

Humility Assessment

Read over this list. Circle the ones that seem 'very true'.

1. I daydream about being admired, desired or appreciated.
2. In meetings I am alert to whether my name will be brought up.
3. I find it difficult to do something good without expecting praise.
4. I often fantasize about being special.
5. I get irritated when I'm not consulted.
6. I fear being embarrassed.
7. I often have the sense that I'm getting a raw deal.
8. I am pretty confident in my ability to guess other people's motives.
9. I get angry when my goals are blocked.
10. I spend a lot of time criticizing myself.
11. I get very agitated when people criticize me.
12. I can become very sad or angry when I've been forgotten.
13. When I am wronged, it's all I can think about.
14. When other people are praised I think critical thoughts about them and/or fret about why I haven't been praised like this.
15. When I am disappointed, I don't often think about God being good & in charge.
16. I spend most of my down time thinking about how I can get what I want.
17. I'm pretty defensive in conflict but it's only because they are attacking me.
18. I am not that easy to please.
19. I tend to notice little faults.
20. I tend to zoom in on what I disagree with when others talk.
21. I'm opinionated.
22. I'm a man-pleaser.
23. I tend to change my behavior rather than apologize.
24. I am impatient.
25. I feel like I know myself pretty well but others don't often seem to agree.
26. I have a lot of luck just trusting my gut.
27. I believe in the slogan, "Lead, follow or get out of the way," except for the 'lead' part.
28. I often discuss people's faults and errors with others.
29. I tend to complain about society, government, and other people in conversation.
30. I probably do not make it easy for people to complain about me.
31. I interrupt or talk over others.
32. I am often thinking about what I'll say while someone else is talking.
33. I don't spend much time pondering others.
34. I don't have much room in my schedule to help others out with things.
35. I don't spend much time pondering God.

Morbid Introspection vs. Self-examination

Sometimes when we talk about our sin with others, they warn us against morbid introspection. Is there a difference between reflection and honesty about personal sin and morbidity? Yes! There is a huge difference. Morbid introspection is self-focused and, at its root, prideful. Honest self-appraisal is rooted in the grace of God. Morbid introspection focuses on failed righteousness. Honest self-appraisal focuses is anchored in the passive righteousness we enjoy in Christ.

Self-examination is biblical

The Bible often challenges us to self-assess through **command** (2 Cor 13:5; Hagg. 1:5-7); **instruction** which always invites self-reflection (e.g. 1 John; James; Galatians; Ephesians; Colossians, etc.); **example** (e.g. laments about personal sin {Pss.32, 51, 73}; laments where the sufferer justifies themselves to God {Job; most other Psalms of lament} and through its frequent **emphasis on our motives** (e.g., Matt. 6:1ff.; Phil. 1:15-17; Jas. 4:3; the log/mote lesson). How can we repent if we fail to recognize our sin and the deeper pride that drives it? I not only agree that my angry outburst is wrong but that it is rooted in the pride of insisting on my own way and the hope I have in something other than God. Such insights do not sanctify but are important in order to cooperate with the Spirit who is sanctifying.

Morbid introspection is prideful

It is obsessed with self and self-performance. It does not turn outward toward God and others. It is as ugly as self-righteousness - reverse side of the same coin. "I'm right/innocent" & "I am a horrible person" are both focused on self-abilities. The one is self-congratulatory, the other is self-condemning. But, we need to think less about ourselves and hope less in ourselves focusing/trusting more upon God.

Consider the following insights from others:

"Many get stuck on their own fault and they shift back and forth excusing and then accusing themselves. "Remorse and regret are a part of the self-salvation project." Keller, Prodigal God

"Sin turns you in on yourself, blinding you to God... Self-loathing exalts your opinion of yourself as supremely important; shame exalts the opinion of other people. But...what God chooses to "remember" about you is decisive. Your conscience, if well-tuned, is...dependent on the stance He takes."
David Powlison from, Making All Things New

"What's the difference between examining oneself and becoming introspective? I suggest that we cross the line from self-examination to introspection when...we do nothing but examine ourselves, and when such self-examination becomes the main and chief end in our life."

Lloyd-Jones *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Its Cure*

"A person who tends toward Religious OCD is often characterized by a demand for certainty. This person finds ambiguity intolerable, especially with reference to whether he has done something wrong. "This introspection is where he gets stuck in a cycle of self-trust and self-focus, desperately seeking to find relief from feelings of guilt and condemnation. The problem with this kind of introspection is that it is all about the self." (he) "...wants what God alone possesses: omniscience...On these occasions, the scrupulous person has put himself in his own dreadfully incapable hands instead of the hands of the God who executes all that he plans, which means that God's hands cannot fail.

From <http://thebcd.org/religious-ocd-and-morbid-introspection/>

For further reflection:

A Primer on Pride, Naugle <http://www.cslewis.com/a-primer-on-pride/>

C.S. Lewis on Humility (and Pride,) Lindsley,
http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/C.S._Lewis_on_Humility_and_Pride

Humble Roots, Hannah Anderson

Humility, Andrew Murray

Humility: Wellspring of Virtue, Dietrich von Hildebrand

Lost in the Middle, Paul Tripp

Mistakes Were Made (but not by me): Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions, and Hurtful Acts, Carol Tavis

Pride and Humility, Tarrant http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/Pride_and_Humility_SinglePage

Reclaiming Love, Adjith Fernando

Religious OCD and Morbid Introspection, Brent Osterberg <http://thecbcd.org/religious-ocd-and-morbid-introspection/>

Seeing the Face of God, Thomas

The Prideful Soul's Guide to Humility, Jones & Fontenot

The Release of the Spirit, Watchman Nee

The Short Sayings of Jesus: Humility and Exaltation, Gary Delashmutt
<http://m.xenos.org/teachings/teaching.php?id=3762>

Thinking Fast and Slow, Kahneman

Why do we start with humility, Welch <https://www.ccef.org/video/why-do-we-start-with-humility/>