

Pride

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In a world that encourages pride in such things as appearance, nationalism, work, and one's achievements, it only seems right to embrace it in every aspect of life. However, Almighty God does not appreciate pride in any form (Prov. 16:18). God's instructions are to hate pride, and the arrogant behavior that usually accompanies it (Prov. 8:13),

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 (1Jn. 2:16; emphasis added; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

It's a natural human tendency to be attracted to people who are confident, successful, and proud. There is a sense of security that comes by being associated with these individuals. This is especially true for those who are successful and give all the credit to their own supposed talents, abilities, or hard work (Prov. 16:19; cf. Dan. 4:30). Understandably, it is desirable to be associated with those who are wealthy, powerful, and successful. However, pride is usually a close companion of these things (Hab. 2:9). It is in our nature to want to feel special, entitled and empowered, or at least be in the company of those who are, because it makes us feel better about ourselves and, in our own mind, elevates us above others. This is especially attractive to our human nature, which is actually very weak and fallible (Ps. 103:14),

Your words have been harsh against Me," Says the LORD, "Yet you say, 'What have we spoken against You?' ¹⁴You have said, 'It is useless to serve God; what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked as mourners before the LORD of hosts?' ¹⁵So **now we call the proud blessed, for those who do wickedness are raised up**; they even tempt God and go free (Mal. 3:13-15; cf. Isa. 13:11; emphasis added).

God gives ~~the~~ examples of being **pleased** with the actions of those who conduct themselves in an upright manner (Mt. 12:18; 17:5; Mk. 1:11; Lk. 3:22; 2Pt. 1:17). However, those who are proud fail to give credit to a Higher Power that provides them with the ability and opportunity to be successful (Dt. 8:18). This is especially true when an individual elevates him or herself to the point where they do not recognize or rely upon God (Ps. 10:4). Being proud separates an individual from God, and sin along with its consequences eventually follows (Ps. 119:21; 94:2; Prov. 16:5; 15:25; 101:5; Mal. 4:1).

Pride was the cause of the first sin ever committed. The process that lead to this sin began with one created being taking the credit for his achievements instead of being thankful and respectful toward his Creator,

You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. ¹⁴ You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you *there*. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

¹⁵ **You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you.** ¹⁶ By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷ **Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.** I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, that they may see you. ¹⁸ **By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries.** Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; it has consumed you, and I have turned you to ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you (Ezek. 28:13-18; emphasis added; cf. Rom. 16:20; NASB).

How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! ¹³ **But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north.'** ¹⁴ **I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High'** (Isa. 14:12-14; emphasis added; NASB).

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall (Prov. 16:18; cf. 29:23).

This fall resulted in Lucifer losing his position and responsibility in the heavenly realm. His name was then changed to Satan, or Adversary, to reflect the rebellious decision he made. It is important to understand that his action was preceded by pride, and he continues to preach this false doctrine to mankind,

His rows of scales are his pride, Shut up tightly as with a seal; ...³⁴He beholds every high thing; He is king over all the children of pride (Job. 41:15, 34; cf. Rev. 12:9).

God hates the proud (Prov. 6:16), because pride inevitably leads to sin (Prov. 21:4). Those who are proud and self-confident often feel emboldened to manipulate and control others. One tool of manipulation used by the proud is flattery. Those who conduct themselves in this manner cannot be trusted (Ps. 40:4; 12:3). Sadly, Eve was fooled by Satan's flattery which cloaked his dishonesty. Since Adam and Eve chose to accept and believe in Satan's perverted reasoning, symbolized by partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, pride took root within them. Pride, like leaven (1Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9), can start in some small way, but if not checked it begins a process that eventually leads to spiritual defilement (Mk. 7:20-23). Sadly, Adam and Eve's choices and actions drove them from the presence of God (Garden [City] of God; Gen. 3:24; cf. Ps. 12:3; 138:6).

Since then, and throughout man's history, even God's people can suffer various trials due to separating themselves from Him, by their own pride (Job 35:12; Isa. 28:3; Jer. 13:9-17; Eze. 7:10-11; Hos. 5:5; 7:10; Am. 6:8; 8:7; Zec. 11:3).

Pride can even disguise itself in the form of false-humility. This occurs when one believes that abstaining from certain things makes them more godly, or righteous (Col. 2:18-23; stoicism/self-denial), or by showing oneself very forgiving no matter what the actions of the offender were (i.e. not adhering to God's law regarding actions against God, or our fellow man; 1Cor. 5:1-7; cf. Dt. 22:30). It is one thing to strive for self-improvement and spiritual maturity, but another to believe that it is through self-abasement, at all costs, that we will be considered righteous by God.

Those who are proud of their own talents, abilities, and opinions, combined with contempt or disdain for God and His servants, have always existed (Ps. 86:14; 119:85, 122; 123:4; 140:5; 1Tim. 3:2-6). They also tend to lack respect (1Pet. 5:5), and arrogantly mock God and His people. In doing so, they elevate themselves above others (Prov. 21:24; Isa. 2:12), and take pleasure in arguing, disputing, and creating strife. These are corrupt minds and God's people are instructed to withdraw from them (1Tim. 6:3-5).

Those who are motivated by pride are often the ones who end up persecuting God's servants who faithfully keep His law and precepts (Ps. 119:51, 69, 78). Trust (faith) in God is what guides His servants throughout their lives (Hab. 2:4).

God will repay the proud for their actions, which are set on evil and sewing discord and strife (Ps. 31:23; 59:12; Zeph. 3:11; Prov. 6:16-18; 28:25). Either in this life or the next, God will strike at the pride of the disobedient (Lev. 26:19; Dan. 4:37; 5:20).

One example of pride, that is often a point of discussion and debate in today's world, is that of "gay pride". The proud conduct of those who engage in same gender sexual activities is nothing new (cf. Gen. 9:21-22; 19:8; Lev. 18:22) and pride is one aspect of this behavior. It is tantamount to saying that God has it all wrong, doesn't know what He's talking about, or is just plain unkind. This proud and arrogant attitude has fueled the choice to participate in this behavior for thousands of years,

Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, **proud, boasters**, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, **not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them** (Rom. 1:27-32; emphasis added).

God has no more tolerance for this sin than any other (Jas. 2:10-11). We all commit sin, but none of us should be proud of that fact (Rom. 3:23). Like all sin, without humility and repentance, it is deserving of death (Rom. 6:23). Jesus Christ paid this high price for us by sacrificing his life as a substitute to cover all sins that are repented of.

Pride is a constant battle in our lives. Even though there are times where our pride interferes with decisions we make, with God's help and His Spirit it can be overcome (2Chr. 32:26). The path to reconciliation with God begins with humility and repentance. In order for God to work with us spiritually, we need to become humble and see ourselves for what we truly are (Job. 40:11-12; Oba. 1:3).

Pride may feel right in the moment, but only serves to harm others in the long run (Jer. 50:32; Ps. 10:2). It distances us from God (Jas. 4:6). The greatest men of this world are

nothing compared to God and all that they strive to do apart from Him will likewise be brought to nothing (Lk. 1:51-53; Isa. 25:11-12; Jer. 49:16). Just as pride and sin was the source of Satan's fall, so it will be the downfall of mankind if not addressed,

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, **boasters, proud**, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, **headstrong, haughty**, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! (2Tim. 3:1-5; cf. 2Pet. 2:11; emphasis added).

Hear and give ear: do not be **proud**, for the Lord has spoken (Jer. 13:15; emphasis added).

Instead of being proud of our own accomplishments, we should reflect on the fact that it is not because of our own talent and ability that we have achieved any success. We need to recognize that any attributes we have are a direct result of the blessings that Almighty God has bestowed upon us, as well as the opportunities He has given us. After all, it is only by God's pleasure that we continue to live, breath, and are able to do the things we do. It's high time that credit be given to Whom the credit is due, and it's not us (cf. Dan. 4:30-33; 1Tim. 3:6),

And you shall remember the Lord your God, **for it is He who gives you power to get wealth ...** (Dt. 8:18a; emphasis added).

For she (mankind) did not know that **I** (Almighty God) **gave her grain, new wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold – which they prepared for** (gave credit to) **Baal** (a false God) (Hos. 2:8; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. ²⁵Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things (Ac. 17:24-25).

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor. 11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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