

## Problem Thinking & the Lord's Healing: Bad Pride/Good Pride

Pride is a challenge to write about. It can be good or bad, depending on what we have pride in. For the wrong pride we all have it; it can be extremely negative, have horrible effects and can disguise itself. One of our volunteers who has worked with many inmates over twelve years says that he thinks almost all of the problems that the inmates he has worked with stem from Pride. In reviewing Biblical verses on pride, we find that we can also have pride in good things. What we have pride in is extremely important.

Old Testament verses indicate that Pharaoh, (Gen 9:17), Ruben (Gen 49), Israel (several), Adonijah (I King 19), Hezekiah (2 Chron. 17), and Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4) reflected pride by not respecting the LORD. (Numb 15).

Pride is associated with loftiness, arrogance, haughtiness and deceit, and lack of concern. It is born and it grows (Jer. 48 & 49, Ezek. 7, 16 & 30, Hos. 7). Here are the ways pride was reflected in the O.T.

- Not seeking or paying attention to, not giving thought to and going against God's commands, priests, wishes or orders and stiffening their necks (Isa. 16, Deut. 1, 10 & 1Sam. 15, Neh. 9),
- Speaking words as if they were of God when they were not (Deut. 18),
- Trusting or working in their own strength or solutions and not God's (Deut. 32, Judges 7, Isa 9),
- Working against God's people (Gen 9, Ps. 36, Zeph. 2),
- Having arrogance, wrath, cursing, lying, & foolish, perverted or uncontrolled speech (Prov. 11&14, Isa. 16, I Sam. 2, Ps. 59)
- Wanting to make themselves king (I King. 19)
- Stuffing themselves, being idle and persecuting not strengthening the poor (Ps. 10, Ezk. 16),
- Not seeking God or keep Him in their thoughts, (Ps.10, Hos. 7)
- Getting Drunk (Isa. 28, Proverbs 23 best description of alcoholism I have ever seen)
- Mocking, scoffing, and haughty (Prov. 21)

Pride brought wrath and punishment, wasteland and testing on themselves and others (Lev. 6, Deut. 8, Deut. 17). It binds people as a chain and is associated with violence which is like a garment, (Ps. 73), brings shame, dishonor, disgrace, strife and contention, (Prov. 11 & 13) humbles or brings people low (Prov. 29), doesn't see the end of a matter, (Ecc. 7) and precedes destruction and falls (Prov. 16, Hos. 5).

God hates pride and arrogance, evil conduct and perverted speech. (Prov. 8) God saves those that are in trouble and makes the proud become low (2 Sa. 22). He wants to put negative pride to death, stain it, bring contempt to it (Isa. 23) mar it (Jer. 13), bring wrath on it, bring it down & us down from it, (Deut. 10, Jer. 13 & 49, Isa. 23& 25) make it low (Deut. 8), dispose and abase it, despoil it and cut it off (Zech 9 & 11) in order to bring positives, (Dan. 4 & 5) He weeps deeply in secret with tears running down His face over us if we have pride (Jer. 13)

God sees and knows the motivations of our hearts (Josh. 22). He says that hearts can be cleansed and pride put away (Deut. 10), pride of hearts can be broken (Lev. 26), people can be accused of pride when they have the right motives (I Sam. 17), we can repent (2 Chron. 32, Dan. 4) and our hearts can be lifted up in the ways of Yahweh (2Chron. 17). Pharaoh did not humble himself and was destroyed. (Ex. 14, Ps. 136) Hezekiah (2Chron. 32) and Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4) were humbled and found grace and honor again.

Here are two verses that help us put pride down and be humble. "What does the Lord your God ask of you except to fear the Lord your God by walking in all His ways, to love Him, and to worship the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul? Keep the Lord's commands and statutes I am giving you today, for your own good." Deut. 10: 12b-13 says ...and one which I learned as a song and is of my favorites; "He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8NASB)

In the New Testament Paul confronts those who have pride and it is listed as the following

- Sins so grievous that pagans don't do them, appearance over truth (Mt. 23, 2 Cor.5, James 2),
- Knowledge without love (1 Cor. 13)
- Thinking ourselves better than others, lust for what is in the world (1Jn. 2)

- Passing judgement before God's time (I Cor. 4)
- Loving ourselves (more than God or others) and money
- Given to bitter words, never giving praise, not seeking God, not listening to authority or not having any religion (2 Tim. 3),
- Having no true knowledge – but loving discussions and controversies which bring ... quarrels and suspicions, adulteries, greed, evil actions, deceit, promiscuity, stinginess, blasphemy, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, lewdness, an evil eye, No respect, loud talk, evil intentions, not honoring father or mother, lustful desires, envy, slander, foolishness and novices who teach (Mt. 7, Rom. 1, 1Tim. 3 & 6, 2 Tim. 3).
- Satan speaks words of pride against God (Rev. 13). With His arm, He has done acts of power and put to flight those who have pride in their hearts. (Lk 1) God hates pride (1Pe. 5, 1Jn. 2)

We have no reason for pride in ourselves, because our salvation and standing with God is a gift, the reasoning of man is useless and it is only because of God's wisdom and power that we have this gift and belong to Him (Rom. 2 & I Cor. 3), thus we should do His work without pride (Acts 20, Rom. 3 & 11)

Scripture gives us what to do with pride. Circumcise the heart and put it away (Duet.8) Fear the Lord is to hate evil. (Prov.8) Put away the pride, dirt ... and evil (1Pe. 5), Seek humility & wisdom (Prov. 1 & 11) Listen now; not hardening our hearts (Heb. 3), Take in The Word without pride (Ja. 1) and Let love be the most important. (1 Cor. 8 & 13). We can take pride in God, His word and His people. God is without pride and taking His yoke brings rest. (Mt. 9:11)

Here are the things scripture says to take pride in. We need to ask ourselves, "What do we glory in?"

"This is what the Lord says: The wise man must not boast in his wisdom; the strong man must not boast in his strength; the wealthy man must not boast in his wealth. But the one who boasts should boast in this, that he understands and knows Me— that I am Yahweh, showing faithful love, justice, and righteousness on the earth, for I delight in these things. This is the Lord's declaration. Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord that he understands and knows Me— that I am Yahweh, showing faithful love, justice, and righteousness on the earth, for I delight in these things. This is the Lord's declaration." Jeremiah 9:23 HCSB

"I will boast in the Lord; the humble will hear and be glad." Psalm 34:2 HCSB.

#### Good which scripture says pride is taken in:

- ◇ in the Lord that he understands and knows Me— that I am Yahweh, showing faithful love, justice, and righteousness on the earth (Ps. 39Jer. 9)
- ◇ Parents (Prov. 17)
- ◇ Humility/Humble spirit & wisdom, taking advice - brings honor (Prov. 11 & 29)
- ◇ Good/Wise speech—protects us (Prov. 14) Ministry (Rom. 11)
- ◇ The law of faith which shuts out pride (Rom. 3)
- ◇ Christ Jesus in the things which are God's, ministering as a priest sharing the gospel. (Rom. 15)
- ◇ In each other - us –not appearance or seeming, but the things of the heart (2 Cor. 5)
- ◇ You – the churches of God – and the good things said about you. Titus & the Corinthians (2 Thes.1, 2 Cor. 7)
- ◇ Agreeing, feeling, loving and caring for one another, coming under authority of those older, being servants and making oneself low (1Pe. 3)
- ◇ Bringing to light what is hidden, applying that to yourself so that pride doesn't cause people to be puffed up against each other .. (1 Cor.4)
- ◇ The things which are written - Scripture (1 Cor. 4)
- ◇ Not charging for the gospel, being compelled, obligated and a steward to preach (1 Cor. 9)
- ◇ A life of dying, dying to self (and selfishness) daily (I Cor. 15, 2 Cor.7)
- ◇ Giving (2Cor. 9) Making yourself low (1Pe. 5)

- ◇ Untroubled mind, faith in trouble and sorrows (2 Thess. 1)
- ◇ Authority to build up believers (2 Cor. 10)
- ◇ Hebrew, descendant of Abraham, Servant of Christ, imprisoned, lashed, beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrecked, in danger, labor, hardship, hunger, thirst, exposure, daily concern for the church and individuals (2 Cor. 11)
- ◇ Weakness, being feeble - God's strength (2 Cor. 12)
- ◇ His own work, not charging for the gospel (Gal. 6)
- ◇ In me is increased by being with you by my presence, -being with you- (Phil. 1)
- ◇ Being quiet, doing your business, working with your hands (1Thes. 4)
- ◇ The humble or poor in spirit being lifted up and the rich in being made humble (Ja. 1)
  - ◇ Mercy, overcoming judging (Ja.2)
  - ◇ Grace (Ja. 4)

### Questions for lesson Bad Pride/Good Pride

1. What do you take pride in?
2. Looking at the list of how pride is reflected in the Old Testament, are there things that surprise or startle you?
3. Does the list from the New Testament reflect the attitudes of anyone you know?
4. Do either of these lists have things that you have seen as positive and did this lesson help you to see the consequences of those attitudes?
5. How do these attitudes affect our relationships?
6. Can you think of any specific people that the relationship has been affected and are you willing to pray for yourself and for them?
7. Does it surprise you that the Bible tells us that we should have pride in these good things?
8. Do you see that these good things are gifts and we do not earn them ourselves, but that God will give them to us as we humble ourselves and ask? (James 5)
9. What do you honor? Are you willing to honor God and others as well as what God gives you, creates in you and does for you?
10. Do you give, or are you a giving individual and when you do give is it for selfish reasons or truly a gift?
11. How does the saying or verse "In our weakness is His strength" (2 Corinth. 12) help you to understand it is ok to lean on God?
12. How can being with others increase our faith and strength?
13. How can Being quiet increase our faith and strength?
14. Mercy is when we deserve something bad and we are forgiven, Grace is when we receive something we do not deserve. Christ paid with His life for our sins and mistakes so that we could be loved, adopted and close to God and so that we could be loved and are able to love others. Are you willing to seek Him and to learn to know Him?