God wants your life to be richer than you have ever dreamed possible. The secret? Humility.

**What is humility? What is pride?**

When God called Moses to deliver two million people out of slavery, what response did Moses give? (See Exodus 4:10,12,13).

Was Moses being humble or proud? (Hint: The next verse says, "Then God's anger was kindled against Moses.")

Pride is preoccupation with __________, regardless of what form it takes.

**Moses was exalting himself in three ways:**

1. Moses responds as if he is _______________ _______ _____.

2. Moses was trusting in _______________ and in his ______ ________________.

3. God wanted to deliver two million people, but Moses was thinking about ____________.

Superiority and inferiority complexes are both based on ________________ because both cause our minds to be on ourselves.

Real humility is not thinking less of ourselves; it is thinking of ________________ ________________.

Humility is not debasing ourselves; it is getting our focus off of ourselves altogether. Belittling ourselves is not humility, but a hidden form of pride. We are still the center of our own attention.

Several of Satan's strategies are attempts to get us preoccupied with ourselves. In each case God gives us instructions as to how to correct our focus, and He commands us to do so.
What Frees Us From Self-centeredness?

I. Casting Our Cares upon the Lord

1 Peter 5:6-7  Humble yourselves,...
casting all of your cares upon Him for He cares for you.

If we hold onto a care, we are choosing to handle that matter ________________________________.

We will have difficulty entrusting our cares to God until we realize that

1) __________________________________________
2) __________________________________________.

Because God never commands us to do something that we can't do, all cares can be ______________ on Him.

When we give God our responsibilities, however, He ___________ ___________ ____________.

II. Counting Others as More Important than Ourselves

God says we're proud whenever we go through our day without considering the interests of other people!

What is our mind-set on days when we pursue only our own interests? When we serve only ourselves, subconsciously we are considering ourselves more important than everyone else. We exalt ourselves—not by consciously thinking we are superior but by preoccupation with ourselves and our own interests. God therefore commands us to humble ourselves.

Philippians 2:3b-4  in humility count others as more important than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Let's not ask ourselves, "Am I familiar with these verses?" but rather, "Am I ________________ these verses? Do I count others as more important than myself? Do I look out for their interests?"

This decision to count another person as more important than ourselves is not a one-time decision. It must be made thousands of times. It must become our mind-set.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5 KJV).
If Jesus had looked only to His own interests, He would never have gone to the cross. But He looked to our interests because He first counted us as more important than Himself! Jesus did not suddenly adopt this mind-set on the day He was crucified. He spent every day counting others as more important than Himself.

**Correcting Our Focus Brings Joy**

In the following passage Jesus reveals the secret of how to have His joy:

**John 15:11-12** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

Jesus had "the oil of joy" above all His brethren (Hebrews 1:9). Jesus had more joy than anyone else because He ______________ more than anyone else.

**Proverbs 22:9** He who has a bountiful _______ will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.

Has anyone ever done something for you (or said something to you) that impacted your life by making you feel valued or esteemed? If so, what did they do or say?

What kind of people are able to make such deep, positive impact on the lives of others? What characteristics do they have?
A) Dispelling the Gloom of Depression

Depression is sometimes caused by chemical imbalance or by other physical problems. Sometimes it is caused by believing lies.

But depression often grips us simply because we adopt the wrong focus. Adopting the mind-set of Philippians 2:3-5 will dispel the gloom. It is God’s prescription for depression.

“If you ______ __________ ____for the hungry, and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness, and your gloom be as the noonday” (Isaiah 58:10).

The young man in Dallas was freed from his long-term depression because he finally got his focus on _______________ __________ ___________.

Joy comes from loving others—getting our focus off of ourselves and asking, “How can I be a blessing? How can I help somebody else? How can I give my life away?”

B) Dispelling the Gloom of Loneliness

Could it be that loneliness is caused by adopting the wrong goal? What is the goal of our hearts when we struggle with loneliness? We are seeking to ___ ________.

We want to make friends so that we won't be lonely anymore.

The problem is that our goal is to meet ____ ____ ________, to alleviate our own pain.

We do not notice opportunities to love or encourage others because that's not our goal. Our goal is to get them to love us. Inevitably, when we "seek our life, we lose it."

The only solution is to change our goal. Instead of seeking to get others to love us, we must seek to love others, expecting nothing in return. Then our misery comes to an end. As we choose to serve people unselfishly, God’s joy rushes in.

We are thus humbling ourselves biblically. We stop being the center of our own attention by adopting the servant mind-set of Philippians 2:3-5.
We are like a magnet that has been turned around. Instead of repelling people, we attract them. People hate to be manipulated, but they love to be loved. People are attracted because they love to be encouraged; they love to be listened to; they love for another person to show genuine interest in what's happening in their lives.

**We can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in others than we can in two years trying to get others interested in us.**

I Timothy 2:9  Women should adorn themselves...not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire but by ___________ ___________________...

We may think, *If I stop seeking my own happiness to seek the happiness of others, I'll be shortchanged. My needs won't be met.* Instead of relying on our own understanding, we need to trust God.

Loneliness is based on the erroneous belief that we are unloved--an empty cup in need of filling. Thus, we seek to find people who will love us. If we will affirm that our needs for love and significance are already met in Christ Jesus, we will gain a new "full cup" perspective, enabling us to share love with other people. We will begin to experience the reality of 1 John 4:19, "We love because He first loved us."

**C) Overcoming Boredom**

When we suffer from boredom, we again must change our goal in order to be free. When I'm bored, I'm focusing on whether or not I'm having a good time. I am searching for something or someone to entertain me.

God has called you and me to a higher purpose. Jesus "did not come to be served, but to __________" (Matthew 20:28). When I'm bored, however, the opposite is true of me. I seek not to serve, but to be served. I'm here to be entertained.

God calls us to a complete change in orientation. To be free from boredom, we must obey Philippians 2:3-5. Esteeming others as more important than ourselves is the way out of the prison.

**When we turn our attention to helping others, we discover life as God intended it to be--life filled with purpose, adventure, and significance. Boredom becomes a thing of the past.**
D) Overcoming Stage Fright

When we are nervous in front of groups, what is it that we fear?

Fortunately, if we are willing to face up to the true cause of our nervousness, God has a cure.

Nervousness is a symptom of having the wrong goal (namely, to ____________ or to ____________ ___________________. In both cases I'm living for myself. I am not focusing on the interests of my audience; I am focusing on my own interests.

The cure? There's only one. I must change my goal. I must be willing to lay down my own reputation to seek the ____________ ___ ___ _____________.

It's amazing! When I correct my focus, the nervousness always disappears. There have been no exceptions.

Acts 20:18-20  You yourselves know how I lived among you all the time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility...; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was ________________.

Shrinking back is a form of self-protection. Paul did not shrink back, because he wasn't thinking about himself. He was thinking about how to profit his listeners. His humility gave birth to boldness.
"Not Another Performance" --John Powell

I was picked as one of three speakers to travel around to all the universities of my order in the middle west and give a presentation. And our little traveling trio made big waves everywhere and finally we came back to Loyola University where I teach and there are 115 Jesuits sitting out there and these are the men I live with, eat with, and teach with...these are my brothers and I want to WOW them.

(I'm thinking) "You've never heard me speak and I'm really good and you don't know it...tonight you're going to know it," and instead of being relaxed as I am right now, I was very nervous and so I said to God..."God, would you relax me? Just put your hands over my heart or something"...and nothing happened.

I said, "Oh come on God, I want to give a good talk tonight and if I'm nervous, I won't." Now this is when I heard the words that among other peak experiences with God, these words have transformed me. They really have. I heard these words...

YOU ARE GETTING READY TO GIVE A PERFORMANCE AND I DON'T WANT A PERFORMANCE, I WANT AN ACT OF LOVE. YOU ARE GOING TO PERFORM FOR YOUR BROTHERS SO THAT THEY WILL KNOW HOW GOOD YOU ARE. THEY DON'T NEED TO KNOW HOW GOOD YOU ARE...I DON'T WANT A PERFORMANCE, I WANT AN ACT OF LOVE.

So I looked out again, and you know when you're self conscious and you're just thinking of yourself and you're using everybody for a mirror?...How am I going over, huh?...What do you think?...What do you think of me?...

Then there's that wonderful moment of love when you begin to look out again at those same people and say...What do you want...What do you need?...Where do you hurt?...Can I help you?

And I looked out at my brothers a second time after I heard what I feel sure was the voice of God, and I looked at three or four of our priests who are having a terrible struggle with alcoholism and one of them, poor man, is just very sick and the other three are going through a terrible trial.

Then there are a number, another handful, that have been forcibly retired from teaching because of the university rule and they have the feeling of the elderly, they're on the shelf...nobody cares about them...They don't say smart things anymore or make bright moves...nobody needs them...And I looked out at their faces for a long time.

Then I looked out at those who were physically sick, for whom every step is a pain, whose heads ache, whose eyes burn. I looked at those who were unsuccessful in almost everything they do. Their students don't like them...their classes are always unsuccessful...and I looked at them for a long time and I kept thinking...and I wanted to WOW you...I wanted to impress you with how good I am...I wanted you to admire me...

Oh, you don't need me for that. You need me to love you.

As I looked out at my brothers...all the nervousness disappeared and I loved them.

I realized in that moment how cluttered with performances my life has been. I have been a performer. I have been listening for applause after every performance...and in that moment I heard God say to me...Not another performance, but an act of love.

Beware! They Work Together!
Anxiety,
Anxiety and pride,
I never knew they worked side by side.

Anxieties,
They pull our focus in,
Our minds swirl round and round,
On ourselves they spin.

When I hold onto my cares,
I live independently.
“Don’t worry, God. I’ll handle this.
It all depends on me.”

Anxiety,
It seems an acceptable sin
It does until I realize
The pride that I am in.

I don’t notice the needs of others,
When cares are filling my mind,
When I hold onto my worries,
To such opportunities I’m blind.

Fortunately, God has a cure,
A cure to set us free.
He says in 1 Peter 5:6-7,
“Humble yourself. Cast your cares on Me!”

No better father could anyone have
Than the One who spoke these words.
There is no one kinder,
There is no one wiser.

We must believe the truth,
His will is better than our dreams,
God really does care for us,
Despite how things may seem.

So if we want our lives to be,
A blessing to man and pleasing to God,
We must obey His command diligently,
“Humble yourself. Cast your cares on Me!”

--Jamie and Jenna Lash / LifeGivingWords.com / (214) 333-5432 or (800) 791-1965
Duplication of this poem is allowed. It is adapted from the best-selling book entitled,
“This Was Your Life! Preparing to Meet God Face to Face"
Blanks filled in for notes on Developing a Servant’s Heart

P. 1
self
smarter than God
himself own abilities
himself pride
ourselves less

P. 2
on our own
1. God cares for us
2. God’s will is better than our own
cast gives them back

P. 3
doing /obeying
loved
eye

P. 4
somebody other than himself
be loved
our own need

P. 5
good deeds
serve

P. 6
[to] impress [or to] avoid humiliation
benefit of my audience
[that was] profitable