

## The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

### Pride

[2 Corinthians 10:3-5 HCSB](#) For although we are walking in the flesh, we do not wage war in a fleshly way, (4) since the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments (5) and every high-minded thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

**Introduction** (2 Kings 19:11-13; 35-36; Psalm 10:4-5)

There are two kinds of pride: healthy pride (the good) and sinful pride (the bad and the ugly). Sinful pride is a terrible thing. Sinful pride makes you arrogant and I have discovered that arrogance is always based on ignorance. Consider the case of General Rabshekah as an example. King Sennacherib of Assyria ordered him to besiege Jerusalem with what was reportedly a 200,000 man army. Rabshekah stood before God's people and arrogantly boasted,

- [2 Kings 19:11-13 HCSB](#) Look, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the countries: they destroyed them completely. Will you be rescued? (12) Did the gods of the nations that my predecessors destroyed rescue them--*nations such as Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the Edenites in Telassar?* (13) Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, or Ivvah?"

In essence he was saying "I beat all these other people and all these other gods. Why should your Yahweh be any different?" What tragic ignorance! What sublime hubris! What was it that Rabshekah didn't know? Look down a few verses to:

- [2 Kings 19:35-36 HCSB](#) That night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. When the people got up the *next* morning--there were all the dead bodies! (36) So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and left. He returned *home* and lived in Nineveh.

When Rabshekah arrogantly boasted against God, the Angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian troops in a single night. That's 23,125 an hour. That's 385 trained, professional soldiers per minute. That's 6 per second. When the remaining 15,000 woke up to find the corpses the Bible (in what is perhaps the greatest understatement ever) says they went home.

You never sin alone. Rabshekah's arrogance killed all those men. His ignorant pride caused an untold amount of suffering back home because each of those men was someone's son, father, uncle, or lover.

Sinful pride is dangerous because it ignores the realities of life. Rabshekah didn't realize there was a real, powerful, vengeful God above Him who cared about His people. A proud man is always looking down on people. The problem is, as long as you're looking down, you're not aware of anything or anyone above you!

- [Psalms 10:4-5 HCSB](#) In all his scheming, the wicked arrogantly thinks: "There is no accountability, *since* God does not exist." (5) His ways are always secure; Your lofty judgments are beyond his sight; he scoffs at all his adversaries.

What are the characteristics of sinful pride? We struggle with pride when we:

1. Focus on ourselves rather than others
2. Have an unbalanced need to be recognized and appreciated
3. Talk most about ourselves when conversing with others
4. Draw undue attention to our abilities and achievements
5. Focus on our personal knowledge and experience
6. Develop a self-sufficient attitude; excluding God and others

7. Desire to control others
8. View others as lower or less important than ourselves
9. Primarily consider others in respect to meeting our needs
10. Refuse to give up our personal rights
11. Demonstrate too much concern about what others think of us
12. Have an unhealthy, unbalanced desire for self-advancement
13. Desire to be successful apart from God's blessing or direction
14. Have hurt feelings when others are promoted and we are overlooked
15. Feel sorry for ourselves (self-pity) when we're not sufficiently appreciated
16. Become defensive when we are criticized
17. Blame others for our failures
18. Have difficulty admitting when we have failed someone else

Listen to me. You need to hate pride in your life. You need to root it out like a weed; like the cancer that it is!

**Pride will lead to problems with others.**

- **Proverbs 13:10 HCSB** Arrogance leads to nothing but strife, but wisdom is gained by those who take advice.
- **Proverbs 28:25 HCSB** A greedy person provokes conflict, but whoever trusts in the LORD will prosper.
- **James 3:16 HCSB** For where envy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every kind of evil.
- **James 4:1 HCSB** What is the source of the wars and the fights among you? Don't they come from the cravings that are at war within you?

Is there strife in your life? Is conflict abounding? Then look carefully at the various actors in the scene. One of them is arrogant. Make sure that it's not you!

**Pride leads to dishonor and shame.**

- **Proverbs 11:2 HCSB** When pride comes, disgrace follows, but with humility comes wisdom.

Look at what happened when Jesus, the Son of God, God in flesh, humbled Himself and became obedient to His parents – His human parents who couldn't fully understand what He was!

- **Luke 2:51-52 HCSB** Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them. His mother kept all these things in her heart. (52) And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people.

Where prideful disobedience leads to disgrace, humble obedience always leads to favor with both God and men.

If I could just get you to remember one thing out of this sermon, out of this derash, it would be this simple equation:

**PRIDE = LOSS**

- **Proverbs 29:23 HCSB** A person's pride will humble him, but a humble spirit will gain honor.
- **Daniel 5:20 HCSB** But when his heart was exalted and his spirit became arrogant, he was deposed from his royal throne and his glory was taken from him.

However, it's not just that it demonstrates abysmal ignorance. It's not just that it can lead to terrible, costly mistakes. It's not even just the fact that it ruins all your human relationships! It's the fact that **GOD HATES PRIDE!**

- **Proverbs 8:13 HCSB** To fear the LORD is to hate evil. I hate arrogant pride, evil conduct, and perverse speech.

He (and anyone who wants to be like Him) will absolutely not tolerate it.

- [Psalms 101:5 HCSB](#) I will destroy anyone who secretly slanders his neighbor; I cannot tolerate anyone with haughty eyes or an arrogant heart.

**He will humble the proud** and if they steadfastly retain their grip on arrogance He will ultimately **destroy the haughty**.

- [Psalms 18:27 HCSB](#) For You rescue an afflicted people, but You humble those with haughty eyes.
- [Proverbs 15:25 HCSB](#) The LORD destroys the house of the proud, but He protects the widow's territory.

On the other hand, **He shows favor to the humble**.

- [Psalms 10:17 HCSB](#) LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will strengthen their hearts. You will listen carefully,
- [Psalms 138:6 HCSB](#) Though the LORD is exalted, He takes note of the humble; but He knows the haughty from afar.
- [James 4:6 HCSB](#) But He gives greater grace. Therefore He says: **God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble**.
- [1 Peter 5:5 HCSB](#) Likewise, you younger men, be subject to the elders. And all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because **God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble**.

What causes pride to develop? Though this list is by no mean exhaustive, let me share with you five sources or origins of pride.

1. **Unbalanced self-sufficiency**. (Deuteronomy 8:17-18; Isaiah 10:13-16; 2 Corinthians 4:7)
  - [Deuteronomy 8:17-18 HCSB](#) You may say to yourself, 'My power and my own ability have gained this wealth for me,' (18) but remember that the LORD your God gives you the power to gain wealth, in order to confirm His covenant He swore to your fathers, as it is today.
  - [Isaiah 10:13-16 HCSB](#) For he said: I have done *this* by my own strength and wisdom, for I am clever. I abolished the borders of nations and plundered their treasures; like a mighty warrior, I subjugated the inhabitants. (14) My hand has reached out, as if into a nest, to seize the wealth of the nations. Like one gathering abandoned eggs, I gathered the whole earth. No wing fluttered; no beak opened or chirped. (15) Does an ax exalt itself above the one who chops with it? Does a saw magnify itself above the one who saws with it? As if a staff could wave those who lift it! As if a rod could lift what isn't wood! (16) Therefore the Lord GOD of Hosts will inflict an emaciating disease on the well-fed of Assyria, and He will kindle a burning fire under its glory.
  - [2 Corinthians 4:7 HCSB](#) Now we have this treasure in clay jars, so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us.
2. **Empty, fruitless knowledge**. (1 Corinthians 8:1)
  - [1 Corinthians 8:1 HCSB](#) About food offered to idols: We know that "we all have knowledge." Knowledge inflates with pride, but love builds up.
3. **Spiritual gifts and ministry** can become a source of pride. (2 Corinthians 12:7)
  - [2 Corinthians 12:7 HCSB](#) especially because of the extraordinary revelations. Therefore, so that I would not exalt myself, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to torment me so I would not exalt myself.
4. **Pride of place** (Jude 1:6)

- **Jude 1:6 HCSB** and He has kept, with eternal chains in darkness for the judgment of the great day, angels who did not keep their own position but deserted their proper dwelling.
5. **Despising proper authority**
- **Jude 1:8 HCSB** Nevertheless, these dreamers likewise defile their flesh, despise authority, and blaspheme glorious beings.

So what do we do?

**Derashot:**

1. We must actively replace pride with humility. (Psalm 138:6; Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6; 1 Corinthians 13:4; Philippians 2:3)
2. We must change the focus off of ourselves and onto others. (1 Corinthians 13:4; Romans 12:3; Mark 9:34-35)
3. We should reject everything that exalts itself against Adonai. (2 Corinthians 10:5)

Sinful pride is bad. Sinful pride brings all kind of ugliness in our lives. IF there is any room for healthy pride; good pride; if there is something about which we should properly be proud, it should be that we know Yahweh Adonai.

- **Jeremiah 9:23-24 HCSB** This is what the LORD says: The wise must not boast in his wisdom; the mighty must not boast in his might; the rich must not boast in his riches. **(24)** But the one who boasts should boast in this, that he understands and knows Me—that I am the LORD, showing faithful love, justice, and righteousness on the earth, for I delight in these things. *This is* the LORD's declaration.

**Study Questions**

Why can't a proud person be used by God? Psalm 10:4; James 4:6

What areas of our lives are affected by pride? Psalm 12:3; Matthew 6:1-2

What causes pride to develop? Deuteronomy 8:17; 1 Corinthians 8:1; 2 Corinthians 12:7

What are the practical consequences of pride in a marriage? Proverbs 13:10; 28:25

What is humility and how can it be demonstrated within the context of marriage? Mark 9:34-35; Philippians 2:3

How can the focus of a marriage partner be changed from one's self to one's spouse? 1 Corinthians 13:4; Romans 12:3; Mark 9:34-35