

PRIDE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Proverbs 6:16-17

INTRODUCTION

God hates sin. He hates every sin. He can never be reconciled to it. He hates nothing but sin. But there are some sins which He does in a special manner hate because they are provoking to Him and they are harmful to the comfort of human life and society. In reading, **Proverbs 6:16-17** (NKJV) ¹⁶ *These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷ A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood* – we see that there are seven things that God hates, and pride is the first, because it is at the bottom of much sin and gives rise to it. God sees the pride in the heart and hates it there but, when it prevails to that degree that the show of men's countenance witnesses against them that they overvalue themselves and undervalue all about them, this is in a special manner hateful to him, for then pride is proud of itself and sets shame at defiance.

The New Testament speaks of it as well. **1 Peter 5:5-6** (NKJV) ⁵ *Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."* ⁶ *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.* **Luke 14:11** (NKJV) ¹¹ *For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."* **Matthew 5:3** (NKJV) ³ *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Pride is the sin back of all sins. Sinful pride is condemned by God and is a deadly sin. It is not allowed, it is not to be desired nor sought for. It is a conceited, haughty spirit. **It is undue self-esteem.** It is repugnant egotism. Augustine once said, *it was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels. When we begin to believe that we are self-contained and self-sufficient, we are on dangerous ground.*

UNDERSTANDING PRIDE

Pride is deceitful and invades every facet of a person's life. One can be proud of his social status, proud of his intellectual attainment, proud of his accomplishments, proud of his possessions (riches), proud of his people, and proud of his race in such a way as to take glory away from God. In poverty and in spiritual living, pride can also manifest itself.

In Social Status

The scorn we feel for those of another race is extremely cruel pride. We feel pride regarding those who might be on a different rung of the social ladder. Pride enters when we are with someone whose dress does not come up to our own. James addresses this problem, which arose in the assemblies of the early church in **James 2:2-9**. No man's riches set him in the least nearer to God, nor does any man's poverty set him at a distance from God. *With the Most High there is no respect of persons*, and therefore in matters of conscience there should be none with us. Pride comes when we act partially, and determine wrong, merely because the one makes a better appearance, or is in better circumstances, than the other. Civil respect towards persons of different ranks must never be such as to influence the proceedings of Christian. If we allow ourselves commonly to judge by outward appearance, this will too much influence our spirits and our conduct in religious assemblies. It is great partiality, it is injustice, and it is to set ourselves against God, when we despise others.

In Intellectual Attainments

Some are arrogant toward the unlearned, the illiterate, and the oppressed.

In Material Possessions

When man begins to concentrate on what he has instead of what he is before God, pride sets in. In times of affluence, people are apt to become self-sufficient, independent, and even arrogant. Wealth can never be regarded as a natural right. It is the gift of God. Since the majority of people in the world lack wealth, those who are abundantly blessed need to not allow pride in their own achievements possess them and bring about their ruin.

In Poverty

One can be proud of his rags just as much as one can be proud of a closet full of the latest fashions. **John Mason**, in **McGuffey's Third Reader**, said, *a man may be poor in purse, yet proud in spirit*. The poor are sometimes more intolerant of the rich than the rich are of the poor. Pride has no special abode; it affects the social outcast as well as the social register.

In Spirituality

Spiritual pride is the most repulsive of all. It was the sin of the Pharisees of Christ's day. Spiritual pride comes when brethren or congregations trust in themselves that they are righteous and begin to view others with contempt (*recall the Pharisee, and the tax-collector that went up into the temple to pray Luke 18:9-14*).

It affects leaders. It is a great temptation to any leader. . Sometimes, when someone has a position, he wants a greater position. Sometimes, when a leader has some power, he wants more power. This is why leadership in the church sometimes is so easily corrupted. Peter warned in **1 Peter 5:3** ^(NKJV) *nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock*.

PRIDE - ITS CONSEQUENCES

Pride has evil effects. As discussed, **intellectual pride** causes us to forget that our mental capacities are given by God, and that the knowledge we attain is largely the labor of others. Intellectual pride is often the enemy of the gospel.

Material pride throws life out of balance, and man begins to concentrate on what he has instead of what he is before God. In material pride, self is enthroned instead of God. Material pride makes a man covetous. Why, therefore, do we have all the unjustified human pride in our possessions? Material pride attempts to make man non-dependent on God. A little boy came to his mother saying, *"Mama, I'm as tall as Goliath; I'm nine feet high."* *"What makes you say that?"* asked the surprised mother. *"I made a little ruler of my own and measured myself with it, and I'm just nine feet high!"* Many follow the little boy's method, measuring themselves by some rule of their own. They measure themselves by the success they achieve. *"Prosperity that excludes God has this property,"* Plutarch wrote. *"It puffs up narrow souls, makes them imagine themselves high and mighty, and leads them to look down upon the world with contempt."* The pride of prosperity has a tendency to puff us up in light of our own self-measurement and to cause us to forget the true source of all our blessings—God. When prosperity comes, a man needs to beware so he will not gloat inwardly and secretly boast of the achievements of his hands. In **Deuteronomy 8:10-20**, Moses forewarned Israel of this basic sin, man's spirit of self-sufficiency. Paul also warned in **1 Timothy 6:9** *(NKJV)* ⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Spiritual pride begets a critical spirit. It causes us even congregations to be proud of our thoughts, thinking our thoughts are always pure and others are impure. Some glory in their self-righteousness. It also **mars our ministries**. It causes people to lose focus on or lose sight of God's glory and interests. It turns focus on man's interest, man's image and human approval. Pride causes so many of us to be more concerned about the kind of image we are projecting to our congregation than about how much glory we bring to God. Every ministry in the church must have as an objective that it should reflect Jesus and not its coordinators. Those of us who mount the steps of a pulpit need to be reminded that people are present to see Jesus and not us. A congregation with proud leaders will beget weak members. If churches follow good leaders, they will become strong. If they follow proud leaders, they will become weak.

Pride ruins our relationships. Pride not only keeps us from God, but from each other. Our pride often keeps us from being open and honest. We need to learn to be open and honest with each other, and then we can grow closer in our relationships. Many people who consider themselves Christians remain at odds with each other because their pride will not permit them to make the confession necessary for reconciliation.

Pride sets us against God. **Proverbs 16:5** *(NKJV)* ⁵ *Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; though they join forces, none will go unpunished.* The pride of sinners sets God against them. When one's spirit is elevated with one's condition, so that one becomes insolent in one's conduct towards God and man, let such a one know that though one admires himself, and others caress him, yet one is an abomination to the Lord. Such a one is despised and detested by God. Even though, they strengthen one in another alliances and combinations, joining forces

against God, they shall not escape His righteous judgment - **Isaiah 45:9** (NKJV) ⁹ “Woe to him who strives with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth! Shall the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ Or shall your handiwork say, ‘He has no hands’?”

Pride leads us to destruction. Proverbs 16:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.* Those who have pride will be brought down, either by repentance or by ruin. It is the honour of God to humble the proud (**cf. Job 40:11-12; Daniel 4:31**), It is the act of justice that those who have lifted up themselves should be laid low. Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, were instances of this. Proud men are frequently most proud, and insolent, and haughty, just before their destruction, so that it is a certain presage that they are upon the brink of it. When proud men set God's judgments at defiance, and think themselves at the greatest distance from them, it is a sign that they are at the door; therefore let us greatly fear pride in ourselves.

CONCLUSION

Proverbs 8:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.*

Jonathan Edwards said, **Nothing sets a person so much out of the devil's reach as humility.** Thomas á Kempis said, **Do not consider yourself to have made any spiritual progress, unless you account yourself the least of all men.**

God walks with the humble; He reveals himself to the lowly; He gives understanding to the little ones; He discloses His meaning to pure minds, but hides His grace from the curious and the proud. You can only come to God when you humble yourself, acknowledge your sin, and receive Christ Jesus by gospel obedience.

Philippians 2:1-5 (NKJV) ¹ *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. ³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,*

Endnote

The Seven Deadly Sins - Pride: The Sin Back of All Sins (J. Wayne Kilpatrick. 1989, 2005 by Truth for Today)
Deuteronomy- The Pride of Prosperity - Deuteronomy 8:10-20 (Felton Spraggins . 1990, 2000 by Truth for Today)