

# Shaking The Tree Of Knowledge

*By Steve Phinney*

Jesus said ...*How can you BELIEVE when you receive glory (gk: recognition) from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?*

I have been in the service of Christ for over 36 years and in His ministry as a profession for almost 30 of those years. What have I learned? Too much! My addiction to knowledge, words and man made degrees of men has formed in me a pride that replicates God.

I know by knowledge, that true fulfillment is found in humility and obedience in Christ. However—my heart continues to find recognition from man. The result was being faced with God shaking the “tree of knowledge” until I feel out. Where did this insatiable “need” for recognition and push for more knowledge come from? Well, I have been asking that question of God for many years. Due to rejection issues this past year, I believe I have been given some clear answers. The pursuit of knowledge by searching the scriptures can be a surrogate father to the fatherless. The result was, I fell into a pattern of attempting to find life in words and thus not truly being able to BELIEVE. Moreover, of course, the one who does not truly believe another cannot experience intimacy with that significant other.

Jesus said . . . *You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness; and you are unwilling to come to Me that you may have life. **John 5:39-40***

The final resting place for this “tree of knowledge” stuff is the battlefield of PRIDE. Pride says that the strength of self-condemnation or self-denial is the key to humility. God’s view of humility is to release His Son within us to demonstrate that His Son . . .

- † Can do NOTHING of Himself—John 5:19
- † Can do NOTHING without His Father—John 5:30
- † Will NOT accept recognition from man—John 5:41
- † Will NOT do His own will—John 6:38
- † Will NOT teach His own sermons—John 7:16
- † Does NOT come in His own name—John 8:42
- † Will NOT use His own words—John 14:24

Now let me get this straight—if Christ Himself can do nothing, won’t accept man’s credentials, will not do His own will, teach His own messages or use His own words without the Father doing it through Him, what right do I think I have coming us with my own stuff.

Humility is the relationship between creation and the Creator—that the created one says to the Creator, *I am nothing and You are all.*

Creation is birthed from the image that is rooted in the heart and mind of the Creator. Humility is the state of a vessel that remains weak and willing in order to allow the redemptive work of the Father to pour itself through the vessel, with the understanding that the vessel will not and cannot get in the way. Weakness = willingness and willingness = HUMILITY.

Humility comes with a steep price tag—my life. Humility cannot be fully embraced without an experiential exchange of life—mine for His and His for mine. I pretty much know what He is going to do with mine, but

the real question is; what will I do with His?

I have been an artist most of my life, sketching, painting, sculpturing and graphic designing. Each "creative" piece I would come up with, deep down inside, I knew this creativity came from a source other than myself—that I was not the real author. People would compliment me and I would take ever once of credit they would offer, knowing I was not the true creator. Because I did not learn how to read or write until I met my wife, I was not accustomed to receiving acceptance through academia. This created two problems, one; attempting gain acceptance through what I did know—art and second; once I was able to read and write, I found myself driven to prove myself in knowledge, being a "know it all". Pride was born!

One of my great revelations in life has been; proud and arrogant people are insecure about others seeing their weaknesses, that pride somehow becomes a fake and useless shield to protect them from further rejection—the arrogant person not realizing that pride actually invites more rejection. In fact, the worst kind, withholding love and acceptance.

People in general despise arrogance. They know intuitively that it is impossible to get close to proud people, so they use their "know it all" to gain the needed knowledge and then discard them. Why do we do this? Because arrogant people are deceitful people, like Paul (2 Corinthians 12:16), they are difficult to have relationship with. Even though we should commend one another, we classically compel boastful types to be foolish (2 Corinthians 12:11). The result, proud people find it lonely at the top.

Humility is our passage to participate in the life of others and most critically, our Husband—Christ Jesus. Once accepted by Him, we shall recognize our true no-ability, that our Husband is on a mission to accomplish His Fathers will through us. Humility makes this possible.

Have you ever noticed that the times we try to prove our humility, it leads to humiliation? I certainly have! To stop God from proving our humanity, we must walk in humility—not proving what has already been proven.

The difference between "religion" and Christianity is rooted in the parameters of humility. "Religion" makes claims or proves what it believes, while Christianity rests in the beliefs of the One who has already proven what is true. It is difficult, if not impossible, to have intimacy with someone who is always trying to prove something.

How can the Bride of Christ have intimacy with their Husband (Christ) if we do not join Him in His humility—that He functions within in order for He Himself to experience intimacy with His Father. Since our Husband is a gentle man, He will not attempt an intercourse of action with His Bride if she is resisting Him with a devilish pride.

My humility starts with embracing my weakness and then boasting of them (2 Corinthians 12:9). To prove that humility is in ones soul is the same act of proving that one is foolish. To acknowledge weakness is functioning in the credentials of the heavenlies.

