

Letter 14: “Humble Humility”

1. Do you know people (maybe yourself!) who are proud of their humility? Do you know any who are too humble to acknowledge their gifts?
2. Screwtape directs Wormwood to get his patient to “value an opinion for some quality other than truth, thus introducing an element of dishonesty and make-believe into the heart of what otherwise threatens to become a virtue,” affording “the chance of keeping (people’s) minds endlessly revolving on themselves in an effort to achieve the impossible.” How does that kind of distorted view of humility or any other virtue serve the devil’s ultimate goal of destroying our faith in God?
3. Were you surprised by Screwtape’s assertion that the ultimate goal of God’s call to selflessness is to give us our selves back again? Does that seem contradictory? How does that or would that work in the everyday reality of our lives?
4. Read Luke 10:25-28. How does the lawyer’s answer, affirmed by Jesus, reflect Screwtape’s assertions in this letter? How does the lawyer’s follow-up question betray that answer? Jesus then told the Parable of the Good Samaritan. How does the parable reflect God’s goals for us, as laid out in this letter?
5. How does knowing that God created us and that “He *really* loves the hairless bipeds He created” resolve the tendency to embrace either arrogance or false modesty?
6. Screwtape ends by asserting that “the sooner the man turns his attention outward, the better the Enemy is pleased.” How does deflecting our attention away from ourselves lead to a more authentic appreciation of who we really are?