

Pride

Trinity Baptist Church Discipleship Training (February, 2007)

Introduction:

The topic chosen for this study is “Pride: How it manifests itself and how to avoid it.” We will briefly examine pride from the viewpoint of the Bible—pride is sin. We will look at some of the ways pride manifests itself and ways to avoid this sin.

What Does the Bible Say About Pride?

- I. Pride has been man’s greatest plague from the beginning
 - A. It was the root cause of the fall of Adam
 1. Satan tempted Eve by appealing to her vanity – he promised she would become as God.
Genesis 3:4 – “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”
 2. Notice how clearly the Bible portrays Eve’s desire for self-gratification
Genesis 3:6 – “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”
 - B. It was the root cause of the first murder – Cain’s pride led to jealousy and then hatred and then murder
Genesis 4:3-4 – “And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”
 - C. It can be found at the tower of Babel
Genesis 11:4 – “And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.”
 - D. The Bible makes it clear that pride was a chief reason for God’s judgment upon Israel
Isaiah 3:16 – “Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing *as they go*, and making a tinkling with their feet:”
 - "outstretched necks" - as if to appear taller
 - “wanton eyes” – a seductive look designed to attract attention
 - "Mincing as they go" - literally skipping along with arrogance.
 - "making a tinkling" - a jingling sound made by the bracelets worn on the ankles – again, a desire to attract attention.

- E. It characterizes the lost man
1 John 2:16 – “For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”
Psalm 10:4 – “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek *after God*: God *is* not in all his thoughts.”
Mark 7:21-23 – “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”
- F. The Bible speaks of the great dangers of pride
Proverbs 13:10 – “Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.”
Proverbs 11:2 – “*When* pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly *is* wisdom.”
- II. What is God’s attitude towards Pride?
- A. God hates pride
Proverbs 8:13 – “The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.”
Proverbs 6:16 – “These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: A proud look . . .”
- B. God resists the proud
1 Peter 5:5-6 – “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”
“Resists” is from the word ἀντιτάσσομαι (an-tee-tas'-so-mai) – also means “to oppose,” “to range in battle against”
1. The proud man is trying to be successful in his home life – God is opposing him
 2. The proud man is trying to be financially successful – God is opposing
 3. The proud man is trying to be religious – God is opposing him.
- C. Pride is a great danger to the church. The judgment upon the church of Laodicea should serve as a warning.
Revelation 3:17 – “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:
- D. God hates pride but loves humility – He desires humility, he demands humility
Micah 6:8 – “He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

How Does Pride Manifest Itself?

- I. When we elevate ourselves above God.
 - A. All willful sin is the result of pride
 1. You sin when you declare in your heart that your desires are greater than God's law
 2. Sin is an effort to dethrone God and enthrone self
 - B. Sinful self-sufficiency is caused by pride
 1. We abandon our daily intake of Scripture because we don't see it as the source of strength and holiness
 2. We abandon prayer because we don't see our absolute dependence upon God in everything.
 - C. Inconsistent service to Christ is caused by pride
 1. If we don't see Him as Master and Lord we won't see the need to serve Him
 2. Most people see God as one who serves us.
 - D. Unbiblical worship is caused by pride
 1. Prideful men think they have a right to approach God when and how they choose.
 2. They order worship after a manner that pleases them.
 - E. Desiring the praise of men is caused by pride
 1. God sees this as wickedness because it robs Him of His glory
Acts 12:21-23 – “And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. ²² And the people gave a shout, *saying, It is* the voice of a god, and not of a man. ²³ And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.”
 2. Seeking the praise and recognition of men is wicked pride because God made us as we are
Exodus 4:11 – “And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?”
 - a. If you have superior intellect what have you to boast of
 - b. If you have superior strength or athletic ability what have you to boast of
 - c. If you have great beauty what have you to boast
 - d. If you have great wealth what have you to boast**1 Samuel 2:7** – “The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.”

- II. When we elevate ourselves above other men.
- A. By seeking to have the first and highest place
Luke 14:8-11 – “When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; ⁹ And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. ¹⁰ But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. ¹¹ For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”
1. We naturally want the best for ourselves
 2. Humility demands allowing others to have the chief place
- B. By looking down upon those we consider less important than us
1. We tend to look down upon the poor and needy
James 2:1-4 – “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons. ² For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; ³ And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: ⁴ Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”
 2. We tend to look down upon the unattractive – our generation worships outward beauty
 3. We tend to look down upon those with less intelligence
- C. By boasting in what we have
1. Do your possessions bring you feelings of pride?
(Your car, home, apparel, jewelry, gadgets)
 2. Do your children bring you feelings of pride?
Why do mothers boast of their child’s first steps or first words?
Why do parents boast of their children’s academic achievements?
 3. Do your achievements bring you feelings of pride
- D. By failing to submit to authority
1. Children disobey their parents because of pride – they refuse to humbly submit
 2. It is pride that causes us to disobey the civil authorities. We declare a sinful autonomy
- E. By elevating our “feelings” to the highest place
1. Anger is usually caused by pride
 2. Jealousy is usually cause by pride
 3. Disputes and contention are usually caused by pride
Proverbs 13:10 – “Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.”
 4. “Hurt feelings” are usually caused by pride

How Do We Avoid Pride? What is the Cure for Pride?

As we consider the sin of pride and the need for humility we must examine it from two sides.

- (1) Humility is a grace given by God. It is something we need to pray for and desire.
- (2) Humility is also a command from God. It is something we need to strive after.

How are we to put to death our pride and grow in humility?

I. By desiring to be humble - Do you really want to be humble?

- A. Are you willing for God to make you humble?
 1. Are you willing for God to use whatever means necessary to make you humble
 2. God's refining fires can be uncomfortable to the flesh
 - a. If He removes your health are you willing
 - b. If He takes away your wealth are you willing
- B. If we desire God's perfect work why do we complain when He brings adversity

II. By seeking to love more –

The ultimate cure for pride is love – a love for Christ, a love for our fellow man.

A. Our love for Christ testifies to our conversion – if a man does not love Christ he is not a Christian.

1 Corinthians 16:22 – “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.”

1. To love Christ is to die to self
Luke 9:23-24 – “And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”
2. Thomas Watson – “So a humble saint takes the crown of honour from his own head and sets it upon Christ's. And the reason is the love that he bears to Christ. Love can part with anything to the object loved. The humble saint loves Christ entirely, therefore can part with anything to him. He gives away to Christ the honour and praise of all he does.”
3. Pride says, “Look at me.” This is the heart of the natural man. To seek to gain recognition for ourselves it to rob Christ of His glory. Love will never permit us to do that.
4. A love for Christ will cause us to hate our sin and will humble us before Him. It will lead us to abhor ourselves before Him.
 This is the essence of the Beatitudes. They teach this great humbling effect of meeting Christ.
Matthew 5:3-5 – “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. ⁵ Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”

- B. A love for our fellow man will cause us to humble ourselves before him.
1 Corinthians 13:4 – “Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,”
1. Love will not allow us to walk over him or treat him with contempt and scorn. True love will cause us to raise our esteem of him. It will cause us to see his value. This will result in silencing our boastful tongue and casting water upon the fires of our arrogance.
 2. To be destitute of this humility is to be destitute of love. To be destitute of love is to be destitute of all Christian graces.
 3. Pray that God might help you to love more
 - a. Love takes your eyes off yourself - Love does not vaunt itself
 - b. Love causes us to lift up others

III. By seeking to become more like Christ

Philippians 2:1-5 – “If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, ² Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. *Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”

Matthew 10:24 – “The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord. “

A. Christ is the perfect picture of humility

1. The King of Kings came to earth as a servant
 - a. At the Last Supper there was a dispute among the disciples
Luke 22:24 – “And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.”
 - b. Jesus answered their dispute in John 14
John 14:4-5 – “He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.”
2. The greatest demonstration of humility came as He went to the cross
Philippians 2:8 – “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”
 - a. Jesus had the power to crush those crucifying Him
Matthew 26:53 – “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?”
 - b. This power was demonstrated at His arrest
John 18:4-6 – “Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had

said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.”

3. Jesus willingly suffered at the hands of men
Matthew 26:67- 68 – “Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?”
Isaiah 53:7 – “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”
Philippians 2:8 – “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

B. Pray that God will give you a servant’s heart – a heart that places others above yourself

1. The problem with pride is that we want all men and God to serve us
2. True love brings us to esteem others better than ourselves – it makes us servants

Mark 9:33-35 – “And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.”

IV. Keep a proper perspective about yourself

A. Remember what the Bible says about men

1. That we are but dust
Genesis 2:7 – “And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”
Genesis 18:27 – “And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am but* dust and ashes:”
2. Our life is but a vapor
James 4:14 – “Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”
3. We are vile sinners before a holy God
Job 40:3-4 – “Then Job answered the LORD, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.”
Romans 3:23 – “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”
4. We are but worms
Job 25:4-6 – “How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean *that is* born of a woman? ⁵ Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. ⁶ How

much less man, *that is* a worm (רִמָּה) (rimmah) – maggot)? and the son of man, *which is* a worm?”

- B. All that we are is what we are in Christ.
1. Our every boast must be in Christ
1 Corinthians 1:30-31 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: ³¹ That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.
 2. We only have value in Christ – and that is all of grace. We are only His crown of glory by His doing.
Ephesians 2:8-9 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”