

PRIDE: A SIN OF SELF DESTRUCTION
Proverbs 16:18,19

Introduction:

1. A young preacher proudly walked into the pulpit with shoulders back, head up, and confident step.
2. He stumbled through his sermon and went back to his seat with eyes downcast, shoulders slumped, and stumbling step.
3. An old man told him: “If you had gone into the pulpit the way you came out, you would have come out the way you went in.”
4. Pride is a common human failing:
 - a. Augustine said pride is the greatest of all sins and that a proud man exalts himself and displaces God.
 - b. C. S. Lewis called pride “the anti-God state of mind.”
5. People can be proud of many things: race, religion, nationality, talents, accomplishments, possessions, fame, etc.
6. A justifiable confidence and love can turn into a sin if unchecked.

Discussion:

I. WHAT IS PRIDE?

- A. Webster says pride is “an over high opinion of oneself, an exaggerated self esteem, conceit, arrogance.”
- B. There are two kinds of pride:
 1. Pride is used in a good sense.
 - a. “I’m just so proud to be here.”
 - b. One must love self before he can love others (Lev. 19:1; Mark 12:31).

2. **Pride is most often used in a bad sense in the Bible.**
 - a. **God hates pride (Proverbs 6:16-19).**
 - b. **The heathen “professing to be wise, became fools” (Romans 1:22).**
 - c. **Pride is one of the sins common in “the last days” (2 Timothy 3:2).**

II. WHAT DOES PRIDE DO?

A. Pride leads to a fall (Proverbs 16:18).

1. **King Saul was a humble man, but pride led to disobedience which led to his loss of the kingdom (1 Samuel 9:21;10:20-24; 13:8-14; 15:1-31).**
2. **King Uzziah was a good king until his heart was lifted up with pride (2 Chronicles 26:3-5, 16).**

B. Pride is one of the three avenues by which temptation comes.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world” (1 John 2:15,16).

1. **Satan tempted Eve through these avenues (Genesis 3).**
2. **He also tempted Jesus in this way (Luke 4:1-13).**

III. HOW MAY PRIDE BE EXPRESSED?

A. One may be proud of his spirituality.

1. **The Pharisees were proud of their righteousness (Luke 18:9-14).**
2. **The apostles sought first place in the kingdom (Matthew 20:20-28; John 13:1-17).**
3. **A certain preacher “could strut sitting down.”**

- B. One may be proud of his education and intellectual ability.**
- 1. The Pharisees loved to be recognized for their learning and attainment (Matthew 23: 6-12).**
 - 2. “Knowledge puffs up, but loves edifies” (1 Cor. 8:1).**
 - 3. Today’s emphasis on degrees is often a matter of pride.**
- C. One may be proud of his race or nationality to the extent that he considers himself superior.**
- 1. The Jews disdained the Gentiles; the Greeks called all non-Greeks “Barbarians.”**
 - 2. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34,35).**
 - 3. All are one in Christ in regard to salvation (Gal. 3:28).**
- D. One may be proud of his talents and abilities.**
- 1. Our talents are given to us by God (Matthew 25:14-30).**
 - 2. Paul asked: “For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?” (1 Corinthians 4:7).**
- E. One may be proud of his wealth and material possessions.**
- 1. The rich commonly look down upon the poor.**
 - 2. Being poor is not necessarily a sign of laziness or lack of initiative.**
 - 3. Being well-to-do doesn’t always reflect hard work and initiative - it may be a result of birth or opportunity.**
 - 4. Remember where wealth comes from (James 1:17).**
 - 5. The only wealth that really counts are the treasures we lay up in Heaven (Matthew 6:19-21).**

IV. WHAT IS THE CURE FOR PRIDE?

- A. We must look to Jesus for He is our example (1 Peter 2:21).**
- 1. He showed humility in “emptying Himself” (Phil. 2:5-11).**

2. He also showed humility when He washed His disciples' feet (John 13:1-17).

B. We must "crucify self."

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

C. We must love for "love does not parade itself, is not puffed up" (1 Corinthians 13:4)

D. We must not over estimate ourselves and our importance.

"For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith" (Romans 12:3).

Conclusion:

1. Wendell Winkler suggests we examine ourselves to see if we are guilty of pride (Heart Diseases and Their Cures, page 49).
 - a. Have I been motivated by pride to do a certain work in the church (desire the eldership, or teach a class)?
 - b. Have I turned down a job in the church because it did not seem good enough or important enough?
 - c. Have I been jealous of another who can teach, preach, sing, or pray better than I?
 - d. Am I so proud I will not admit it when I am wrong?
 - e. Do I look down on others in the church who have not had the opportunities to grow that I have had?
2. Pride will keep us out of Heaven (James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5).
3. Pride has kept many from being saved (Matt. 18:3; Mark 16:15,16).