

SESSION 9: How Can I Know God?

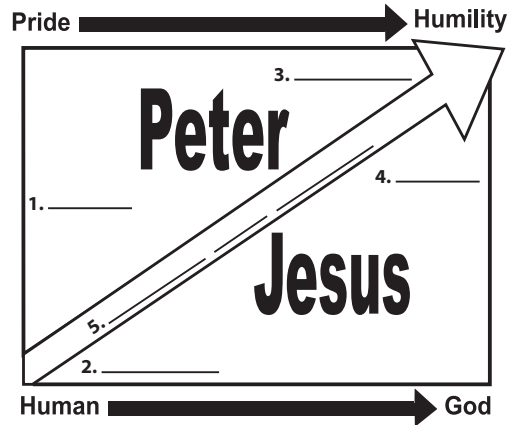
Discovering the Stumbling Block Along the Path to Faith

Reference: *Surprised by Faith*, pages 131-148 (fourth edition); pages 119-132 (third edition)

Making the Discovery

The fisherman Peter, before he became a disciple of Jesus, illustrated an important spiritual principle (Luke 5:1-8). This principle keeps many people from knowing God in personal relationship.

1. Peter thought he knew more about fishing than Jesus did. He was a fishing “_____” —thinking he would not catch any fish even though Jesus told him to.
2. Peter referred to Jesus as “_____” —a title of respect (like rabbi) but not recognizing Him as God.
3. After catching two boat loads of fish, Peter was repentant toward Jesus and referred to himself as a _____.
4. Peter also now referred to Jesus as the “_____” (Greek “kurios,” meaning supreme one, over all) recognizing Him as God.
5. In this incident with Jesus, Peter went from pride to humility—a change that must occur on our _____.
6. _____ is what keeps many people from faith in Jesus Christ.



Pride is thinking of ourselves as better than others; self-sufficient and independent from God and others; not humble. Pride is the chief cause of misery and alienation in the world. Wars, divorce and other maladies of life can often be traced to the competitiveness of an uncontrolled ego. Pride is also the greatest deterrent that keeps us from a relationship with God. A refusal to say “I’m sorry” to God about our sins and reluctance to renounce our independent self-sufficiency keep us from knowing God.

7. Spiritual _____ is necessary on our path to faith. Spiritual brokenness is the change in one’s personal perception from a self-sufficient and conceited “pro” to a humble “sinner” repentant before God; a conviction that results from the work of God’s Spirit. The Bible makes it clear that the path to Christian faith involves recognizing our pride of self-sufficiency and acknowledging our sinful nature that separates us from a holy God.
8. When spiritual brokenness occurs in our life, our perspective also changes. We no longer view Jesus as just a human teacher of good morals; rather we make a _____ of faith to follow Him as the Lord of our life.

DISCOVERY #9

“Ah-ha!” Pride keeps more people from faith and forgiveness in Jesus Christ than any other factor!

Confirming the Discovery from God’s Word

In summary of God’s Word, both the Old and New Testaments teach the doctrine of universal sin which has separated everyone in the entire human race from a relationship with their holy God (Psalm 14:1-3; Romans 3:9, 22-23). Often sin is manifested as pride and independence from God, which God calls evil and which God hates (Proverbs 8:13). In contrast, God calls humility good and says that it pleases Him when we walk humbly with Him (Micah 6:8). Pride makes us blind to the ways of God and leads to a life of moral error and eternal destruction in the end (Proverbs 16:18). On the other hand, God promises that if in humbleness we seek Him and forsake our sin, He will hear us, forgive us and restore what sin had destroyed (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Answers to “Fill in the Blanks”: 1. pro; 2. master; 3. sinner; 4. Lord; 5. path to faith; (Illustration: 1. The Pro; 2. Master; 3. Sinner; 4. The Lord; 5. Path to Faith); 6. Pride; 7. brokenness; 8. commitment.