

For the Love of the Family Ministries

Missionaries to America's Forgotten Mission Field, the Family

The Difficulties Of Pride In Our Life

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Proverbs 16:17-25, "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul. Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the Lord happy is he. The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning. Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly. The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips. Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."

In working with people in our counseling/discipleship program, I find that the area of pride is one of the most difficult things we as Christians deal with. Probably the most difficult sin to conquer in our life is pride. It hides itself very well in our lives. It is a deceitful and elusive sin. It is also a "root" sin. By that, I mean, it produces a lot of other sins. Any time you see a person with an anger issue in their life it comes from pride, Proverbs 21:24, "Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath." Many people have seen their home destroyed because they were too proud to admit they need counsel and to seek help. Because pride steals glory that is due to God alone, there are few sins that bring the level of destruction that pride brings.

The Christian life is a spiritual warfare. The devil seeks to put outside pressure on our lives to control our soul and thus control what we do. The devil always works from the outside in. God works from the inside out by speaking to our spirit by the Holy Spirit. The biggest tool for the devil to use in our lives is pride. Pride is a hindrance and a destroyer in every area of the Christian life. When we go back to the beginning of the Bible in Genesis we see that Satan used pride with Eve. He told her, "she would be like God and God did not want that to happen." This is the same method the devil has always used. All around us today there are people being destroyed in our local churches because of the pride issue that the devil uses in our lives. Many of the people who contact us through For the Love of the Family are in the difficulties they are in because of pride and it's off shoot sins. The Bible speaks much about pride. It is the key to either being a servant used by God or a person not being used as a servant and being destroyed.

Who is the author of pride? I Timothy 3:6, “Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” So, we see the devil is the author of pride. Isn't it interesting here that Paul is talking about a person being a preacher who has not learned how to deal with his pride? We all have it to deal with. The understanding of this is extremely important. Many young people who come out of Bible College today fall right on their face and do much destruction because of their pride. They are unwilling or do not understand that the power of God in our life is not by how much we think we know or even what we know, but by our submission to God. Sometime ago, I was in a church in another state. The pastor was a young man. Prior to the morning service, he took me into his office and spent the better part of an hour telling me how he thought God was using him. I fully expected us to pray and ask for God's blessing upon our day. We did not. We went out for Sunday school. He read one passage of scripture and then told jokes and motivational stories for the hour. The morning worship service was the same. He also preached in anger. He was very proud of the fact that the church was growing and how great he was. The thought in my mind at that point was, this church will end up blowing up and the fall of it will be great. I always enjoy hearing how God is working in others lives. However, I am interested in hearing what God is doing, not what folks are doing in their own power and self righteousness. Unfortunately, the destruction of many pastor's lives, their homes, their children, and their churches are because of pride. I have found that the biggest quitters are those who are prideful people. Folks, there is a premise here that is very important for the life of a church. There are people who are in the church today, who will pray and read their Bible in self righteousness but never do anything. Then there are those who are motivated by doing and give little attention to their Bible. A proper relationship with God means I spend time with the Lord in submission to Him, but it also motivates my doing, Matthew 7:24-27. Jesus said that a wise man is a hearer and a doer. People who do without hearing are motivated by pride. People who hear and never do are motivated by pride. There must be a balance in the relationship.

The devil's desire, of course, is for a lost person to not get saved. He will appeal to your pride and make you think you know more about it and you can work it out your own way. Psalm 10:4, “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.”
The devil uses pride on lost people and saved people.

Many people because of their pride die and go to hell. Folks, quite frankly, the reason I got saved was flat out because I did not want to die and go to hell. There is no future in it! Maybe you have had it bad in your life. Things have not gone well. Let me put it to you this way. Hell is eternal! It is not a place you can go for a weekend visit to see if you like it. There are no exits! You do not get out. Do not make a prideful, ignorant, eternal mistake and die and go to hell. You think life has been bad up till now? Hell will be nothing like anything you have ever known in bad! Don't let the devil use your pride to send you to hell. If you are reading this and are unsaved, right now is the time to tell the Lord you are a sinner and repent of your sins and ask Jesus to come into your heart and be your Savior.

There are three ways the Christian can live his or her life. They can live their life in unrighteousness, self-righteousness, or righteousness. Unrighteousness and self-righteousness are pride issues. The whole deal of self righteousness is a pride issue. Luke 18:11-12, “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” Pretty self righteous statements. How many times have I heard some prideful statement like this, “I grew up in a Christian home, I will always serve God.” Eighty percent of all children who grow up in an Independent Baptist church do not serve God. Many who grow up in Christian homes do not serve God. Why? Pride. It is their desire to go their own way and be independent of God.

The Apostle Peter was an example of someone who made prideful statements. He told the Lord that he would not deny Him. Of course, we know the Lord told him, “He would deny him thrice before the cock crew.” Peter denied him three times in his self righteousness. You see folks, a self righteousness person will be destroyed, because he has never learned that he is or she is nothing apart from their submission to God.

Proverbs 16:18-19, “Pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.” Did you notice humble spirit? Does that mean you just go around saying you are humble? You know, I am worse than dirt? No, it deals with a larger spiritual principle. You see there are those who have false humility. They hide their pride by talking about humility. Proverbs 16:25, “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death (destruction).” A person who is prideful thinks his way is right, not God’s way. Did you notice it will end in destruction? The word haughty here is an interesting word. Pride means I think more of myself than I should. Haughty means I think lower of others than I should.

A prideful person always brings strife and contention. Proverbs 13:10, “**Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.**” **The prideful person is always angry and fighting with someone. Every hurt or perceived hurt is magnified in their life. They are always upset with someone. They do not turn their hurts to God. They are grudge keepers. They are a hindrance to those who really want to serve God.**

A prideful person grieves the Spirit of God and they lead others into sin. A prideful person is a hindrance to their children growing up to serve God. In fact, they will be the reason their children die and go to hell or if the child does get saved, they live an ungodly life, Ephesians 6:4. A prideful person is stubborn and non teachable. A non teachable prideful person is miserable in their life and they are miserable to be around. They think they know more about living for God than anyone else, but fail to understand the spiritual point. Kim and I worked with a 17 year old whose pastor father brought to the counseling center. Both dad and mom were Bible college graduates. In fact, one had a master’s degree and the other an earned doctorate. They had home schooled their child. The child did not want to live for God, had been immoral, and was involved in drugs. The parents were prideful folks, who did not have a real relationship with God. Their pride was being crushed by God. The child was an extremely prideful person as well, who told us they knew more than most people and they and their friends had it all figured out. The child said they could handle drugs and sex and it would not be a problem and their parents were just going to have to accept it. One of the things the father mentioned among many was that we had family devotions. In further talking, I found they read books together and talked about them. Some of the books were secular and others not worth spiritually talking about. The child told me they never paid attention. I asked if they had ever spoken to anyone about the Lord. “Why would I want to do that,” was the answer. Of course, the parents did not either. Where do we get off with thinking we are too good to talk to the sinner about their needs? When a child grows up in a home that is too proud to see the world as God sees it, they are headed for destruction. If a child never learns to share their faith with others, they will lust after the things of the world (what the worldly kids have) because of their pride. However, the opposite extreme is true as well. When a young person who is taught soul winning makes them spiritual and they never have a real relationship with God the same results occur. They are prideful about the fact they witness to others. Both are recipes for destruction, because they are motivated by pride and the fall is great.

Folks, every Christian has to be willing to submit themselves to the teaching of God’s word. Do you believe the Bible today? Then watch carefully what it says, Proverbs 13:13, “Whoso

despiseth the word shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.”

If we do not submit ourselves to the teaching of God’s word, our arrogance and pride will lead us to destruction and shame. Proverbs 11:2-3, “When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom. The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.” A prideful person is deceived about themselves and about their spiritual condition, Galatians 6:7.

Proverbs 29:23, “A man’s pride shall bring him low; but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.” Proverbs 26:16, “The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.” Proverbs 26:12, “Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.”

God takes a dim view of a self righteous, prideful person. I have the opportunity to counsel with many people. When folks come in with a life in destruction, the first thing we want to find out is what area of pride they are holding onto as an idol of the heart. When we talk with them about this, pride raises its ugly head pretty quickly. The great hindrance to the church today, the cause of the gospel, and living for God, is the pride of the Christian.

The answer to our pride is to submit ourselves to God. James 4:6-7, “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” Psalm 25:9, “The meek (humble) will he guide in judgement: and the meek will he teach his way.” Let me ask you friend are you going around unhappy in your life? Are you always fighting, angry, upset with others? Are you always bucking authority, telling people your opinion, and what you are not going to do? Are you always trying to manipulate circumstances to the way you want it. God is going to resist you. Your work in self righteousness will destroy you and others around you. It will destroy your home, your husband, your wife, your children, and you. Ultimately, the pain of your life will be huge. You will make poor decisions and wonder why God is not changing the circumstances of your life. So, you will try to manipulate the circumstances and get frustrated when it does not work out. You will be defeated, discouraged, and depressed. You will be a people responder and not a God responder. God wants us to be a God responder and not a people responder. II Corinthians 3:5, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.” The only answer is to quit seeking to live the Christian life in self righteousness in your own power and submit to God. Today would be a good day to start the change by submitting yourself to God.

Maybe you need to tell God today, “Lord, I have been trying to live the Christian life in my own power, my own way. Please forgive me. I want to submit myself to you. Forgive me for the sin of pride in my life.”

Submission to God is the answer to a prideful life. Submission to God is true humility. The Christian who understands this will have a fruitful, powerful life. True submission however is a daily moment by moment thing. As you spend time with God each day, ask God these questions: Lord is there any sin that stands between you and me today? When He shows you the sin, confess it and turn from it, I John 1:9. Lord who and what do you want me to pray for today? Folks, submission is a matter of learning to listen to God not telling God what He is going to do. Lord, who do you want me to witness to today? Lord, who do you want me to encourage today? Lord what do you want me to

praise you for today? Consistently, you need to be turning issues of the day over to God. There will be issues every day in your life.

Do not be deceived dear Christian friend. The answer of the Bible on this subject is crucial to your life, your family, and your home. Many divorces are happening in Christian homes because one or both parties do not have a real relationship with God because of their pride.

Proverbs 16:18, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." God does not want it to be that way. He desires you have His power today by submitting yourself to Him.

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