

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP  
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

**Study Series: That You May Believe - A Journey Through The Gospel of John**

**Part 6: He Must Increase - Humility and Christ Exaltation**

**Wednesday, March 11, 2026**

**Text: John 3:22-36**

**Teacher: Pastor Nneoma Ewurum**

**Introduction**

Humility and its related forms (humble, humblest, etc) are mentioned around 80 to over 100 times in the Bible depending on the translation. It is considered one of the most central, frequently taught and essential virtues in Scripture and often contrasted with pride. It is the posture of our heart that allows God to work through us (God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble – James 4:6 NLT). As we continue our study in the gospel of John, we see an example of humility displayed by John the Baptist and we uncover some lessons we can apply from this study.

***Background: Who was John the Baptist?***

In life, people naturally want recognition, influence, and praise. The world teaches us to promote ourselves and seek attention. However, the kingdom of God operates differently. The message of the Christian life is not self-exaltation, but Christ-exaltation.

John the Baptist understood this truth when his followers became concerned that Jesus Christ was gaining more followers than him. Instead of becoming jealous or defensive, John declared one of the most powerful statements of humility in the Bible: “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

***What does humility mean to you?***

**Understanding John the Baptist’s Humility**

1. He recognized that everything came from God. 1 Corinthians 4:7
2. He knew his role and assignment. John 1:20. Matthew 3:3
3. He knew who Jesus was. John 3:31-36.
4. He rejoiced when Jesus was exalted. John 3:29

**The Supremacy of Christ and our Greatest Example of Humility**

- Theological explanation of why Christ must increase. John 3: 31-36.
- The King of heaven became a servant. Philippians 2:5–8
- Jesus washing his disciples’ feet. John 13:12-15.

**Understanding the spirit at work in John’s disciples**

1. They tried to create a rivalry between John the Baptist and Jesus. They saw ministry as rivalry.
2. The spirit of jealousy
3. The spirit of competition – deadly danger
  - a. Destroys unity

- b. Discourages faithfulness
- c. Fosters pride
- d. Serves man and not the Kingdom of God
- e. Other examples: Saul when David slayed more men than him (1 Samuel 18:7-9 NIV)

## **The Danger of Pride**

Pride is the opposite of humility. It is giving ourselves credit for what God has accomplished, taking God's glory. It is looking down on others and overestimating our own self-worth or importance. It is one of the six things the Lord hates. Proverbs 6:16-19 (AMP).

When pride controls the heart, we want to be the center but when humility controls the heart, we want Christ to be the center.

Scriptures on the dangers of pride: Proverbs 16:18-19 (NIV), James 4:6 (NIV), Proverbs 11:2 (NIV), Proverbs 29:23 (NIV). Philippians 2:3-4. (NIV).

## **Biblical examples of pride**

1. Lucifer's fall from heaven. Isaiah 14:12-15
2. King Nebuchadnezzar's fall. Daniel 4:30-37.
3. King Herod Agrippa. Acts 12: 21-23

*What are the signs of pride we can identify in our own life or in others?*

*How can ministry become about us instead of Christ?*

## **Ways Christ Increases in Our Lives and We Decrease**

1. When we seek His Kingdom first. Matthew 6:33
2. When we surrender our will. Galatians 2:20
3. When Christ becomes the center of our identity
4. When we serve others. Mark 10:45. Matthew 23:11
5. When we always give God glory. 1 Corinthians 10:31
6. When we develop a heart of gratitude. 1 Thessalonians 5:18.
7. Spend time in God's presence
8. Surrender our pride and allow God to grow humility in us

*What would it look like for Jesus to increase in your life this week?*

## **Conclusion**

The Christian life is not about building our own name—it is about lifting up the name of Jesus Christ. Like John the Baptist, we must adopt this mindset of He must increase but I must decrease. This means celebrating when Christ is glorified even when we are not recognized. This means serving faithfully without needing an applause. This means killing every spirit of jealousy and competition among brothers and sisters who are co-laborers in Christ. It is not about you. It is for the glory and fame of one name only, the name of Jesus!