The Preciousness of Humility

Few Christian traits are as sweet and loving as humility. True humility, not feigned, grows our spirit beyond the world's focus on competition and allows true friendship to flourish among those who seek to lift up others rather than beat them at some silly social game of supposed superiority.

Humility takes the focus off self and allows us to see the importance of others. Humility is a vital part of close friendship, because without it we get stuck in a pitiful game of one-upmanship that never develops into the closeness for which our hearts yearn.

By its very definition, competition is a challenge to win a struggle or contest. It demands a winner and a loser in every case, from grade school to the Olympics. Competition in sports is a very good thing, likewise in business. Proper competition creates better athletes and better products. We even have national spelling bee contests which create better spellers! From backyard badminton to a pickup game of basketball to scrabble at the kitchen table, good natured gamesmanship can be a great thing. But competition in relationships never is.

Most of us can recall petty personal competitions from junior high, "She's my best friend!" "No, she's *my* best friend!" Some of that is to be expected as kids grow into young adults, but growing into adulthood should include leaving behind the petty pride that feels a need to be "better than you."

God's goal should become our goal. In Philippians 2:1-3, we see His goal for our relationships:

> Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves

O, how that would change the world, and develop close friendships and heal broken spirits! God's plan always leads to more closeness to Him and to one another.

Ray Wallace