



# How Do You Handle Being Wrong?

By Dr. Gregory Wiens

How do you handle being wrong? Maybe you don't think you are ever wrong; in that case you may not want to continue reading this article. We are all wrong. It is only that some of us are more able to see our mistakes or at least more willing to admit them. It appears to me that your ability to handle mistakes or times when you are wrong, significantly impacts your ability to lead.

If you are not able to freely admit your mistakes, others will discount your successes. Most of us will agree with this, but for some of us, it is that we simply don't really think we are ever wrong. The scriptures are clear to point out that wisdom and humility are different. Proverbs 11:2 states "*When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with **humility** comes wisdom.*" And Proverbs 15:33 says, "*The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom, and **humility** comes before honor.*"

These two verses would seem to indicate that you gain wisdom through being humble. This makes sense if you see humility as being open to learning from others...in other words as Philippians 2.3 says, "*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in **humility** consider others better than yourselves.*" When you consider others are important and having something for you to learn from, then you will be humble. And then you will learn things you don't know and become wise.

And then you will be able to lead more effectively for two reasons. The first is that those who follow you will have greater ownership in the vision and you personally. This is because they will know that you are open to their input and they will also see their fingerprint on the plan. The second reason you will lead more effectively is simply because the plan will be better because you have had multiple people speaking into it. Humility seeks others input and values their contribution; wisdom is knowing what input is appropriate and what input is not.

Most of us THINK we are open to others input. From my experience, those who need feedback usually don't seek it, while those who seek feedback usually don't need it. If you want to do a short test of your humility, write out these five statements on a sheet of paper and give them to at least five people who work with you. Ask them to order these statements in the order of what they would describe as most like you; from 1 being the most like you and 5 being the least like you. Have them turn back the forms anonymously and simply add up which characteristics are the most and least like you.

- Is clear and decisive
- Values others input
- Knows what needs to be done
- Disciplined in his/her approach
- Thinks of creative solutions

Don't be surprised with the results, realize that with humility comes wisdom.