

Pastor's Note

Hello

This week Tina and I are traveling out of the country on a trip we've been planning for our 25th anniversary. As a Christian nation, the United States of America has a rather sad reputation among the ports of the world. Most people's experience with traveling Americans today is not very flattering to the Christian faith. American tourists are generally considered quite arrogant and very self-centered. James 4:10 says, "*Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*"

Humility is something we do. It's not a way we feel. Humility is an action, not a style or a mindset. Let's say you find your friend sitting at their desk, and you ask them about their health. "How are you feeling? I know you've been working on getting in shape. Tell me about your fitness program." They might reply, "Thanks for asking. I am actually exercising at this exact moment. I'm thinking a lot of exercising thoughts, and I'm remembering right now what it feels like when I exercise. I'm actually quite exercised about my exercising thoughts, and I feel the euphoric feeling you get when you exercise." You may say to your friend, "You appear to be a few fries short of a Happy Meal here. Thinking about it isn't going to get it done, how about you get up and actually do some exercising." Exercise isn't something you feel, it's something you do.

The same thing is true of serving. Let's say at your house, she does the grocery shopping. (I'm sure it's only because you were fired from grocery shopping because of all the extra stuff that was not on the list that still made it home with you every week.) Now imagine that she comes home from the store and starts carrying bags of groceries in, back and forth, back and forth, while you just sit there serenely watching. She might look at you expectantly and wonder if you're planning to help. If you announce, "I'm thinking helpful thoughts right now," She might be tempted to tell you, "That's so not helpful! Get up and help me." Why? Because helping isn't something you feel, it's something you do.

Thinking about exercising isn't the same thing as doing exercises. Thinking about helping isn't the same as actually helping. As Christians, claiming to be humble because we think humble thoughts is equally absurd. We present Jesus to the world as the most humble person to have ever lived. We tell the world that as Christians we are trying to be like Jesus. But our reputation in the world has not really re-presented Christ very well. As Christians we cannot merely think about being humble. That's

not humility. Humility is losing ourselves in the doing of serving. Not thinking about ourselves at all. When Jesus washed the disciples' feet in John 13, He wasn't thinking, *Check out this humility. I feel so humble right now. I bet the disciples are awestruck by My humility.*

Actually we are never told to be humble in the bible. Not once. It's never "be humble" or "think humble thoughts." It's always, "humble yourself."

James 4:10 *"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you."* It's something we do. 1 Peter 5:6 *"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you."* In fact, after Jesus finished modeling humble service by washing the disciples' dirty feet, He told them to follow His example and serve one another, and then He added in, John 13:17 *"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."* Humbling yourself is an action, not a concept. This week Tina and I will be doing what we can to re-present the faith (and American tourists) by humbling ourselves as we encounter others in the world. As you go out in your daily life and re-present Jesus and the faith, show the world around you what Christians are really like by humbling yourself before those you encounter this week.

Blessings,

Scott

