

Humility (2)

We will continue our discussion about the virtue of humility. After we learned about humility and how to come near to it, it is important for us to know :

* **Some of the important characters of the humble person:**

1 – A humble person is a radiant image of Christ, he is filled with grace and the light of the Lord shines on his face.

Once, the disciples of St. Pakhomius asked him to describe some of the revelations and divine visions that he sees, so he answered: “A sinner like myself doesn’t see heavenly revelations, but if you want to behold a divine scene, search for a man who is humble at heart and pure, and you should not seek any scene better than this.

2 – A humble person is very strong because he relies on God, unlike the arrogant who is on his own without the grace of God. So he is actually weak, no matter how much his personal capabilities are, but the humble is mighty because he has all the capabilities of God.

One day the devils came to St. Macarius the great screaming at him: Macarius! You are causing us great grief. You are keeping fast - we don’t eat at all, you are keeping awake - we never sleep, you live in the wilderness - we do too, but there is one thing, however, in which you surpassed us. “And what is that?” - asked the saint. The devils replied: “It is your humility, it is for this reason that we cannot cope with you and you overcame us. The saints lift his hands to pray so the devils were scalded and disappeared.

3 – The humble is a resting place for the Spirit of God and a dwelling place for Him. The history of the desert fathers tells us about St. Zechariah, who grew up as a monk with his father Abba Qarion, that Saint Moses the Black once saw him praying beside a well and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Saint Moses approached him and asked: Father, tell me what should I do to be saved? Saint Zechariah prostrated at the feet of St Moses and said to him: O father, do you ask me? Abba Moses replied: Believe me my son, Zechariah, I saw the Spirit of God upon you and this is why I am asking you. Abba Zechariah took off his monastic head cover and trampled over it with his feet, then he picked it up and put it over his head again and said: If the monk is not meek and humble like this head cover, he will not be saved.

4 – The humble flees from the devils, therefore they can’t conquer him because the devil is arrogant and he cannot bow down, so when we humble ourselves and bow down, we become out of his reach.

One day, Abba Anthony saw the snares of the devils setup over all the earth, so he became troubled and sighed within his heart, saying: Oh Lord, who can escape from this? So he heard a voice saying to him: The humble escape.

* **How do we acquire humility?**

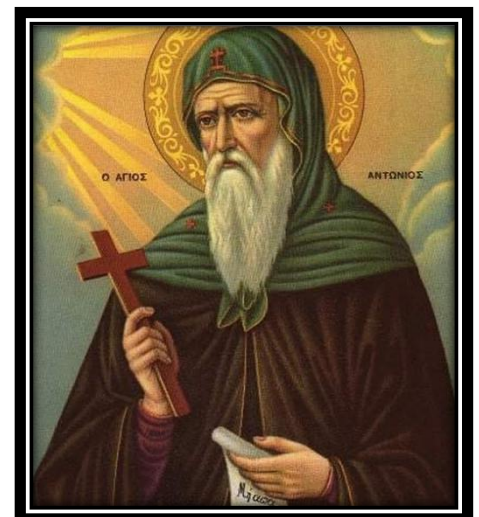
First: By practicing obedience. Obedience is a key element to humility because through it man gives up his opinion and his own will to follow the will of others, and this self-denial leads the soul to be meek. The advice of the saintly fathers to us is: To pay heed to obedience more than asceticism because obedience leads to humility, but excess in asceticism may lead man to pride and boasting.

Second: By carrying out humble acts, we acquire humility. Our hearts become humbled when we carry out simple activities or acts that are despised by others.

Third: To endure insults. This is one of the best exercises to acquire humility. Sometimes God allows some insults and humiliations to come our way specifically to be humbled. When God sees our strife to endure in thanksgiving, he grants us the grace of true humility. As St. Pachomius said that grief and humiliation is the Cautery [Hot iron] that Jesus uses to heal us from the disease of pride. To endure insults, we naturally need great strength which we can take from God through prayers.

Fourth: Doing things in secret. One of the most interesting spiritual exercises is to do good deeds in secret for the sake of our Father who sees in secret and wishes to have a very close and personal relationship with each one of us. St. Isaac the Syrian says that any good deed will not be accepted by God unless it is performed in secret. That is to say we ought to only seek God’s acceptance and not the praise of others, which causes man to be deprived from his heavenly reward.

Because of this, Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded us to give in secret, to choose the lowest place, and to fast and pray in secrete... So that only God sees us and rewards us for our love and humility...



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