

## **Proverbs-Pride/Humility**

Today, as we continue our topical survey of the book of Proverbs, we are going to look at two very extremely contrasting attitudes that have an absolutely massive impact on our relationship with God, with people, and on our own perspective of how to approach life, work, and our service to the Lord through the church. We are going to examine, from the divinely inspired point of view of Proverbs, the extreme contrast between pride and humility and the significant consequences each brings.

If you want a perfect example to use in your English class of an antonym, try Pride and humility.

**Pride-** an overly high opinion of one self; exaggerated self-esteem, conceit, haughty behavior, arrogance

Bruffa def<sup>o</sup> - Pride in its extreme and most spiritually offensive sense is a refusal to genuinely acknowledge and give glory to God. It is self-worship.

**Humility-** absence of pride or self-assertion; .....humble-having or showing a consciousness of one's defects or shortcomings; not proud; not self-assertive; unpretentious

Bruffa def<sup>o</sup> - In its deepest and most spiritual sense humility is an honest admission of our weakness and complete dependence on God.

**Consequences of Pride/arrogance**

Before we get into the specific negative consequences of pride, I think we need to consider the different forms or even disguises that pride reveals or hides itself through. Of course the most obvious and annoying are those who speak up in a crowd, speaking loud and obnoxiously, and bragging on their many great accomplishments. But pride also takes on more subtle forms that are not nearly as noticeable or immediately outwardly offensive but none the less reek of arrogance. This may be a simple inward self-confidence void of true faith and dependence on God. It may be a reliance on one's own gifts and talents rather reliance on "Christ in you the hope of glory." It may be a quiet inward boasting of one's accomplishments rather than giving glory to God. It may be revealed through false or insincere attempts at showing humility.

Pride, in all its forms, subtle or outwardly obnoxious, is equally destructive and dangerous to the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of any person especially any true follower of Christ.

## **1. God hates it**

**13** To fear the LORD is to hate evil. I hate arrogant pride, evil conduct, and perverse speech. **P**rov 8:13 (HCSB)

Anything said only once in the entire scripture is God's Word, the absolute truth and must be taken seriously. God doesn't have to say something a certain number of times in order for us to take it seriously. His word is His word. But what if something is repeated, even in the same book? What if multiple warnings regarding the evil nature and destructive consequences of a particular attitude appear through the bible and especially

repeatedly in Proverbs? Should we not even more seriously heed the warnings? This is the case regarding the sinful nature of pride.

**16** Six things the LORD hates; in fact, seven are detestable to Him: **17** arrogant eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, **18** a heart that plots wicked schemes, feet eager to run to evil, **19** a lying witness who gives false testimony, and one who stirs up trouble among brothers.<sup>[20]</sup> **Prov 6:16-19 (HCSB)**

Obvious truth revealed: God hates pride! Why? Pride is the center of the attitude of Lucifer when he said- **14** I will ascend above the highest clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.” Isaiah 14:14 (HCSB) Pride contradicts faith and dependence on God. Pride says, “look what I’ve done.” “I don’t need God.” “I am god of my own life.”

**5** Everyone with a proud heart is detestable to the LORD; be assured, he will not go unpunished. **Prov 16:5 (HCSB)**

## **2. Disgrace**

**2** When pride comes, disgrace follows, but with humility comes wisdom. **Prov 11:2 (HCSB)**

Disgrace usually has to do with a gradual or sudden loss of our public image, our reputation where people may have once thought of us as righteous and faithful changes to that of loathsome and despicable.

The best biblical example of that kind of disgrace I can think of is David. He was once highly revered and respected. He was praised as a mighty warrior. Songs were sung about the valor and victories of David. But his pride led to laziness and loss of self-discipline which led to sin and disgrace. He lost the respect of the people, was mocked, spit upon, overthrown and run out of town in complete disgrace.

Pride will not fail to lead us to similar disgrace.

### **3. Destruction**

**18** Pride comes before destruction, and an arrogant spirit before a fall. **19** Better to be lowly of spirit with the humble than to divide plunder with the proud. **Prov 16:18-19** (HCSB)

Destruction of what? Reputation, influence, power, wealth, health and even life itself .... Whatever we have allowed in our lives to inflate our pride over the need to trust in, rely on, and give glory to God. Pride will destroy everything good and pleasant. Its path will be like that of a tornado complete and merciless.

**25** The LORD destroys the house of the proud, but He protects the widow's territory. **Prov 15:25** (HCSB)

### **4. Humility**

**23** A person's pride will humble him, but a humble spirit will gain honor. **Prov 29:23** (HCSB)

This is actually a good thing. To get humility by any method is good and for our benefit but there are a lot of other more honorable and (I might add) pleasant ways to get humility than it being forced upon us by the negative and destructive forces of arrogance and excessive pride. If and when humility is forced upon us by the destructive forces of pride, it is likely to also be mixed with shame and embarrassment.

## **5. Discipline**

<sup>3</sup> The proud speech of a fool [brings] a rod [of discipline], but the lips of the wise protect them. Prov 14:3 (HCSB)

Interesting how it is likely the tongue that eventually brings down the prideful. We may get away with silent and subtle pride for a prolonged period of time but once we become verbal, expressing our arrogance openly and publicly, the rod of discipline will soon be on our backs. Whether it is God Himself, one of His children, or simply stepping away from us and allowing Satan to have his way with us. Either way we can be assured it will not be pleasant. The Lord disciplines those He loves. Count on it.

## **6. Downfall**

<sup>12</sup> Before his downfall a man's heart is proud, but before honor comes humility. Prov 18:12 (HCSB)

It is inevitable. The prideful will fall. We are not told in what way we will fall but it is probably directly related to the nature of our pride. Talent- loss of ability. Wealth- poverty. Position-

fired, voted out. Spirituality- respect and influence (2 deacons-former church)

There is perhaps no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as pride. Beat it down, stifle it, mortify it as much as one pleases, it is still alive. Even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility. [Benjamin Franklin, from his autobiography](#). Pride is the only disease that makes everyone sick but the one who has it. [Source Unknown](#).

## **Fruit of Humility**

Genuine, honest, sincere humility becomes the fertile soil in which so many good things find life and nourishment to spread their roots. When we can honestly think and say as Paul <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good lives in me, Romans 7:18 (HCSB) Then, we are ready for God to begin a great work in us.

Last week we easily found specific things we should do in order to gain wisdom. But I wonder if the only thing we can or really need to do to become genuinely humble is to get control of and suppress our pride. Humility is the natural consequence of one who has repented of and forsaken his self-glorifying, self-important pride then coming to God needy, broken and hungry.

Let's look at the fruit of humility. Note: Almost without exception, each fruit of humility is contrasted with the destructive opposing forces of ungodly pride.

### **1. Wisdom**

<sup>2</sup> When pride comes, disgrace follows, but with humility comes wisdom. Prov 11:2 (HCSB)

## 2. Fear the Lord

<sup>4</sup> The result of humility is fear of the LORD, along with wealth, honor, and life. Prov 22:4 (HCSB)

Pride, consciously or sub-consciously, resists the power and authority of God on our lives. Humility not only acknowledges God's authority in our lives but fully submits to it. To fear the Lord is to fully honor and respect Him. To fear His righteous judgment and seek His grace and forgiveness.

## 3. Grace

<sup>34</sup> He mocks those who mock, but gives grace to the humble. Prov 3:34 (HCSB)

We're not talking about saving grace. Saving grace comes solely by the love and goodness of God, not something we can achieve or earn through certain good behaviors. But in light of humility, we're talking about daily grace, sustaining grace, God's favor on us above and beyond what we could ever rightly claim we deserve. This He pours out more and more as we become less and less in our own eyes.

## 4. Honor

<sup>23</sup> A person's pride will humble him, but a humble spirit will gain honor. Prov 29:23 (HCSB)

Honor, true honor, cannot be gained or achieved. It can only be placed or given to someone by someone else. Self-applied honor is ungodly pride. True honor is given by others and especially by God. Honor is achieved through quiet, humble, faithful, self-sacrificing service.

**12** Before his downfall a man's heart is proud, but before honor comes humility.<sup>[12]</sup> **Prov 18:12 (HCSB)**

**33** The fear of the LORD is wisdom's instruction, and humility comes before honor. **Prov 15:33 (HCSB)**

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

[Abraham Lincoln, 1863.](#)

I believe pride is one, if not the worst, of our most common maladies. If we would humble ourselves enough to admit it, we are all plagued with the disease of arrogance. In our homes, at work, at church, and everywhere else, pride's destructive forces erode our families, church, and our very lives. We arrogantly refuse to move, give, change, or even listen to each other or

what God is saying because we are so arrogantly, self-appointed masters of our own lives. We will either fight or give in to this struggle if pride every day of this life.

Pride says, "I am right. You're wrong. My way is best. You're way is stupid. I am in control. I will not move or change because I don't need to. I'm OK. I don't need God. I am god." We may not say these things out loud, but these are the evil inspired attitudes of pride that brew and stir within every one of us. Just admit it. Pride has destroyed so many homes, churches and even nations and it will destroy you and yours. Will pride destroy you?

Humility says, "I am weak. I messed up and I continue to mess up. I am sorry. Please forgive me. Please help me. I need you. I need God. I am broken. I need to listen, change, and serve."

This humility thing goes against every element of our old, carnal, but still alive and well fleshly nature. There is nothing natural about humility. Only through a deeply committed relationship with the God who humbled Himself all the way to the cross will we be able to tear down the tower of Babel, the tower of pride in our lives, and begin to appropriately humble ourselves. Will you humble yourself under the mighty hand of God or will you one day be humbled?