

Proverbs on Pride

PREACH IT, TEACH IT DEVOTIONAL

SCRIPTURE STUDY

Proverbs 16:18
 Proverbs 6:17a
 Romans 7:14-25
 Romans 8:2
 Psalm 105:5
 2 Chronicles 26
 Isaiah 60:15
 Ezekiel 24:21
 Genesis 3:4
 1 Chronicles 26
 Psalms 47:4
 Proverbs 3:7, 26:12
 Isaiah 2:11,17, 4:2
 Luke 1:51b
 Romans 1:30
 James 4:16
 1 John 2:16.

PRAYER FOCUS

Dear Jesus,
 Teach me to identify the pride and self-reliance in my life that I may depend on You more fully. Thank you that You are proud of me because of Jesus' sacrifice and my adoption into your family.
 Amen



THE I IN PRIDE

“Pride goes before destruction”
 Proverbs 16:18 NIV

Holman’s Bible Dictionary defines pride as “undue confidence in and attention to **one’s own** skills, accomplishment, state, possessions, or position. Pride is easier to recognize than to define, easier to recognize in others than in oneself.” (emphasis added) As the saying goes, “When you say you have no pride, you still do.”

We are born ready to make ourselves known to the world. Initially it’s self preservation or we’d starve to death. Not long after that we learn two words: mine and no. Even as adults we use those two words often though we say them using flowery words in long sentences, but the meaning is the same.

WHAT’S WRONG WITH THE I IN PRIDE

Solomon in writing about pride penned: “A proud look [the spirit that makes one *overestimate himself* and *underestimate others*]” Proverbs 6:17a (AMP). (emphasis added)

The fundamental problem with “**I**” is that it’s singular. It leaves no room for anyone else: “**I**” is totally self-sufficient—no room for God, family or friends. Paul used “**I**” or “**me**” over 40 times as he looked inward and reviewed his struggle with sin in Romans 7:14-25. Finally, in Romans 8:2 he looked outside himself to Jesus who “set him free.”

“...the power of the life-giving Spirit...through Christ Jesus—has freed me...” Romans 8:2 (LB)

In the Old Testament the negative side of **I** in pride occurs in sixty-one verses found mainly in the prophets and the books of poetry. The main Hebrew root is *gh* and the most common term is *gaon*, and it occurs twenty-three times. Pride reveals itself in both attitude and conduct. It is also found as a synonym *gaba* meaning “to be high”. This normally means pride or arrogance, in particular “an inner attitude of pride,” often linked with parts of the human body (Isaiah 2:11,17)” (Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary). For example:

Pride of the eyes- Psalm 105:5: “whoever has haughty eyes...him will I not endure.” (NIV)

Pride of the spirit- Proverbs 16:18: “Pride goes before destruction” (NIV)

There are many forms of pride. The most insidious form of pride is **rebellion against God**. This was the very first test of man in the Garden of Eden as Satan tempted Eve with “You will not die! God knows that the instant you eat it you will become like him” (Genesis 3:4a LB). Eve chose to believe Satan and sin entered the world. Pride attributes to self the honor and glory that is due only to God. All forms of pride are based on it. For instance:

Boasting that is done in the presence of others:

“But as it is, you boast [falsely] in your presumption and your self-conceit. All such boasting is wrong.”

James 4:16 (AMP)

“...and the pride of life [assurance in one’s own resources or in the stability of earthly things]—these do not come from the Father but are from the world [itself]. 1 John 2:16 (AMP)

Haughtiness and arrogance are offensive and disdainful displays of superiority towards others:

“He has scattered the proud and the haughty” Luke 1:51b (AMP)

“...full of insolence, arrogance, [and] boasting” Romans 1:30 (AMP)

Conceit is having an excessively favorable opinion of your own ability and importance:

“Be not wise in your own eyes” Proverbs 3:7 (AMP)

“Do you see a man wise in his own eyes and conceit? There is more hope for a [self-confident] fool than for him.”

Proverbs 26:12 (AMP)

- As you read the above verses write “I” or “my” for the words that refer to the individual.
For example: I boast falsely in my presumption and my self-conceit. All such boasting is wrong. James 4:16
On the back summarize what these verses say and what God said in the earlier verses about pride.
- As we look at pride in this devotional it will be easy to think about how the subject applies to other people you know. However, pride comes in many forms and sometimes we’re being prideful and are not aware of it. Take the **I** challenge this week and be open to any and all areas of pride in your life.

UZZIAH THE PRIDEFUL KING

Uzziah became a King at 16 and reigned for 52 years, years longer than any previous kings of Judah or Israel. He was a wise, pious, and powerful king who brought the nation through a very prosperous time. “He sought God during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God. As long as he sought the LORD, God gave him success (2 Chronicles 26:5 NIV).”

“However, Uzziah’s heart was lifted up in pride. No longer satisfied to be a mortal king, he desired to be like some of his contemporaries—a divine king. He entered the Temple to burn incense. When Azariah the high priest and 80 associates confronted him, he responded in anger instead of repentance. God judged him by striking him with leprosy.” (Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary) Uzziah had leprosy until he died. He lived in a separate house no longer as king and excluded from the temple of the Lord. Because of his prideful act he lost everything (2 Chronicles 26).

We can identify with Uzziah. We seek God and He helps us. Then we become complacent thinking we can handle the situation on our own. That's pride ~ I can do it myself. So God stops helping us. Soon we're having problems and wonder why God is allowing them to happen. Uzziah was given an opportunity to stop his prideful behavior when the high priest and associates confronted him. Had he listened and repented, he would have continued as King and been remembered as one of Israel's great kings. Instead, "He had leprosy." is how the people remember him. God will confront us when we're prideful like He did with Uzziah. Our response will be the way of pride or God's way.

- Ministries are started because of God's calling on a life. As the ministry grows, sometimes the emphasis changes from being God-directed to self-focused. How do selfishness and self-sufficiency hinder God's work in our lives and ministries?
- When life is going well it's easy to think we can handle the less significant matters of our daily walk. We don't need to bother God. We'll pray if something "big" comes up. When we refuse to bring every area of our lives before God, we limit His opportunity to work and to bless us. What are some of the "little things" that you can take to the Lord in prayer today?

POSITIVE PRIDE

There are over thirty verses in Proverbs about pride. We normally think of pride as negative, but God also speaks of it in positive terms.

Pride was positive when God spoke of His pride of Israel:

"...I will make you the everlasting pride" Isaiah 60:15 (NIV)

"...the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory" Isaiah 4:2 (NIV)

Pride is positive in Psalm 47:4 and Ezekiel 24:21 as the Israelites reflected on their inheritance and God spoke to them about His sanctuary and their pride in it:

"He chose our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved." Psalm 47:4 (NIV)

"my sanctuary—the stronghold in which you take pride" Ezekiel 24:21 (NIV)

The American Heritage Dictionary states pride as "Feeling pleasurable satisfaction over an act, possession, quality, or relationship by which one measures one's stature or self-worth: *proud of one's child*; *proud to serve one's country*." (emphasis added) Parents often instill pride in their family heritage by stating "We are the Smith's and Smith's are known for being polite."

- Are you raising your family to have a sense of pride and thankfulness? When you think of your generational family heritage do you feel a sense of pride? Why or why not? What are some blessings and qualities you can identify?
- When God looks at your life, He says: "You are an everlasting pride" to me? Spend some time meditating on that truth.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Genesis 3:4a; Chronicles 26; Psalms 47:4; Proverbs 3:7, 26:12; Isaiah 2:11,17, 4:2;
Luke 1:51b; Romans 1:30; James 4:16; 1 John 2:16.