

The Way of Christ

“LEARN FROM ME,
FOR I AM MEEK AND HUMBLE OF HEART.”

Jesus Christ
(Matt. 11:29)

HUMILITY comes from the Latin word “humus” which means earth/ground. Humility has to do with bringing our proud flesh low to the earth, on our knees, before the God of love who created us. Humility has to do with getting our “love life” in order. Our free will is our loving power, but because of sin, our wills are defective. Therefore, on our knees, we must return our free will to God and ask for His will of perfect love. Thus, by the grace of God, we begin the process of cleaning up our way of loving. Only then can we fulfill the law of love—

*“You shall love the Lord your God
with your whole heart,
and with your whole soul,
and with your whole mind,
and with all your strength.”*

*“You shall love
your neighbor as yourself.”*

(Mark 12:30-31)

MEEKNESS has to do with putting another self before my own self. A meek person is slow to anger, and even when angry is able, by the grace of God, to control the anger so as not to hurt another person. A meek person is gentle, kind, and forgiving. A meek person is a good listener. In Latin, obedience means “to listen to.” In meekness of heart, we become obedient to God, in that we are disposed “to listen to” the Holy Spirit who speaks silently in our hearts.

With the HUMILITY of Jesus Christ we can begin to love God as He is worthy of being loved. With the MEEKNESS of Jesus Christ we can begin to love our neighbor as ourself. These virtues of Jesus must be asked for and practiced together.

HOW DO I OFFER MY FREE WILL TO GOD,
SO THAT I CAN TURN MY LIFE OVER TO HIM?

Follow these four steps.

“The Four Step Prayer”

1. Get on your knees. (Know that you are coming before that great God who created you.)
2. Ask God the Father for the meekness and humility of His Son, Jesus Christ.
3. Ask God the Father to take your will.
4. Ask Him for His will in return.

For example, when kneeling pray—

**“Heavenly Father,
please grant me the
meekness and humility of Your Son,
Jesus Christ.
Please take my will,
Heavenly Father.
Please grant me Your will
in return.
Amen.”**

Or, you can pray—

**“Dear Lord,
please give me the humility
and meekness of Jesus.
Please take my will
and give me Your will
in return.
Amen.”**

Practice this the first thing in the morning “to set your spiritual clock right,” which means, to align your heart and soul with God. Repeat these steps as many times during the day or night as is necessary in order to keep yourself in a right relationship with God. If you are unable to kneel due to circumstances, such as being at work, in public, or physically disabled, you can do The Four Step Prayer without kneeling.

At the end of your day, again come before the Lord on your knees. Make an examination of your conscience using “The Seven Capital Sins” outline. If you see that you have sinned or see the sin in you, repent of it by confessing (naming) the sin and ask for forgiveness. Hold the sin up to the Lord and ask Him to take it and replace it with the opposite virtue. For example, **“Dear God, please forgive my sin of (Pride). Please give me Your (Humility) in its place.”** Then do The Four Step Prayer. Also, remember to be thankful to the Lord for everything that happened to you in your day, whether it was hard or easy, joyful or painful. All of God’s promises for your salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, will begin to be fulfilled in you. Remember “heart action”—get your whole heart and soul involved when you do the four steps, as best you can, without looking for a feeling or emotion. As you pray, “take my will,” let go of your own will and accept whatever God’s will may be.

(Note: The devil will try, through pride or sloth, to stop you from doing the four steps by giving you thoughts such as these—“I’m just too tired” or “Do I really need to?” or “What good does it do?” and so forth. Upon hearing these thoughts, say—“Begone Satan! in the name of Jesus Christ”—and then proceed with the steps.)

THE SEVEN CAPITAL SINS

PRIDE (Opposite Virtue = **HUMILITY**, **Gratitude**) Pride is a robber and the root cause of all sin. It robs me of the knowledge of my own personal worth and true self, and it robs me of the knowledge and love of God and of my neighbor. Pride causes me to spend my loving power badly and I short circuit right out of life.

Pride produces:

Arrogance—thinking myself better or more important than others.

Self-pity—a “poor me” attitude, thinking myself as less than others.

Gossip—saying hurtful things against others that can harm their reputation. I put others down to build myself up.

Boasting—bragging to myself or others. Taking credit for God’s gifts.

Self-illusion—The false and phony ego of the “old man.” The idea or concept I have of myself that is unreal; the old self or false self.

Your true self is “love” just as “God is Love” (1 John 4:8) though you are finite and God is infinite.

Vanity—Am I preoccupied with how I look? Do I spend a great deal of time in front of the mirror? Egotistical self-admiration.

Self-righteousness—doing the right thing for the wrong reason, not for God, but for self. Thinking that I am always right.

Stubbornness—keeps me from giving another person a right to their own opinion. Refusal to give up my own will for God’s will.

Pride makes me:

Embarrassed—an uncomfortable self-consciousness and painful awareness of my hurt pride or wounded ego.

Overbearing—an oppressive domineering attitude.

Manipulative—seeking to control others through deceptive means.

For example, to stir up trouble in order to get attention.

Selfish (Self-centered)—is the reason why I constantly think “I, me, mine.”

Rebellious—Disobedient to proper authority that is reasonable.

Resisting God’s will.

ENVY or **JEALOUSY** (Opposite Virtue = **Acceptance, TRUE LOVE**) Envy means that I have not yet discovered the real person within me that God created. It causes me to be dissatisfied with myself and my life.

Do I dislike seeing others happy or successful as though they have taken away from my happiness or success?

Am I jealous or envious of others because they have more than I do, or because they are better looking, smarter, more talented, have more friends, or for some other reason?

Do I ever criticize the good done by others because I secretly wish I would have done it myself?

Do I ever gossip about others because I am jealous of them?

Remember, God created you and loves the person that He created, but He does not love the sin in you.

Hate your sin, but do not hate yourself.

ANGER (Opposite Virtue = **MEEKNESS, Forgiveness**) A defensiveness within me that rises up from hurt pride. If I do not take it to God, it will become destructive.

Do I get mad easily? When I have been hurt, do I try to think of ways to get even or to punish the other person?

Do I ever stomp my feet, clench my fists, or throw things out of anger?

Do I swear out of anger, using God's name in vain?

Am I touchy or overly sensitive to correction or opposition?

When I am angry, do I retreat into self-pity with a "poor me" attitude or think—"Life is not fair. I do not deserve this."

Note: The emotion of anger is not a sin if it is reasonable. For example, anger can help you to break free from bad relationships or emotional attachments that are not healthy. Anger from hurt pride is always a sin.

GREED or **COVETOUSNESS** (Opposite Virtue = **GENEROSITY, Holy Detachment**) The excessive desire for material things or money. "*The love of money is the root of all evils.*" (1 Tim. 6:10) Greed causes all kinds of evils.

Am I preoccupied with thoughts of “What can I buy next?”
Do I place my hope or security in material things or money
and not in God?
Do I acquire wealth or preserve it by dishonest means
(such as cheat, lie or steal)?
If I am an employer, do I pay my employees a fair wage
considering my own salary and profits?
If I am an employee, do I do an honest day’s work for an
honest day’s pay?
Do I try to live beyond my means by taking on unreasonable debt?
If I am a creditor, do I practice usury or oppress the poor and needy?
Am I generous or stingy in giving to others?

GLUTTONY (Opposite Virtue = **MODERATION**) The excessive or unreasonable use of food and drink (or something else) for pleasure or a feeling of well-being.

Do I stuff myself with junk foods and refuse to eat what is good for me?
Do I eat more than my body needs to stay in good health?
Do I drink alcoholic beverages to excess, affecting my ability to reason and act responsibly?
Do I use illegal drugs?
Do I use legal drugs to get “high” or intoxicated?
Do I gamble with money that I need or in a way that depresses me?
Do I use technology, such as the cell phone or laptop computer, in a way that leads me into sin or temptation and away from God?

LUST (Opposite Virtue = **Purity, CHASTITY**) The selfish use of sexual pleasure. Lust disregards God’s plan for expressing my sexual feelings.

Do I know that sexual feelings are good in themselves, but that I am responsible for how I express these feelings? Do I surrender these feelings to God and ask for His help in controlling them? Or—
Do I daydream or fantasize about sexual matters?

Do I read raunchy books or look at lewd pictures (Pornography)?
Do I tell “dirty” jokes or use filthy language or suggestive talk?
Do I listen to music that gives me impure thoughts or desires?
Do I engage in sexual activity with my body alone (Masturbation)?
Do I engage in sexual activity with anyone other than my spouse
(Fornication or Adultery)?
Do I view members of the opposite gender as body parts, or persons
with spiritual souls that will live forever in heaven or hell?

If married, do I treat my spouse respectfully?
Do I dress modestly to protect my sacred and holy body from
impurity?

SLOTH or **LAZINESS** (Opposite Virtue = **Discipline, GOOD ACTION**)

Sloth comes from the word “slow.” It has to do with being slow to accomplish a necessary good. Sloth is a misuse of human energy, too great a love for comfort and ease. Sloth causes a neglect of duty.

Do I get right at my duties and fulfill my responsibilities or do I keep
putting them off because they are unpleasant or burdensome?
Do I do a sloppy job because the work is difficult?
Do I take proper care of myself, such as eating right and exercising
regularly as well as cleanliness?

Most importantly, do I work at my relationship with God, including
my prayer life, overcoming temptation and sin, and practicing virtue?
Or, am I lazy when it comes to my spiritual life? Jesus Christ said—
*“If anyone wills to come after me, he must deny himself, take up his
cross daily, and follow me.”* (Luke 9:23)