

Peter tells us in his 1 Peter 5:5-6, 'Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.' Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may exalt you in due time.' What God seems to be saying here is: Humble yourselves or be subject to humiliation.

Our ego or self-will is like a balloon. We each have one of these balloons which we blow up ourselves. Now, once the balloon has been blown up some, there are two ways that it can be deflated. The first way is that it can burst catastrophically, either by blowing it up too much or by blowing it up enough that the slightest pinprick or stress pops it. The more tightly the material is stretched, the less the stress needs to be which pops it. If you have ever seen a small child playing with a balloon, you have seen, the sudden shift from joy to despair when the balloon bursts. The child may cry pitifully, clutching the pieces. So many times we have been just like that child, only we are holding the pieces of our shattered pride.

But there is a much better way to let the air out of the balloon. If we keep an eye on the balloon we can see the dangers that are involved, and we can let the air back out slowly through the neck. This way the balloon never gets too tight, and is much harder to puncture. This is what Peter meant by humbling ourselves. It may hurt a little to humble ourselves, as the squeak of the balloon shows, but it is much better than the tremendous bang of humiliation. Humility is easier on us than pride; this is what Peter is trying to tell us. Let us each pray for the ability to humble ourselves.