

# Grace Bible Church

## 2015 Biblical Counseling Conference

### Session #15

## Pride and Humility in One's Life<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

Charles Spurgeon, in a sermon he presented in 1856, states, "There is nothing into which the heart of man so easily falls as pride, and yet there is no vice which is more frequently, more emphatically, and more eloquently condemned in Scripture."<sup>2</sup>

### I. THE INDIVIDUAL MUST COME TO GRIPS WITH THE EPIDEMIC VICE: PRIDE

#### A. Biblical Terms

1. Old Testament
2. New Testament

#### B. Biblical Examples

#### C. Biblical Warnings

#### D. Pride Defined

1. Self-Worship
2. The Flip Side – Self-Pity and/or False Humility to gain praise
3. The Definition:

**The mindset of self (a master's mindset rather than that of a servant): a \_\_\_\_\_ on self and the service of self, a \_\_\_\_\_ of self-recognition and self-exaltation, and a \_\_\_\_\_ to control and use all things for self.**

#### E. Manifestations of Pride

1. Complaining against or passing judgment on God (Numbers 14:1-4, 9, 11; Romans 9:20)
2. A lack of gratitude (2 Chronicles 32:25)
3. Anger (Proverbs 28:25; Matthew 20:1-16)
4. Seeing yourself as better than others (Luke 7:36-50)
5. Having an inflated view of your importance, gifts and abilities (Acts 12:21-23)
6. Being focused on the lack of your gifts and abilities (1 Cor. 12:14-25)
7. Perfectionism (Matthew 23:24-28)
8. Talking too much (Proverbs 10:19)
9. Talking too much about yourself (Proverbs 27:2; Galatians 6:3)
10. Seeking independence or control (1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Ephesians 5:21)
11. Being consumed with what others think (Galatians 1:10)
12. Being devastated or angered by criticism (Proverbs 13:1)
13. Being unteachable (Proverbs 19:20; John 9:13-34)
14. Being sarcastic, hurtful, degrading, talking down to them (Proverbs 12:18, 24)
15. A lack of service (Galatians 5:13, Ephesians 2:10)

<sup>1</sup> Taken from, *From Pride to Humility*, Bemidji, Minnesota: Focus Publishers, 2000. Those desiring to obtain copies for use in ministry can be obtained by contacting them directly. 1-800-91-FOCUS

<sup>2</sup> Charles Spurgeon, "Pride and Humility" (sermon, New Park Street Chapel, Southwark, August 17, 1856).

16. A lack of compassion (Matthew 5:7, 18:23-35)
17. Being defensive or blame-shifting (Genesis 3:12-13; Proverbs 12:1)
18. A lack of admitting when you are wrong (Proverbs 10:17)
19. A lack of asking forgiveness (Matthew 5:23-24)
20. A lack of biblical prayer (Luke 18:10-14)
21. Resisting authority or being disrespectful (1 Peter 2:13-17)
22. Voicing preferences or opinions when not asked (Philippians 2:1-4)
23. Minimizing your own sin and shortcomings (Matthew 7:3-5)
24. Maximizing others' sin and shortcomings (Matthew 7:3-5; Luke 18:9-14)
25. Being impatient or irritable with others (Ephesians 4:31-32)
26. Being jealous or envious (1 Corinthians 13:4)
27. Using others (Matthew 7:12; Philippians 2:3-4)
28. Being deceitful by covering up sins, faults, and mistakes (Proverbs 11:3; 28:13)
29. Using attention-getting tactics (1 Peter 3:3,4)
30. Not having close relationships (Proverbs 18:1-2; Hebrews 10:24-25)
31. Etc.

- F. Promoters of Pride
- G. When is it righteous to boast?
- H. The Proper Response

#### **THE INDIVIDUAL MUST PUT ON THE ENDANGERED VIRTUE: HUMILITY**

- A. Biblical Terms
  1. Old Testament
  2. New Testament
- B. Biblical Examples
- C. Our Greatest Example – Jesus Christ
- D. Humility Defined
  1. God-Worship
  2. The Definition:
 

**The mindset of Christ (a servant's mindset): a \_\_\_\_\_ on God and others, a \_\_\_\_\_ of the recognition and the exaltation of God, and a \_\_\_\_\_ to glorify and please God in all things and by all things He has given.**
- E. Manifestations of Humility
  1. Recognizing and trusting God's character (Psalm 119:66)
  2. Seeing yourself as having no right to question or judge an Almighty and Perfect God (Psalm 145:17; Romans 9:19-23)
  3. Focusing on Christ (Philippians 1:21; Hebrews 12:1-2)
  4. Biblical praying and a great deal of it (1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-2)
  5. Being overwhelmed with God's undeserved grace and goodness (Psalm 116:12-19)
  6. Thankfulness and gratitude in general towards others (1 Thess. 5:18)
  7. Being gentle and patient (Colossians 3:12-14)
  8. Seeing yourself as no better than others (Romans 12:16; Ephesians 3:8)
  9. Having an accurate view of your gifts and abilities (Romans 12:3)
  10. Being a good listener (James 1:19; Philippians 2:3-4)

11. Talking about others only if it is good or for their good (Proverbs 11:13)
12. Being gladly submissive and obedient to those in authority (Rom. 12:1-2, 13:1-2)
13. Preferring others over yourself (Romans 12:10)
14. Being thankful for criticism or reproof (Proverbs 9:8, 27:5-6)
15. Having a teachable spirit (Proverbs 9:9)
16. Seeking always to build up others (Ephesians 4:29)
17. Serving (Galatians 5:13)
18. A quickness in admitting when you are wrong (Proverbs 29:23)
19. A quickness in granting and asking for forgiveness (Colossians 3:12-14)
20. Repenting of sin as a way of life (Colossians 3:1-14; 1 Timothy 4:7-9)
21. Minimizing others' sins or shortcomings in comparison to one's own (Matthew 7:3-4)
22. Being genuinely glad for others (Romans 12:15)
23. Being honest and open about who you are, your weaknesses and the areas in which you need growth (Philippians 3:12-14; Galatians 6:2; 2 Cor 12:9-10)
24. Possessing close relationships (Acts 20:31-38)
25. Etc.

## II. THE INDIVIDUAL SHOULD BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT MOVING FROM PRIDE TO HUMILITY

- A. Humble yourself or ... (James 4:7-10) with the Gospel and a Cross-centered perspective
- B. Practical steps for the Individual
  1. Pray for God to search your heart (by His Spirit with His Word) and help you repent of pride and to grow in humility (Ps 139).
  2. Read the Law, Psalms and the Prophets often to gain a high view of God and a proper view of yourself.
  3. Study Jesus (His earthly example; especially in the Gospels – Mt.11:28-30, focus on His humility).
  4. Ask others if you come across proud in any way.
  5. Spend as much focused time as possible worshipping God (e.g., praising, prayer, reading and meditating). Be sure to center in on the Love of God demonstrated at the Cross.
  6. Practice the “one-another” commands (35+).
  7. Work with the Holy Spirit to put off pride and put on humility at the level of your motives, thoughts, communication and actions.
    - a. Go back through the 30+ manifestations of pride and evaluate how and when you might evidence them.
    - b. Go back through the 24+ manifestations of humility and plan how you can be more humble in the typical situations you are in.
  8. Have the mindset that humility must be a way of life (Phil 2:1-11; Col 3:12-13).<sup>3</sup>

### Resources:

Richard Baxter, *The Christian Directory*

Jonathan Edwards, *Revivals* (section on Pride)

Wayne & Josh Mack, *Humility: The Forgotten Virtue*

C.J. Mahaney, *Humility: True Greatness*

Stuart Scott, *From Pride to Humility*

Thomas Watson, *A godly man's picture*

<sup>3</sup> Humility, “It is the recognizing of one’s own weakness, but also the recognition of the power of God.” *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*. Rogers and Rogers, 467.

## Manifestations of Pride<sup>4</sup>

**Definition of Pride:** *The mindset of self (a master's mindset rather than that of a servant): a focus on self and the service of self, a pursuit of self-recognition and self-exaltation and a desire to control and use all things for self.*

Please rate the following statements of manifestations of pride in your life using the following scale:

- 0 – This is **not** an issue in my life;
- 1 – This is **seldom** an issue;
- 2 – This is **sometimes** an issue;
- 3 – This is **often** an issue;
- 4 – This is a **major** issue;
- 5 – This is a **life-dominating** issue in my life.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Complaining against or passing judgment on God.** A proud person in a difficult situation thinks, "Look what God has done to *me after all I have done for Him*" (Numbers 14:1-4, 9, 11; Romans 9:20). Perhaps we I do this passively, in the form of apathy as well.

\_\_\_\_\_ **A lack of gratitude in general.** Proud people usually think they deserve what is good. The result is, they see no reason to be thankful for what they receive. As a matter of fact, they may even complain because they think they deserve better. They tend to be critical, complaining and discontent. The proud person is not in the practice of being thankful toward God or others (2 Chronicles 32:25; Rom 1:21).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Anger.** A proud person is often an angry person. One's anger can include outburst of anger, withdrawing, pouting, or frustration. Another word for anger is moodiness. An angry look has been called "silent murder." People are often afraid of you (walk on "eggshells" around you). A person most often becomes angry because his "rights" or expectations are not being met (Matthew 20:1-16).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Seeing yourself as better than others.** A proud person is usually on top looking down on others. He might compare others to himself in his strengths and overlook his weaknesses. He gets easily disgusted and has little tolerance for differences (Luke 7:36-50).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Having an inflated view of your importance, gifts, and abilities.** Many proud people have a very wrong perception of themselves. They are a legend (or Cinderella) in their own mind, but what they really need is a loving dose of reality. They need to hear, "What do you have that God didn't give you?" (1 Corinthians 4:7)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being focused on the lack of your gifts and abilities.** Some proud people may not come across proud at all because they are always down on themselves. This is still evidence of pride because one is focused on self and wants self to be elevated or significant. Having a "woe is me" attitude is self-pity, which is pride (1 Corinthians 12:14-25).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Perfectionism.** People who strive for everything to be perfect often do so for recognition. They may do it so they can feel good about themselves. Whatever the reason, this behavior is very self-serving and proud. The basic problem is making things that are less important more important (Matthew 23:24-28).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Talking too much.** Proud people who talk too much often do it because they think that what they have to say is more important than what anyone else has to say. When there are many words, sin is generally unavoidable (Proverbs 10:19).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Talking too much about yourself.** A person who is proud may center on themselves in conversation. Sharing personal accomplishments and good personal qualities with others can be bragging or boasting (Proverbs 27:2; Galatians 6:3).

<sup>4</sup>Taken from, *From Pride to Humility*, Bemidji, Minnesota: Focus Publishers, 2000. Those desiring to obtain copies for use in ministry can be obtained by contacting them directly. 1-800-91-FOCUS

\_\_\_\_\_ **Seeking independence or control.** Some proud people find it extremely difficult to work under someone else or to submit to an authority. They have to be their own boss. They might say, “I don’t need anyone” or “I don’t need accountability for my faith and doctrine.” They are often rigid, stubborn, headstrong, unapproachable, unwinsome and intimidating. They only have “yes” people around them – often afraid of honest feedback. They may also say, “It’s my way or not” (1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Ephesians 5:21).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being consumed with what others think.** Some proud people are too concerned about the opinion of others. Many of their decisions are based on what others might think. Some are in a continual pursuit of gaining the approval and esteem of others. Focusing on what others think of you or trying to impress or just be on a peer level with others is being a man-pleaser rather than a God-pleaser (Galatians 1:10).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being discouraged, devastated or angered by criticism.** Proud people usually struggle a great deal with criticism. Such people cannot bear (or are perpetually discouraged) that they are not perfect or have weaknesses because they cannot accept who they really are (Proverbs 13:1).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being unteachable and unapproachable.** Many proud individuals think they know it all and act superior. They can’t seem to learn anything from someone else. They respect no one, are stubborn and headstrong (Proverbs 19:20; John 8:13-34).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being sarcastic, hurtful, or degrading.** Proud people can be very unkind people. Those who belittle other people usually want to raise themselves up above others. Very often this can be quite cleverly done through jesting. They may excuse themselves by saying, “That’s just the way I am. That’s my personality” (Proverbs 12:18, 23).

\_\_\_\_\_ **A lack of service.** Proud people may not serve because they are not thinking of others, or because they want to be coaxed to serve and don’t want to continue if there is no praise. Needing recognition is a sure sign of the wrong motives in service (Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 2:10).

\_\_\_\_\_ **A lack of compassion.** A person who is proud is rarely concerned for others and their concerns. He cannot see beyond his own desires (Matthew 5:7; 18:23-35).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being defensive or blame shifting.** You will often hear a proud person say, “Are you saying it’s my fault?” or “Well, what about you?” He tries to explain away or justify his sin (or being wrong about anything) (Genesis 3:12-13; Proverbs 12:1).

\_\_\_\_\_ **A lack of admitting when you are wrong.** A proud person will make a great many excuses such as “I was tired” or “I was having a bad day” (Proverbs 10:17).

\_\_\_\_\_ **A lack of asking forgiveness.** Proud people rarely admit their sin or ask for forgiveness of others. They either cannot see their sin because they are blinded by their pride, or they just can’t seem to humble themselves before someone else and ask forgiveness (Matthew 5:23-24).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Resisting authority or being disrespectful.** A proud person may detest being told what to do. We might say he or she has a submission problem. What he or she actually has, however, is a pride problem. It is simply displaying itself in a lack of submission (1 Peter 2:13-17).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Voicing preferences or opinions when not asked.** A proud person might not be able to keep his preferences or opinions to himself. He will offer it when it is not asked for. These preferences are usually voiced without consideration for others (Philippians 2:1-4).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Minimizing your own sin and shortcomings.** Proud people typically believe that their sin is no big deal. They think they have a little sin and others have a great deal of it (Matthew 7:3-5).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Maximizing others' sin and shortcomings.** To the proud person, other people are the problem. They may magnify or bring attention to the sin of others by gossiping about the other's sin (Matthew 7:3-5; Luke 18:9-14).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being impatient or irritable with others.** A proud person might be angry with other people because they are concerned that their own schedule or plans are being ruined. They are often inflexible on preference issues (Ephesians 4:31-32).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being jealous or envious.** Often when they do not enjoy the same benefits, proud people have a hard time being glad for others' successes or blessings. They are discontented when their lot is not as favorable as another's (1 Corinthians 13:4).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Using others.** The proud person usually views others in terms of what those people can do for *him* and *his* interests. His focus is not on ministering to others. Everything is *for him* and *about him* (Matthew 7:12; Philippians 2:3-4).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being deceitful (pretending to be perfect) by covering up sins, faults, and mistakes.** Some proud people will do just about anything in order for others not to find out negative things about them (Proverbs 11:3; 28:13)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Using attention-getting tactics.** Proud people may try to draw attention to themselves through dress, bizarre behavior, being rebellious, always talking about their problems, etc. (1 Peter 3:3-4)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Not having close relationship.** Proud people often have no use for close relationships, thinking that the trouble outweighs the benefits. They may see themselves as so self-sufficient that they do not need other people. If they are into self-pity, they might be fearful and intimidated for intimacy in relationships (Proverbs 18:1-2; Hebrews 10:24-25).

## Manifestations of Humility<sup>5</sup>

**Definition of Humility:** *The mindset of Christ (a servant's mindset): a focus on God and others, a pursuit of the recognition and the exaltation of God, and a desire to glorify and please God in all things and by all things He has given.*

Please rate the following statements of manifestations of humility which describe your life using the following scale:

- 0 – This aspect of humility is **not** present in my life at this time;
- 1 – This aspect of humility is **seldom** present in my life at this time;
- 2 – This aspect of humility is **sometimes** present in my life at this time;
- 3 – This aspect of humility is **often** present in my life at this time;
- 4 – This aspect of humility is **regularly** present in my life at this time;
- 5 – This aspect of humility is **predominately** present in my life at this time;

\_\_\_\_\_ **Recognizing and trusting God's character.** A humble person acknowledges Who God is and rehearses God's character often. Because he does this, he trusts God much more than the proud person. In trials, he will even thank God for the reminder of how much he needs Him and for all the good He is doing through the trial (Psalm 119:66).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Seeing yourself as having no right to question or judge an Almighty and Perfect God.** A humble man thinks of God as his creator and himself as God's creation. He does not see himself as even remotely qualified to pass judgment on God or what God does. He knows that his perfect and all-wise God can do whatever He pleases, and it will be the best for him (Psalm 145:17; Romans 9:19-23).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Focusing on Christ.** The humble see Christ as their life and their first love. There is no other thing or person that they must have. Through the day they talk to and worship Him often (Philippians 1:21; Hebrews 12:1-12).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Biblical praying and a great deal of it.** Humble people want to worship God and they see themselves as totally dependent on God for His enablement. John Owen once said, "We can have no power from Christ unless we live in a persuasion that we have none of our own." Because they see themselves as needy, they pray often (1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-2).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being overwhelmed with God's undeserved grace and goodness.** The humble person sees himself as truly deserving of hell. He is immensely grateful to God for forgiving him of so much (Psalm 116:12-19).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being thankful and grateful in general toward others.** Humble people thank God and others often. They expect nothing, so anything that is received is greatly appreciated (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being gentle and patient.** Humble people want to act like God, and they are not focused on what they want. They also want to love others the way God loves them. They are willing to wait and are not easily irritated (Colossians 3:12-14).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Seeing yourself as no better than others.** A humble person understands the sinfulness of his own heart. He would never see himself as better than others. This is true no matter who the other person is. He understands that he, in and of himself, is capable of the worst sin. He agrees with John Bradford who said, "but for the grace of God, there I go" (Romans 12:16; Ephesians 3:8).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Having an accurate view of your gifts and abilities.** Humble people do not bemoan the fact that they are not as gifted as others. Neither do they exaggerate their own abilities (Romans 12:3).

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\_\_\_\_\_ **Being a good listener.** Humble people consider what others have to say as more important than what they have to say. They take an interest in others by asking questions and listening. Self is not their primary focus (James 1:19; Philippians 2:3-4).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Talking about others only if it is good or for their good.** A humble person will speak well of others, not negatively. He will convey something negative about someone only if he must do so in order to help that person (Proverbs 11:13).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being gladly submissive and obedient to those in authority.** Humble people are first of all obedient to God, and then the authorities over them (Romans 12:1-2; 13:1-2).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Preferring others over yourself.** Humble people are willing to put others before themselves without first considering their own rights (Romans 12:10).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being thankful for criticism or reproof.** Humble people view reproof as good for them and consider that God may be trying to teach them something (Proverbs 9:8; 27:5-6).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Having a teachable spirit.** Humble people realize they don't know everything, and even when they think they are right they are willing to consider that they might be wrong (1 Corinthians 4:7). They also know that God can use anyone to teach them, since He was even able to use a donkey to teach Nalaam in Numbers 22:22-35. They have many people they admire and respect.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Seeking always to build up others.** Humble people encourage others. They use only words that build up and say what is necessary for the edification of others. They never cut others down (Ephesians 4:29).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Serving.** Humble people are on the lookout for ways to serve and assist others. They are the first to volunteer for jobs no one else wants. They take the initiative to reach out and serve others (Galatians 5:13).

\_\_\_\_\_ **A quickness in admitting when you are wrong.** Humble people have no problem with saying, "I was wrong. You are right. Thank you for telling me" (Proverbs 29:23).

\_\_\_\_\_ **A quickness in granting and asking for forgiveness.** Humble people are eager to forgive because they know how much they have been forgiven. They have no trouble asking for forgiveness because they want to be peacemakers (Colossians 3:12-14).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Repenting of sin as a way of life.** A humble person asks God daily for forgiveness and works toward real change (1 John 1:9; 1 Timothy 4:7-9).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Minimizing others' sins or shortcomings in comparison to your own.** A humble person thinks about his own sin more often than another's sin. He also sees his own sin as more important to deal with than the sin of others (Matthew 7:3-4).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being genuinely glad for others.** Humble people rejoice with others when good things happen because they are aware that God has blessed them immeasurably and they trust God for what they do not have (Romans 12:15).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Being honest and open about who they are and the areas in which they need growth.** Humble people are open and honest about their growth in the Lord. They ask for help and accountability in the repentance process, knowing they need their brothers and sisters (Philippians 3:12-14; Galatians 6:2).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Possessing close relationship.** Humble people have friends and loved ones because they are friendly and love others. They are willing to ask for help with various burdens and problems they may have (Acts 20:31-38).