “I always do.” My friend, it is difficult to take that humble place, but it has made me think a great deal more of John Wesley.” ⁸

Proverbs 29:23 A man's pride will bring him low,
But the humble in spirit will retain honor.

Isaiah 66:2 For all those things My hand has made,
And all those things exist,”
Says the Lord.
“But on this one will I look:
On him who is **humble (poor)**
and of a contrite spirit,
And who trembles at My word.

6041 עָנִי [*‘aniy /aw-nee/*] adj. From 6031; TWOT 1652d; GK 6714; 80 occurrences; AV translates as “poor” 58 times, “afflicted” 15 times, “lowly” once, “man” once, and “variant” three times.

1 poor, afflicted, humble, wretched.

1A poor, needy.

1B poor and weak.

1C poor, weak, afflicted, wretched.

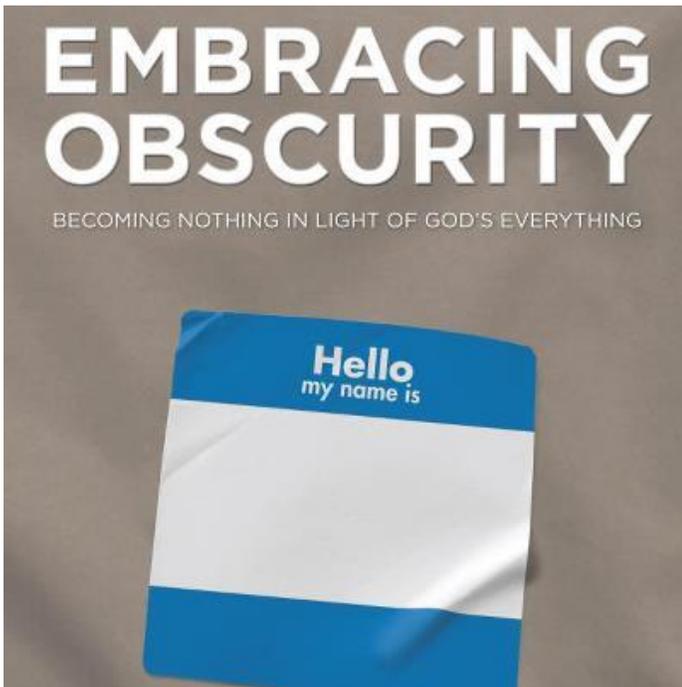
1D humble, lowly.⁹

Zephaniah 3:12 I will leave in your midst
A meek and humble people,
And they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

The “Pursuit of Obscurity”

⁸ J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 303–304.

⁹ James Strong, *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon* (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995).



A recent book with the Christian author – “Anonymous”

His suggestions to “embrace obscurity”:

- Practically, day-to-day... This little list hangs where I'll see it often, reminding me to use the spotlight for the right reasons and in the right ways:
 - **My purpose is not to praise myself.**
 - **My purpose is not to make my name great.**
 - **My purpose is not to get rich.**
 - **My purpose is not to gain authority over others for my ego's sake.**
 - **My purpose is not to leave brothers and sisters in the dust of my ambition.**
 - **My purpose is not to make others feel small.**
 - **My purpose is not to become self-sufficient.**
 - **My purpose is not to earn a five-star rating from the masses.**

Anonymous: “The day the book came out, there was no fanfare, no congratulatory shindig, no one to tell me “good job” or “aren't you clever.” There was just me, and the One who has always taught by example—the One who Himself chose obscurity for my sake and yours. It was ironic, and freeing, and right. And while I've still wrestled with wanting to know what readers have thought about the book, this genuinely has been a whole new paradigm. Instead of worrying about star rating, I'm addicted to the freedom found in embracing my own obscurity.”