**WHAT ABOUT PRIDE? (Beth and Murray Wade)**

**INTRODUCTION**

We have many ladies that use their talents in developing classes and curriculums. We also have some ladies who have helped with sermon outlines and TV program outlines. All those activities are important in sharing ideas and spreading the good news. Beth has provided the backbone of today's lesson called, "What About Pride?" This seemed to me to be a logical follow up to my lesson last week on Pride from James chapter 4. Hopefully this study will be helpful for all of us.

As Christians we often teach and preach about humility. We understand and stress the need of having a humble attitude in order to be pleasing to God and to reach our goal of heaven. But how do we attain that all-important Christ-like attribute? The answer is that we must rid ourselves of pride. The Bible is full of teachings and warnings about pride. Pride may be the main stumbling block for keeping many people out of heaven. We must understand what a danger it is to us and how to recognize it in our lives. Getting rid of pride begins with the heart and removing it requires soul-searching. **Mark 7:20-23** identifies pride as one of the evil things that is within the heart of man that produces what comes out of a man and defiles him. It is important that we root out pride and remove it from our hearts.

When we think of examples in the Bible of those who were proud, we might think of Nebuchadnezzar in **Daniel 4**. God humbled him and taught him that God is able to put down those who walk in pride (**Daniel 4:28-37**). Daniel also tells us that Nebuchadnezzar’s son, Belshazzar, did not humble himself and raised himself up against the LORD of heaven (**Daniel 5:22-23**). This cost him his life. King Hezekiah of Judah also let his power and riches puff him up, but God humbled his heart as well (**2 Chronicles 32:24-26**).

Based on these examples we can see that power and riches can tempt us to become proud. However, let’s look at a New Testament example of pride that may hit a little closer to home when it comes to being proud. Let’s look at the parable of “The Pharisee and the Tax Collector” in **Luke 18:9-14**. What was the cause of the Pharisee’s haughty attitude? Jesus was telling this parable to some “who ***trusted*** in ***themselves*** that they were righteous, and despised others…” (**Luke 18:9**). As Christians, can we become proud of ourselves and trust in our own righteousness? Let’s take a hard look at the sin of pride.

**WHAT IS PRIDE?**

The Bible states very plainly in **Proverbs 21:4** that pride is a sin. **Romans 1:30 and 2 Timothy 3:1-2** include pride in a list of many sins that men practice.

There are four different Greek words that are translated as “pride” or “proud” in the New Testament. They are listed in Strong’s Concordance as #212, #5187, # 5243 and #5244. Some translate these words as “haughty”, “puffed up”, “arrogant”, “high-minded” or “boastful”. Strong’s gives the meaning of #5244 (the most commonly used of the four) as “showing oneself above others, preeminent”. **The Scriptures *always* use these terms in a bad sense.**

**HOW DOES GOD FEEL ABOUT PRIDE?**

First of all, the fact that God is ***never*** described as being proud, lifted up with pride, arrogant, haughty, etc. suggests how He feels about pride. If God (all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present) is not proud; then most certainly, we should not be proud. Pride is not part of ***being God.*** Our goal should be to pattern ourselves after God.

God ***hates*** pride. A proud look (haughty eyes) is at the top of the list of the abominations He hates (**Proverbs 6:16-17, 8:13**). God makes it very clear that He hates pride and arrogance. It is an abomination to Him. These are very strong words for something that we sometimes take too lightly.

God ***resists*** those who are proud (**James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5**). The term “resists” in these verses is a military term which means “to range in battle against”. Being proud puts us in direct opposition to God. It aligns us on the side of evil and puts us in a battle against God. That is a battle we will ultimately lose.

God has taken down many powerful men and nations because of pride. He humbled kings like Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Hezekiah, etc. and nations like Israel (**Hosea 5:5, 7:10**), Judah (**Isaiah 28:1-3**), Moab (**Isaiah 16:6, Jeremiah 48:29**), Tyre and Sidon (**Isaiah 23:9**), Sodom (**Ezekiel 16:49-50**), Samaria (**Ezekiel 16:55-56**), Egypt (**Ezekiel 30:6**), Edom (**Obadiah 1:1-3**), and Babylon (**Jeremiah 50:31-32**). He has shown throughout man’s history that He ***will not tolerate*** the proud.

**HOW DOES SATAN VIEW PRIDE?**

Satan ***loves*** pride. It is one of his best tools in tempting us to sin. **1 John 2:16** tells us that the “pride of life” is part of the world. The “world” here refers to Satan’s realm of power. He has used pride from the beginning when he tempted Eve to put herself on the same plane with God by eating the forbidden fruit (**Genesis 3:4-6**). He has used it time and time again to cause the downfall of many men and nations.

Satan ***uses*** pride to his advantage. Satan knows that the sin of pride will guide our actions and produce other sins (**Proverbs 21:24**).

**HOW IS PRIDE USED BY SATAN?**

* Pride hinders people from coming to God and accepting His word (**Psalm 10:4**)
* Pride causes people to stray from God’s commandments (**Psalm 119:21**)
* Pride hardens man’s spirit and prevents repentance (**Daniel 5:20, Hosea 7:10**)
* Pride destroys faith. One cannot be proud and also trust in the Lord (**Psalm 40:4, Isaiah 9:9-10, Habakkuk 2:4**)
* Pride leads to self-deception (**Jeremiah 49:16, Obadiah 3**)
* Pride can be a stumbling block to the immature (**1 Timothy 3:6**)
* Pride is the opposite of being patient in the Lord (**Ecclesiastes 7:8, James 5:7-8**). Impatience leads to problems and heartache.
* Pride produces envy (**Galatians 5:26, James 3:13-18**)
* Pride causes strife among people (**1 Timothy 6:3-5, Proverbs 13:10, 28:25**)
* Pride leads to shame and humiliation (being brought low) (**Proverbs 11:2, 29:23**)
* Pride defiles a man and leads to eternal death (**Mark 7:20-23, James 1:14-15**)

**HOW CAN I IDENTIFY PRIDE IN MY HEART AND MY LIFE?**

Acknowledging that pride might be a problem in our lives is the first step in identifying pride in our lives. Next we should take a hard look at some of the problems, temptations, and sins in our lives. We need to examine our hearts, in the light of God’s word, to see whether pride is the source of those things and then pray to God for help in getting rid of it. First we need to have the attitude of David in ***Psalm 139:23-24 “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting****.”*

Here is a list of things that might help us examine ourselves, whether we have pride in our hearts. This is certainly not an exhaustive list but it did stomp on my toes a bit.

* ***If I have a problem admitting that I am wrong and saying “I’m sorry”, I may have a problem with pride (Proverbs 26:12).***
* ***If I have a problem forgiving someone, I may have a problem with pride.***
* ***If I finally admit that I did the wrong thing, but it is someone else’s fault; I may have a problem with pride.***
* ***If I am unable to accept rebuke or criticism without lashing out or pouting, I may have a problem with pride.***
* ***If I can’t give up something simply because it offends my brother, I may have a problem with pride.***
* ***If I have a hard time getting along with people and there is always “drama” in my life, I may have a problem with pride.***
* ***If I look down on other sinners and think “I would never do that”, I may have a problem with pride (Romans 12:16).***
* ***If I have a hard time being patient with others, I may have a problem with pride.***
* ***If I look down on the needy rather than helping them, I may have a problem with pride (Ezekiel 16:49-50).***
* ***If I am determined to be self-reliant and “do it all myself”, I may have a problem with pride.* (Do I turn down help when I could really use it? Is my desire so strong to do things myself, that I hinder people from helping as they believe God wants them to do? Do I have trouble turning to God with my problems because I don’t want to “bother” Him?)**
* ***If I “kiddingly” brag on myself, I may have a problem with pride.* (The only time that boasting is used in a good or positive sense in the Scriptures is when glory is given to God and joy is expressed at the success of others – especially spiritual success (*2 Corinthians 7:4; 9:1-2*).**
* ***If I brag on my children because it reflects well on me, I may have a problem with pride.* (Why not rather give thanks and glory to God for them and their successes?)**
* ***If I read a command from God in the Bible and feel myself resisting it; or I think that I am the “exception to the rule”, I may have a problem with pride.***
* ***If I know what to do to be saved and I do not submit to God or I keep putting it off, I may have a problem with pride (James 4:17).***

**INVITATION**

If you have already submitted to God in baptism, but you realize that you are in sin. Don’t be proud. Humble yourself to God and repent. If you realize that pride has been leading you into sin, let God help you uproot it from your heart and replace it with humility, following the example of Jesus Christ (**Philippians 2:5-11**).

If you have not been obedient to God by submitting to him in baptism, don’t let Satan continue to use the weapon of pride against you. Realize that you need God and His love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness. Believe on the Lord, confess your belief that Jesus is the Son of God, repent of your sins, and be baptized for the remission of your sins.