



"Proverbs / Wisdom for Life"
Wk. 2 Pride vs. Humility
By Pastor Jody May 02/13/2022

Proverbs 16:18-19

- ¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a fall.
¹⁹ It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor
than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Proverbs 8:13

- ¹³ The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil.
Pride and arrogance and the way of evil
and perverted speech I hate.

Proverbs 11:2

- ² When pride comes, then comes disgrace,
but with the humble is wisdom.

Proverbs 15:13

- ³³ The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom,
and humility comes before honor.

Proverbs 29:23

- ²³ One's pride will bring him low,
but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.
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[INTRO - PRIDE]

Here is my working definition of pride. Pride is self-absorption. There are a myriad of words that describe "self-absorption." Such as: narcissistic, egotistical, self-centered, or megalomania. But for simplicity's sake, let's stick with "self-absorption." **I want you to think of pride as a sponge- a gross sponge. Proudful people absorb everything around them. It's all about them.** Everything is centered on them. Regardless of what they are doing, nothing is about the thing they are doing, but it's about them. They are always adding things up. Always asking, "What about me?" It's '**meism**'. Here's the scary thing: pride can manifest itself in **superiority or inferiority**.

The superiority form of pride says, "*Look at me I am better than you.*" You are



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always comparing yourself to others and feel superior because you have more or done more. Conversely, the inferiority form pride says, "Oh look at me, I deserve what that person has." You are always adding things up, but not measuring up to other people. Both types of people are self-absorbed.

What are your thoughts when I say pride? Better yet, whom do you think of? Maybe it's a celebrity, a boss, coworker, friend, or a teammate?

Who is it that you never think of?.....YOU. See, one of the toughest aspects about discussing pride is when you start talking about it; people began to think about someone other than themselves. You never say, "I am the most prideful person that I have ever met."

What does that indicate about us? We are all prideful people. Why is this? Why does this happen? It happens because of the effects of sin. Thanks to our first parents, Adam and Eve, when they choose to sin it affected the rest of mankind. **King David says in Psalms 51:1-5:**

***Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.***

We are all born into sin. We are sinners by nature and choice.

Well, to better understand pride and humility I want us to look at a case study. Look in your Bibles at **Daniel 4. Our subject will be King Nebuchadnezzar's. He is the King of Babylon.** Let me catch you up to speed on the story. King Neb. is the King of Babylon, the biggest and most powerful city in the entire world. Earlier in chapter 4, King Nebuchadnezzar has a dream and he needs someone to interpret the dream. So he has Daniel brought forward to interpret the dream. The dream consists of a great and mighty tree that reached heaven and was visible to the end of the earth. However, this tree was to be chopped down and destroyed, but the stump was to be left. It also said that his mind and body would become like that of a beast. He would eat grass.

1. What Pride does to a person.



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Daniel 4:22

²²it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong. Your greatness has grown and reaches to heaven, and your dominion to the ends of the earth.

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. There was a giant tree that covered the earth as far as it could be seen (think *Avatar*). This tree was cut down, chopped up, stripped, and its' stump was banded with iron and now this stump endured the elements just as everyday grass for seven seasons. Here's the interpretation:

Daniel 4:25

That you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and you shall be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.

Daniel interprets the dream, and he begs the king to repent (27). The king seems not to hear a word he says. I also want to point out that Neb. is no stranger to what God can do, he has already witnessed the preservation of the three young men in the fiery furnace which prompted him to praise God. This is a man that is very aware of what God can do, but he heeds not Daniel.

One year later we find the king taking a walk around the roof of the palace, most likely to view the hanging gardens. The majesty of what he sees overwhelms him. But in the recognition of beauty and the feeling of elation he decides to pat himself on the back.

Daniel 4:30

³⁰and the king **answered** and said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?"

It has been a year since the warning, but the king remembers, because in verse 30 it says he **"answered"**. Let me just say this is one of the **first warning signs** that your pride has gotten too big. He is having an internal dialogue, he is arguing against the will of God, He is adding up in his mind



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what he is worth, and the summation is that *“I am too valuable, look what I have completed.”* The problem is not that He doesn’t believe ‘WHAT’ God can do, but he’s having a hard time understanding ‘WHY’ God would do it. His Pride led him to self-deceit, he believed that God needed him not the other way around!?

Have you ever found yourself having an argument with God, and explaining why you should have something, or arguing for what should be yours? If so, perhaps you’re suffering from the delusion as well that God needs you more than you need Him?

In the ancient world man worked hard to establish a garden, to have dominion, and the gods were there to be bought by the work of your hands for continual favors. The God of Israel though, Jehovah, is the one true God who states all things belong to him, you work it for Him, to point back to God. It was a favor to you to let you live in His world and it was foolish not to recognize divine blessings. Here is an important lesson that Solomon taught his kingdom centuries earlier:

Proverbs 16:18-19

- ¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a fall.
- ¹⁹ It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor
than to divide the spoil with the proud.

The lesson of Wisdom for our lives is when Pride shows its’ ugly face you need to **expect a RUDE AWAKENING**. On top of that,⁵ it usually doesn’t happen in a private way. Lessons to bring about humility are usually done publically so that others would learn and so that you would remember.

So, **what does pride do to a man?** Pride makes us neglect repentance, pride makes us avoid problems in our lives, pride makes us argue against a righteous God with unrighteous motives, Pride makes us think that God needs us, and pride sets us up for a fall that will hurt and cause scars.



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But you should know, the good news of the gospel, is that for His children Pride is not your death it is just something that needs to be dealt with, and it is something you have neglected, but a loving father who is more interested in your sanctification, is going to take care of that for you.

2. To fix Pride God can and will humble you.

(God drives him out...)

Dan. 4:31-32

...“The kingdom has departed from you, ³²and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.”

You may think this was a little harsh but let’s remember Daniel tried to intercede for him, called for his repentance, and then on top of that God gave him a year to do it. That’s usually how God works with people. You and I think that God is provoked to anger and wrath immediately, but **God’s actions are always preceded by persistent warnings, periods of mercy, and patient calling.** Today there are some of you in here right now God has already spoken to you time and time again and you are still playing the ‘stalling’ game.

There are things that God has pointed out through His word, through your friends, through elders in the church, through His preaching, and you are still avoiding, and you still have a disposition of callousness. So, let’s just be clear on how God views our Pride:

Proverbs 8:13

¹³The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil.
Pride and arrogance and the way of evil
and perverted speech I hate.

You cannot enter into God’s presence when Pride controls your life, when self-absorption dictates your desires, and when you are still believing that all



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things point to you, that IS evil personified. Pride is either the thing that **leads you into hell** or it is the thing that will be ruthlessly cut out of you before your **entrance into heaven**. And if you still are not hearing me correctly this morning, again I ask you to TRUST God’s Word, and listen to the future of those entrenched with Pride:

Proverbs 11:2

²When pride comes, then comes disgrace,
but with the humble is wisdom.

Pride is unavoidably tied to one’s disgrace, it’s not a question of **‘if’** it will happen but **‘when’**. Usually, prideful people think they can avoid the fall, *too smart for their own britches*, but God says it is the humble person that is truly wise. If you want to avoid a downfall like Neb, listen more to what God is telling you, (TRUST) through His Word today instead of perhaps a deceitful heart.

Family in love and in awe let me just say, Jesus demonstrated to us on the cross, what is the payment for sin, for pride. We either accept His death in place of ours or we embrace our eternal death for the price of keeping our pride. Where are you at with this position this morning? Pride is nothing to be admired in people it is to be admonished for it keeps us under the wrath of God. Now, if you find yourself under the loving discipline of God currently, this story also has the way in which we should respond:

3. The proper response to being humbled.

Dan. 4:34-35

³⁴ At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever,

for his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;

³⁵ all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,



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and he does according to his will among the host of heaven
and among the inhabitants of the earth;
and none can stay his hand
or say to him, "What have you done?"

Here we see the graciousness of God prevails in man. Neb. was not healed because a penance was served, because he endured some type of earthly purgatory, but the curse was released because **God relented**. God relented because He worked in Neb.'s heart causing repentance (monergism). We know it is a true repentance because Neb. understands all of life is about God, man is **NOT** the center, God is, and he sings a song about it! Again, another wise teaching of Solomon is shining through:

Proverbs 15:13

³³ The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom,
and humility comes before honor.

The proper response to God, after the fall of a prideful heart, comes from a Healthy Fear of God now producing **Wisdom for life!** That's what we said last week. People who have a healthy respect for God, have usually been allowed to deal with the ramifications of Pride. God has graciously allowed it to run its' course and for His children He has preserved them in their trials.

Notice no one took Neb.'s kingdom away from him while he was chewing the grass like a cow. No one was able to take him out and gain the throne while he was out of his mind. He didn't die from the elements and bad nutrition all the while having no t.p. and bad hygiene. ☺ Neb. has a very proper response because when he was at his **most vulnerable God saved Him...**

Today some of us, can tell similar stories. There are instances in our lives where we should have been left alone to our self-destructive ways because we did not deserve anything other than the wages of sin. There are things some of us have done that have shown us to be as Paul would say, "The chief of all sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15) and as rebellious and treasonous people we deserved death - **all BUT for GOD!** God preserved us, God would not let us go, God brought us back from delusional thinking, God brought us back from the



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lust of the flesh and the Pride of life! Some of you have even gotten to that sweet spot where like Neb. you have written about it, sung about it, you have shared that story with others. Lessons from pride are not about shame they are about rejoicing in a God that redeems people and sharing that joy with others! If you are still dealing with shame over your past, then you don't know Jesus, you don't God. To enlighten us let's share the last thing we can learn from this case study of pride:

4. God will exalt man BUT for His glory and purposes alone....

Dan. 4:17;36

¹⁷The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.

³⁶At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me.

What's ironic is that in v.17 Neb is still full of Pride, "I got it cause God wanted me to have it!" and then in v. 36 he has learned his lesson and then even both instances He gives glory to God! God exalts whom He will, He allows for the rebellion of his chosen as He wills, He allows for the humiliation of His people as He wills, and He does so that all may glorify Him according to the good purposes of His will. As a matter of fact, what this story shows is that God caused a man's suffering so that he may purify him, and through a fallen condition of man, both Neb. and God were glorified more.

Some people have such a disdain for any being that has that much control over another person. It sounds so callous and so denigrating to have a God that would use someone even in their humiliation to glorify Himself for His purposes. That's exactly why God chose to do it to Himself first so that we would all know that He alone is worthy to be praised, there is nothing asked of us that He did not first accomplish, and it is in Him alone that we should have



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pride (1 Cor. 1:31).

Philippians 2:6-8 ESV

⁶who, though he (Jesus) was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he **humbled** himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Paul reminds his listeners from a jail cell where he is suffering as a servant, that what we endure in suffering is all worth it, because Jesus did it first! When kings like Solomon and Neb. would not give up what they thought was theirs', Jesus gave up his legitimate place of divine deity, His divine birthright, His position of power, AND took on flesh, and humbled himself to the Father as a servant. He does this so that we would know God is worth it, and we all are called to obedience in humility, and not to do the same is to reject Him. The most prideful sin of all. Teaching this last lesson from Solomon:

Proverbs 29:23

²³ One's pride will bring him low,
but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.

Jesus has now obtained honor because he mastered living lowly in spirit where earthly kings failed. Jesus paid out the debt owed for our pride, and He was brought low, to death in a cold tomb for our sins. Jesus as our king extends grace to His people when we deserved death for our Pride. Jesus glorifies God with a humble life and in return the Father exalts His Son and Jesus raises from the dead so that all now can know that God alone is worthy of praise. Jesus praises the Father now and the Father has exalted Him above all others. The Wisdom of Solomon again has shown, to be true because that Wisdom started from the heart and mind of Christ and it was perfected in His life, so we would all know the Truth.

Friends, today we need to be busy mortifying the seed of pride in all our lives, especially if you claim to love Him.



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If you are in denial, if you are boastful, if you think you deserve what you have or you don't deserve your current treatment, then repent and turn towards God and ask Him to correct that pride.

If you find yourself arguing in your prayers more than praising God for your life, then repent please, for perhaps God will soften His correction in your life.

If you have gotten through some tough pride lessons, then friend make sure you are sharing those stories with others especially God's people.

And if you have been lifted up after a lesson then understand Christian that is an opportunity for you to model Christ and represent that your life was made to glorify Him in all things!

Pride vs. Humility “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.” – Prov. 14:12 ESV. Let us all be about praising Jesus today for the way of humility He chose and let us pursue Him with all diligence for His is the way that preserves our lives and honors God.

[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that graciously but relentlessly corrects our pride to exalt his name above our own.

Go in the name of the Son, that modeled humility and servanthood perfecting the path we could not tread.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that opens our eyes to our pride, that helps eradicate it, and empowers our stories to share with others.