



Seven
Part 1 – Walk in Humility
Pastor Ted Cunningham

We're starting a new series today called *Seven*, which is not built off of the seven deadly sins. If you remember the movie *Seven*... I do not endorse this movie, nor do I encourage you to go see it, but in 1995, a friend invited me to go see that movie. I was in college. If you're unfamiliar with it, it's Morgan Freeman and Brad Pitt and it follows a serial killer – again, I'm not endorsing it – that uses the seven deadly sin list to commit his crimes. If you're new to our church, I struggle with this thing called basil bagel syncope, which means I pass out at human suffering. By the time that movie hit the third sin, I looked over at my buddy and said, "I'll meet you in the lobby afterwards." I went and found me a comfy little spot on the floor of the lobby of the movie theater, took a about a 20-minute nap, and then he came and got me.

I've asked the Lord, "When I am tempted to sin, if I take one step toward it, would you please kick in my basil bagel syncope and cause me to pass out." Some would say that's a thorn, but I say thank you Lord that... I can see me tempted and then just passing out. We're not covering the seven deadly sins, but we're talking about walking in 2018, and we're using **Proverbs 6** and that list is out outline. Here's the outline:

16 There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him... If you're brand new to studying the Bible or if you've studied it for any period of time, this saying here is a rhetorical device that's used to embellish the poetry. The reason it's embellishing the poetry is it creates a memory aid for us and it builds to a climax. So, with the list that we are about to look at and use as an outline in this series, it's not that six of them he hates and the last one is detestable; it's that this is all detestable to God.

My heart for 2018 is that I would hate what God hates. And all God's people said... Amen. But, here's the secret to this whole thing. I want to be one who stands for righteousness without becoming a judgmental, whining, complaining citizen of the United States of America. You and I should hate what God hates. And all God's people said... Amen. May it start with me! And all God's people said... Amen. Not me me, but you you. You put that finger back at you. That I would hate this in my own life; let's start there. I want a standard of righteousness. I want to stand for righteousness in my life without becoming what I'm seeing all over the place: bitter, resentful, angry, complaining, pouty, whiney citizens of the United States.

So, six things he hates, seven that are detestable to him... I hope this list is detestable to me in my own walk with Christ in 2018. **17 haughty eyes...** That's the first message we're starting with today. We don't use the word haughty a lot, but we'll explain that one. **...a lying tongue...** That's next week. **...hands that shed innocent blood...** Let me show you how God works and I love this. In November, as we started planning and praying through how we were going to start off 2018... And praying hard, "Lord, give us direction, give us discernment." We usually start off with a vision series for the church, but included a lot of that in the *Home for Christmas* series. We know the teaching team's availability and we start figuring out the calendar. We take the scripture, Proverbs 6, this outline and we put it in January and February for seven weeks.

The third week is January 21, *Hands that Shed Innocent Blood*. This just so happens to be Pro-Life Sunday. We didn't plan that, but we will be talking about abortion on January 21. I want to prepare you for that because there are grandmas and grandpas in here, there are husbands and wives who lost children. Some of you didn't even know you lost children to abortion or grandchildren to abortion until years later. Our desire is for that service to be a healing service, a service that brings you to a place in your relationship with the Lord that you understand the sin of abortion, but that you would also walk out knowing Jesus took that on when he went to the cross. So, we'll deal with that on the 21st.

18 ...a heart that devises wicked schemes... If you've ever stayed up late at night, thinking about how to get even with somebody, be here at the end of January. **...feet that are quick to rush into evil...** If you have zero capacity to stand against temptation, be a part of this series that you wouldn't take that step toward it, but you would take the step in the opposite direction. **19 ...a false witness who pours out lies...** We're going to go back to that lying tongue and we're going to talk about how to speak well of other people, that we wouldn't be part of those groups anymore that when someone's name is getting trashed, we would add more fuel to that fire. That we would speak well of others. **...and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.**

This is the out outline and today we start with *Haughty Eyes*. I love that word *haughty*, but I don't want to be haughty. If you do a search on this word, it's not a word we're using as much in English. We just say *pride*, but when you do a search on this, you get a formal list and in informal list.

Let's start with the formal list, but I really crack up when I see the informal list. The formal list would be someone who is **proud**, someone who we would use the word **arrogant** to describe – they think they're better than everybody else. **Vain**, just all they ever talk about, all they ever think about is themselves. **Conceited, pompous, condescending.** If you're sitting next to someone right now that fits this list, would you raise... No, don't do that. I'm not asking you to do that because we're pointing the finger at ourselves. "Lord, I don't want to walk in this." Haughty eyes...

I love the informal. This is how we informally... or you might probably say this is like slang for haughty. **Stuck up, snooty**, more of the senior adults would use that word. I love this one: **hoity-toity**. You can't say hoity-toity without a New York accent. Not that I'm picking on the East Coast, but just try saying hoity-toity without a New York accent. You can't do it. **Uppity.** "He's got a **big head**. I'm surprised he can even make it through the door." **La-di-da.** These are great, but we all have the potential to be uppity.

I love playing golf once a year. Do we have any golfers in the room? So, you know there is etiquette. Have you ever met a snooty golfer? Have you ever met an uppity golfer? I like to play sports for fun. Why? It's because I'm no good at them. That's why I enjoy playing sports for fun. But, you get that one guy... The idea here of haughty is he begins to look down his nose at you like *this guy doesn't know what he's doing. Why is he out here? Why does he want to do this? Shouldn't you be at Bass Pro? Why are you out here on the golf course right now? Should you be in pick-up truck, drinking beer out on a farm somewhere?*

You kind of pick up on this attitude. *Don't step on my line between the ball and the cup.* If I find you on the golf course, I hope they put me in your foursome because I'm going to wear you out for 18 holes. I'm going to talk on your backswing, I'm walking through your line, and if I don't like where your ball is in my way, I'll kick it out of the way; I don't care. There's a way to deal with snooty people.

If you go down to Taney-Como, right by the dam... It's typically not down by the Bass Pro spot where you see people throwing lines out and fishing with the tackle boxes and the Bass Pro lawn chair and their cooler. It's where all the fly fishermen are. It's not all of them, but you'll find some uppity, snooty, hoity-toity fly fisherman that believe in catch and release. You want a condescending look? You want haughty eyes? Here's what I encourage you to do. Just do this for fun to mess with them. I encourage you to do this. Take a stringer down with your Zebco 33, cast a spoon out there because that's all that people were catching them on yesterday, Tim Sainato, and they were bringing them in one right after another. Put a stringer... You're allowed four fish under 12 inches. That's totally legal. My father in law is here from Minnesota. He can't even fathom throwing back a legal fish. But, sometimes you get the snooty... Just four 12 inch trout or lower on your stringer and walk out past all the Orvis-dressed fly fishermen on your way up the stairs. You'll get some hoity-toity looks because they want you to put those fish back.

I have to be honest with you. I've picked up the passion of fly fishing the last year and I find myself sometimes getting into that. In October, I was invited to go down... A couple of camp dads invited me to be with somewhat of a legend. His name is Chuck Farneth. He's won competitions on fly fishing and everything. I think athletes will understand this... Us athletes will understand this. You want to impress the coach. How many of you know what I'm talking about? You know, the coach is on the other end of the field with the cord and you're over here messing around with your friends. The coach shows up and you kind of step it up a notch.

That's why I'm glad we don't have cameras roaming here like they do at the big churches. I love watching televangelists when they're preaching, and someone gets a camera right in their face. They get all sorts of spiritual. They were just on their phone playing a game, but now the camera is on them and something changes. We get that way with coaches and I felt that way with Chuck. *I'm not the world's greatest, but I hope Chuck is impressed with me. I hope he sees that I can cast a fly rod like Lefty Kreh. I'm throwing that thing down and I hope he's impressed.* It was that day, with my hoity-toity attitude, that I fell over a rock and broke the first bone in my life. I'm convinced... You say does God laugh? Of course he does. He's like, "Ted, I hate to do this to you, but here you go." And, BAM, I went down.

There's a verse... and this is why we memorize scripture. ***I've hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*** As I take a step toward it, that's what the Holy Spirit does. He brings these verses back up. There's a verse for my condition that I had in Arkansas: ***Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*** Three hours from Heber Springs, Arkansas back up to Branson, I stopped at a gas station and I bought a 20 pound bag of ice. I knew I had broken my hand. I iced it the whole way and quoted this verse to the Lord the whole time. "Keep it up, keep the laughs going."

And then it became kind of a theme at Christmas for me, as my family all kind of ran with this verse and my haughty attitude. Amy bought me a walking stick to take down to Taneycomo. It says *Fish Pond Walking Stick* and they actually put on there *Wading Pro*. If you need a cane to go fishing at 43 years old, you ain't a pro; I hate to break that to you. I told Amy, "I can't go... I'll get laughed out..." Then she bought me a submersible pack for my fly fishing so that when I fall in... She plans on me spending a lot of time in the water in 2018.

But, whether you're on the golf course or fishing... if I can just share with you another place that you see it. It's in church. If you've been in church your whole life, there's etiquette. Whatever your denomination was, you learned a certain way to behave and then when someone shows up who doesn't know "the rules," church people can look at them with haughty eyes. Church people wear me out because we can look down our noses at other people.

A year or two ago, we had no room left and we were trying to figure it out. Obviously, no room left is not our problem this morning, but we said we had to save some seats on the back row for people, so we put up deals and said let's just wait until right before service time. Some of our church people got mad. "We shouldn't reward people for being late to church with a great seat." I said, "I think our goal is to reach people! The early people and the 11:00 service. We want to reach them all!" We want to reach latecomers. We've had greeters that won't stand out there until the service time starts because they're like, "They should have been here on time." That's haughty. We don't look down on people. We actually had people leave the church when we started marking off seats in the back. Do you know what that's called? Haughty eyes, looking down at others. The other way Proverbs says it is "...whose glances are disdainful." That's haughty eyes.

Go out on Table Rock this summer. I always have fun with this. Rent yourself the cheapest, oldest boat you can find. You want to see haughty eyes? Go find a \$150,000.00 wake board boat and, like on the fireworks night, just pull right up next to it. The owner of that boat will be looking at you with haughty eyes, throwing his body between his boat and yours to protect his boat. Then he'll just there and steam. Find Tim Sainato fishing on the lake and go right up to him. He won't give you haughty eyes though because he's a humble guy.

Anyway... Haughtiness, disdainful looks. Raise your hand if you've received a disdainful look in the last couple of weeks. Someone thinking they're better than you. How many of you have given a disdainful look in the last couple of weeks? I'll ask it again. You've given someone on 76 a disdainful look. I got called on this, but you walk into Target... I saw someone walking in as though they were walking into Walmart. Do they not know we don't wear pajamas at Target? Target is for the uppity white class; we

don't wear pajamas. I'll ask it again. If you've given a disdainful thought or look to someone in the last couple of weeks.... Oh, it's starting to pick up.

Haughty eyes, let's talk about it for a second. Haughty eyes... I kept thinking about the song from Dirty Dancing, which I don't endorse that movie either... Haughty eyes... Anyway, it's people looking down at you. And it's when you look down at other people. Why do we look down at other people? It's because we think we have **more talent**. "I have more talent. Why am I second string quarterback? That guy has been terrible the last couple of weeks." "Why is that guy getting praise and even getting an award at staff meeting." "We had our Christmas luncheon and he was awarded? What? I am way better at this job than he is."

More talent? How about **more experience**? You can be haughty if you have a young person coming in. This is why companies are going to start failing. Carson and I just watched a video this week on ten companies that will be out of business in the next few years. One of the primary reasons is they are not listening to millennials, the next target group. That can happen in your workplace. "I've been doing this job for 30 years. You just hired that young punk? I've got more experience than he does." Maybe he has a great idea. Maybe she has a wonderful addition to the company and you just maybe need to listen to it. You think, *I've got more experience, so I don't want to listen to you.*

More money. We're really going to get those words like hoity-toity and uppity. You drive through your neighborhood and you've been taking care of your yard, but redneck Jones down the street hasn't used a weed eater in eight years. You can just begin to think, *Come on, man.* Haughtiness just sneaks in on us. We have to understand that it's a condition of the heart. Go back to the list. God hates this, he detests this. And if he does, then I should as well. I should hate when I see them in me.

Junior high and high schoolers, I'm going to talk to you a little bit today. Do you know someone who thinks they have better looks than you? Those better looks put them in a group with better friends. Junior high was rough for me. It was terrible for me. I just remember... I shared this in the first service. My mom was in the first service, so I was trying to be sensitive because I wanted to honor her. But, I grew up with very frugal parents. They were both raised by parents through the great depression. My grandpa retired after 30 years with M&M Mars. Before that, he worked in shoe factories. My other grandpa was a carpenter and grandma was a hair stylist. They didn't have a lot of money. This got passed onto my mom and dad. They raised us and designer brands were not something Ron and Bonnie Cunningham were going to be buying for Ted and Andy Cunningham. If you were raised with parents like that, would you raise your hand.

When my friends started getting Levi jeans and what did I get? Lee jeans. We were in Chicago. We didn't have Wrangler in Chicago. I remember those... In seventh grade, I tried out for the basketball team. They bought 18 brand new uniforms for Traughber Junior High and 20 kids tried out. The coach, in his gracious, benevolent spirit decided they didn't need to cut anybody; they could just have two of the players wear the jerseys from 1953. Who do you think got one of those uniforms? You're looking at him. My nickname in seventh grade because I was a bigger kid... I've had this size head since I was about a year and a half old. My nickname was basketball head. I was a chubby little kid.

I can't find the picture. I asked my mom to go home and find it because I remember they put me in the scene like this. I've got my hands on my knees with my little gut hanging down and my 1952 jersey, smiling as big as I could. And I was ridiculed to no end. I remember telling my mom, "I have to Air Jordan's." She said, "I pay \$40.00 for shoes; that's my top end for shoes." Then I said, "I need a Bulls jacket," because Michael Jordan was really popular at that time.

For Christmas, my mom and dad surprised me with a Bulls jacket, but it wasn't that Bulls jacket that had the embroidery patches sewn across the back that says *Bulls* and then the Bulls emblem on the front. It was silkscreened, it was painted on. My mom and dad thought it was awesome. I can still remember this in my mind. I was in seventh grade, walking into Traughber Junior High, with the disdainful looks coming at me. It was like, "Look at it. He's got fake Jordan's. He's got a jacket that won't make the season." And it didn't. It started to fade... It was Bull by the end of the season. The S was fading and falling off. It would just peel right off with your fingernail. My dad was back there this morning going, "Ahh, we did good. Way to go, honey. We didn't spoil him with designer brands."

But, boy, better looks, better friends. Do you remember in junior high? I need to do a whole message on junior highers. It's brutal. It didn't help that the struggles I already had were that a lot of times I went to school dressed like Don Johnson from Miami Vice; I've told you that. That was a problem too.

But, do you remember when we used to do this thing where we decided as group who we weren't going to like for that week. There was no rhyme or reason; it was just that person is out. Why? I don't know. "We're just not going to talk to them. They're going to be an outcast." Haughty eyes... Disdainful looks...

Adults have it; it's not just kids. Better jobs. "How in the world did they give that to him?" "Why is she getting this role?" "I sing way better than she does." "Have you seen him play the guitar? I can kill him on the guitar." So, even if you don't have the better job, but want the better job, you can develop haughty, disdainful eyes.

Parents, we have a thing called Facebook where we display our **better behaved children**. I love doing this in the stores. How many of you have ever seen haughty eyes directed toward you when your children were having a meltdown at a store? Boy, you see it. I always love doing this... When people don't know my sense of humor, they get really offended by what I do. I love walking up to somebody with a baby melting down and all I say to them is "Hey, when my kids were that age, I didn't let them do that," and then walk away. That's the haughty face. That's haughty right there. Some people laugh because they know it's a joke and others are highly offended by that deal.

Here's the bottom line: **It's hard to serve people**, which is what we're called to do, **when we're looking down at them**. It's hard to do. So, what's the posture of our Savior and what's the antidote, what do we do to solve this haughtiness, this haughty eyes issue? It's to take on the role of our Savior who took the servant position, who washed the feet of his disciples. This is the posture of serving. Serving is looking up at the person. You can't serve someone when you're looking down on them. You can't serve someone when you think you're better than them. You can't serve someone because you see the poverty that they're in and you're like *I know why you're in that poverty. You need to get an education,*

you need to get a job, you need to keep a job, you need to stop spending money on frivolous... This is what we do; we're constantly looking down. But, Jesus was looking up the whole time. The son of man did not come to be served; he came to serve.

Here's what he says in John 13: **14** ***"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet."*** Some of you have grown up in church and you saw this sitting up here and you were like *Oh no*, because it's just uncomfortable. *I didn't wash my feet today and I'm going to have the lint in the big toe corners...* Maybe that's too much information for this illustration. *If were to call me up there right now and ask me to take my shoes and socks off, this would be so embarrassing.* The whole point is that I am supposed to be in this position right here, on my knees.

We don't walk around in sandals anymore and our feet don't get dirty. Foot washing is not an ordinance of the church like the Lord's Supper and baptism, but the word picture carries over to this in the mentality of our everyday, ordinary life. We are to be in the posture of meeting people and looking up to them and serving them and caring for them, not thinking we're better than them.

I shared the critique of the church in that we can have haughtiness, we can have haughty eyes because we have a code or etiquette as part of the church. I don't feel that at Woodland Hills. It may creep in from time to time, but if people tend to not feel comfortable... If it was here, they wouldn't stick around long.

If you have your Bibles, turn to Philippians 2. As your turning there, I want to share this big idea. We always talk about being the hands and feet of Jesus; that's what we're called to do, but **before we can be the hands and feet of Jesus, we need to first see with the eyes of Jesus.** We need to stop looking down on people. Stop looking down on the other shows. Stop looking down on the other theaters. Stop looking down on the other businesses. Stop looking down on the other employees or coworkers. Stop looking down on the other drivers and churches and get on your knees and start looking up from the position of serving.

That's what we have in Philippians 2: **3** ***Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves...*** This has been misunderstood by many when they think this means you never take care of yourself. You only take care of the needs of other people. No, you have to take the whole Book of Philippians in context. The whole Book of Philippians leads us to the context that "Yeah, Mom, for you to be a good mom and to serve your children, you can't do that from a place of having nothing. Get in the word, pray, spend time being full because it's in the best interest of all parties." The idea here is that you wouldn't have this ambition towards goods and services that only take care of you and you're constantly focused on you and how you can do more and how you can be better. Don't do that is what Paul is saying. **4** ***...not looking to your own interests...*** And he clears up the end of Verse 3 with this: Not looking just to your own interests; you have to take care of yourself and your family, but while you're doing that, also ***...but each of you to the interests of the others.*** Don't be looking down on people, be serving people.

The scripture goes on to say: **5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus...** So, he's our Savior, he died for us and he modeled this for us. **6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage...** We've said it around here for years because I'll have people email me or Facebook me and say, "I've been going to the church for X number of years; I give this much..." That doesn't give you an edge. That doesn't give you an advantage. That doesn't make you somebody. No. The longer you're here, the more you should be serving. The longer you walk with Christ, the more you should be serving. When I want to make really hard point, I take my glasses off. I can't see you and how you're responding to that. **7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!**

9 Therefore God exalted him... That's the secret. Quit exalting yourself. Quit posturing all day long; it's exhausting. If you're burned out right now in your business or in ministry or whatever because you're just posturing all the time and letting everybody know how awesome you are, stop posturing to be exalted. Let God do that. **...to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** And all God's people said... Amen!

In 1 Peter 5, we read: **5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another...** I think of the junior high and high schoolers, the students in here, anyone going off into college, that you would have a freedom and a peace in this last half of the year to not walk into school and spend all day posturing yourself in that school. That you would constantly be thinking about what the Lord is seeing in your life right now. That you would stop the looks and the money and the brands and the athletics and the talent and the experience... whatever. Take a break from that and humble yourself before the Lord **because, "God opposes the proud..."** Now this is important. The word *oppose* here is a military term that means to stand against. When you are haughty, when you are proud, when you are arrogant, boastful, or hoity-toity, God stands against you **"...but shows favor to the humble."** You want the favor of God. Stop working so hard to please man. Take a break, take a deep breath, and just cut free from it.

We have a staff member at this church. I'm not going to say his name, but in staff meeting Tuesday, as I'm about to share with a long list here in a second of what humility is and what it is not, I called him by name and I don't want to say his name because the whole point of this is humility. I'm going to let him have his blessing of quietness as he serves. But, I said, "I just want you to know something, Andy. This is you." This list I'm about to share with you, this is my home improvement list for 2018, this is what Ted Cunningham needs to work on. "Yeah, Andy, you've got to keep it ever before you, but I'll be honest with you, Andy, I see this in you every single day. It's inspiring to me, the humility. You've taken on the very mindset of Christ Jesus. You have taken on the nature of a servant."

When I think about it... What if I spent all year and stopped posturing myself. I'm exhausted with pastors who daily promote themselves and their stuff online. It honestly wears me out. Every time I think about what if I put all that aside and wasn't hustling over here... We do that in ministry. We're

hustling, we're making things happen, we're shaking and we're moving... I think to myself *What if I didn't need any of that and just served people?* Do you know what comes over me? It's just this enormous peace. I think this is why – you're seriously only pleasing one person. So, we've got to get the haughty eyes out of our system. So just shake it out a little bit and we're going to sing a song really quick. It's a country song because country is the greatest music on the earth and I say that with all humility. Sing it with me. *"I want to talk about me, I want talk about I, I want to talk about number one. I like talking about you, you, you, you usually, but occasionally I want to talk about me."* I'm going to give you about a B+ on that one. That wasn't an A, but it was a B+. Alright, so you've got that out of your system. To take on the mindset of Christ and to walk in the humility that Christ displayed as he went to the cross for you and for me, as he served looking up at people. He had every right to look down, but he looked up.

This is what humility his. **Humility walks in the room and says, "There you are!" not "Here I am!"** This is a big one. This is a first step for me. It's to walk into the room and find somebody... Get in to their story. Get in to what they're doing. Get into what they are passionate about. If they try to turn it around and talk about you, don't let them. Keep it about them. Talk about them. Stick with them.

Humility rejoices when others get the credit. I was speaking to a friend yesterday who went to a meeting at his work. He'd been working his hind end off to make this project happen. It was complete and it looked great. When the boss stood up to talk about this project, he gave all the credit to another person who wasn't even involved. Whether that was a mistake or whether that was intentional, my friend, as he was even telling me the story, the lower lip quivered.

I said, "The sacred echo. This is perfect. This is exactly what I'm talking about tomorrow." I said, "Did you fall on your face at that moment and thank your Father in heaven for that?"

He said, "NO!"

I go, "You should. That was an opportunity for you to walk in humility. Rejoice that someone else was recognized, but not you. Remain humble."

Humility is not irritated when people don't recognize you. Branson entertainers... Just ask yourself. I was even thinking about this. When you go to shows in Branson and they stand up and they welcome all the busses. I've been to shows where they list a lot of people. Have you ever gotten in trouble for leaving someone off the list? Humility says I was left off the list and I'm okay. Why? Because God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. He brings his favor to the humble.

When the recognition doesn't come your way... That's what I love about Branson entertainers that walk out to a small crowd and you still give it 110% even when the recognition isn't there, the applause isn't there.

Humility is not frustrated when people don't recognize what you are doing. "Does my boss not see I'm killing it over here?" And then you hear him talk to somebody else and say "Hey, great job this month on the deal." "But, is he coming over to my cubical to say that? I don't know if he's seen this. How can I

show him what I've been doing?" Just like you want to go up to that coach and make sure the coach see's your mad skills.

Humility expects nothing in return. Humility is serving with zero expectation of anything coming back to me.

I believe **humility does not pause for praise.** When the praise isn't there, it plows on ahead.

Humility does not huff, pout, whine, or complain when treated like a servant. Ted Burden was here for years at Woodland Hills. I think he has one of the best quotes on humility and on serving. He goes, "The true test to whether or not you are a servant is how you respond when you are treated like one."

Humility is rarely caught on camera or posted online. It's just serving.

Humility is an undercover servant. I think this is the goal for the week. Let us all be undercover servants. How many of you love that show, Undercover Boss? I love Undercover Boss. They don't know who it is and what they're doing. This, to me, is what we should be all about this week as we go out in to the community. They're at us all day long; we'll find it all day long, opportunities to get down and to serve someone. The secret here... Here's the secret and the last point we'll make.

Serve someone in big way this week and let no one know about it. Keep it quiet. If you can only let your Father in heaven know what is going on. Let the reward be there and serve with no recognition, no credit, no praise, no applause, and you're just working and working, serving and serving.

I think that's why the scripture says the sleep of a laborer is sweet. When you know you have put the time in and you have served and the recognition from man is not there, but your heavenly Father... That's peace, that favor of the Lord resting upon you. The scripture says the humility is the fear of the Lord. It's wages, what you earn from humility is riches, honor, and life. But, let God be responsible for that. Let him be the one that exalts you and let us stop looking down on people, fall on our knees, and in secret ways this week, look up and serve the people of Southwest Missouri.

With that, I'm going to ask that you bow your head. We're going to take the Lord's Supper together. I'm going to ask that you begin to prepare by examining your heart. You can start by asking the Holy Spirit to call you by name on a haughty spirit, on haughty eyes. Looking down on a coworker. Looking down on the family member that just left after the holidays and all you've been doing with your conversations with your spouse or with your family is running that person down. "Man, if they would just get a job, quit acting like that, if they would show up more often..." You found every reason to pick on this person. Just confess that right now before the Lord.

The neighbor that you think you're better than. The boss that you think you're way better; you can do a way better job that he or she can. The sports teams, as you head back into sports. The teachers, the students. Confess that before the Lord.

The scripture says, before we take the Lord's Supper together, we need to examine ourselves. Right now, before the Lord, confess and prepare your heart to remember his death.

Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in unworthy manner will be guilty of sin against the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine themselves in this way. Let him eat the bread and drink from the cup. Whoever eats and drinks without recognizing the body eats and drinks the judgment on himself. – 1 Corinthians 11: 27-29

If you've not placed faith in Jesus and you are not a Christian, we ask that you not participate during this part of the service. If you have not placed faith in Jesus, but today you're done with the proud, arrogant, vain, conceited, pompous, condescending living of 2017 and what really marks your whole life, just before God in heaven, confess that to him. If you have been living life for you and you're on your own throne, confess that before him, believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus, confess with your mouth and believe in your heart and you will be saved. If you placed faith in Jesus today, we invite you to participate in the Lord's Supper with us.

Father, we are grateful for 2018, grateful for 2017 and what you did in this church family. May we be challenged in this series. Seven weeks is a long time to talk about difficult stuff and challenging stuff, but may it penetrate each one of our hearts and may we leave here each week, convicted of areas in our personal lives, in our families, in our workplaces, in our driving, in our hobbies, and just everything where haughty eyes may exist, that we would humble ourselves before you and before man.

We thank you for the death of Jesus. He took it on the cross from the time of Adam until now. Every sin was upon him. For that we are grateful, and we remember that today as we take of these elements.

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. – 1 Corinthians 11

And every time we take the Lord's Supper together on the first Sunday of every month, we also take a mercy offering. The mercy offering is in those two baskets out there when you leave and over at the Chapel, there is a basket for you to give. That is to meet the physical needs of family here at Woodland Hills.

This I wanted to save for the end because, to me, this is a big deal. I know I shared numbers with you last week on growth. The giving growth rate went way up. I think our growth to next Sunday from this Sunday will probably have like a 50% growth rate because of the storm. But, we were overwhelmed with giving in December, and so you know, we have our set budget and in December alone, you have given \$108,000.00 above our budget. We were like "Okay, Lord, as a church family we need to be generous as you have been generous and so it's a fun week hearing of needs in our community and how

to help people. It's a challenge and a blessing. It's such a mixed emotion because you can have expectation and entitlement that can ruin it all, but we were like, "Lord we want to be good stewards with what you have given to us."

So, just a few of the stories... We had one missionary that came to us at the end of the year. They lost all their support from a church. We heard their story. Just so you know about missionaries for us, some of you grew up in churches that maybe supported missionaries at \$75.00 or \$100.00 a month. We support our missionaries at \$700.00 a month and up to a few of them that have been with us 16 years that support at \$900.00 a month. You gave them Christmas bonuses and we've done that above that support I think for 15 years to bless them. We tell them to use it to bless their family during this time with working hard all year.

We had a missionary come to us and we had kind of already budgeted and committed to new missionaries for 2018, but when that money came in, we were excited because one of the things you did for that family was... We said we can't commit to a monthly giving because we have some missionaries we have supported for 16 years, so making the commitment year after year... We don't like dropping people and never have unless they come off the field or are done and go to another ministry. But we were able to say to this family, "We're not going to take you on month to month support, but if it would be okay, we would like to give you a year and a half support in just one check," and they were fine with that. So, you gave them \$10,000.00 to get them on their way.

We have to be careful that we don't just start giving to ministries here in Stone and Taney Counties. We want this money to go to the ends of the earth. We want to support missions as well as community events. But, we're giving to meet the physical needs of students in this community. We're giving another \$25,000.00 to do that.

When we talk about the offering out there... I can't share everything we're doing and we're still deciding today, as the staff and elders meet over there to ask the lord what he would have us do in 2018. One of the stories I love from benevolence and we've seen this a lot. I've never been part of a church where this has happened that I know of, but we've helped people through difficult seasons with that mercy offering. If you come from a more traditional church, that's the benevolence fund. But, with that mercy offering, we've helped people through difficult seasons.

We've had people in this church that have come back six to twelve months later and have given back all the money that was given to them through that difficult time. It was on top of all their other giving, but they said, "The church helped me through a difficult time, so I want to give this back so we can continue to help people." That's really the spirit of one another giving that we read about in Acts. We're helping one another and caring for one another.

To encourage your generosity, every dollar that goes in the mercy offering will meet the physical needs of families just here in the church family at Woodland Hills. We then have other funds that we give to meet the physical needs in Stone and Taney Counties and even beyond that to Southwest Missouri and up towards Springfield. I just wanted to share that with you because as it comes in, it gets overwhelming.

I've heard churches that have said, "Hey, on your last Sunday, tell people not to give because you met budget." Why would we stop blessing a community? There are just so many stories you will never hear about concerning what was done with your generosity, but you're one day going to hear them. I think that's a pretty cool thought to think of how the Lord has used you and used this church in giving. We rarely talk about it in that level of detail on a Sunday morning, but we are grateful for you and love you. Thank you, Woodland Hills.