

Pride: my best enemy inside

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Abstract

Today, our society glorifies pride. In the best case, pride is seen as a minor, almost cute issue. In the worst case, we admire somebody who is proud. But how does it go with Christian living?

Contents

1	What does the Bible say about it?	2
1.1	What is pride?	2
1.2	What are the consequences of pride? Where does it come from?	2
1.3	How much pride is tolerable to God?	3
2	Pride in our lives	3
2.1	What is pride doing in our hearts?	3
2.2	Where to look for pride in our hearts?	4
2.3	How to get away from pride	4
3	Conclusion	5
A	Biblical references	6
A.1	What does the Bible say about it?	6
A.2	Pride in our lives	7

1 What does the Bible say about it?

1.1 What is pride?

- It is sin: Pr 21:4 "An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin."
- It is hateful to God: Pr 6:16-19 "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished." (idem Pr 16:5) So, pride is as hateful to God as any kind of sexual immorality, as lying, ... (it should be enough to bring us to repentance and humility!)
- It has been targeted by Christ: Lk 18:11 (the prayer of the Pharisee), the young man (Mt 19:16-21), ...

1.2 What are the consequences of pride? Where does it comes from?

- Brings condemnation: Pr 16:18 "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Mal 4:1 "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."
- Is even worst than foolishness! Pr 26:12 "Hast thou seen a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope of a fool than of him." +1 Sam 2:3 "Do not multiply your words of pride, let not vain-glory come out of your mouth; For Jehovah is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed."
- Mk 7:22 "Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: "
- Comes from lack of maturity, self-righteousness, possessions, power, deceit, ... 1 Tim 3:6 "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Lev 26:19 "And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass"

1.3 How much pride is tolerable to God?

- None!! see Job (39-42)
- God is looking for humility! Ja 4:6 "But he gives more grace. Wherefore he says, God sets himself against the proud, but gives grace to the lowly."

2 Pride in our lives

2.1 What is pride doing in our hearts?

- It shifts the focus from God toward ourselves (breaking cmd 1)
- It builds an idol out of ourselves (breaking cmd 2)
- It leads us to do things against our neighbour (breaking cmd 5-10) and to justify ourselves: Ps 10:2 "The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined."
- It builds rebellion in our heart
- It blinds us to the truth: Ps 10:4 "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God : God is not in all his thoughts."
- It blinds us to love
- It kills the message of the Gospel (through self-righteousness)
- Satan fell by pride. Do not follow him!! Eze 28:12 "Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: "'You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your

beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. By your many sins and dishonest trade you have desecrated your sanctuaries . . ." (NIV)

2.2 Where to look for pride in our hearts?

- In our relation toward ourselves: too much focus on self is a sure sign (putting ourselves down is a hidden way of expressing pride: this is to say that God did not give me what I deserved)
- In our relation to God: do we think we deserve more from God?
- In our relation toward others: do we think we are some much more worthy than our neighbor?
- In our relation to faith (very pernicious form of pride): do we boast about our spiritual strength? Are we like this pastor who was "rebuking Satan"? Do we consider our faith to be so strong that nothing can shake it? Do we see ourselves as so mature that we don't need to focus on "the basic teaching" of the Gospel? (If you think that Christianity 101 is not for you, this is a sure sign you need it more than ever! Paul knows only "Christ and Him crucified", cf 1 Cor 2:2) 2 Cor 13:5 "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves."
- About the proud thinking that we can fight Satan on our own: Satan is very powerful, he appears as an angel of light (so it brings an amazing power of deceit), he has a whole army of fallen angels with him. So, pretending that we will use our authority to humiliate/dominate/rebuke Satan is foolish and proud. God might use us for such a purpose, but He is the one doing it.

2.3 How to get away from pride

- As always, this is the battle of a life time
- By praying (for the following points)
- By identifying how/where we have pride
- By praying sincerely for it as well as for others: Jer 13:17 "But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord' flock is carried away captive."

- By seeking to know God better: the better we know Him and our real state, the more humble we are!

3 Conclusion

- Pride is *very* serious business (and today's society glorifies it)
- Chase it down in the deepest places of your heart
- Be extra cautious about the vicious forms of pride
- Pray about it, and with God's help, fight it!

Funny game for the end: look for "God sinner abomination" on Google... So many people proclaiming that they have the Truth and all others are an abomination! (bilingualism is one (what about Paul speaking Greek, Hebrew and maybe Aramaic? Or Christ?), alcohol is another one (what about Christ transforming water into wine?), any translation other than the original KJV is an abomination, ...). This is *pride*, people believing more in their understanding of God than in God Himself.

A Biblical references

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A.1 What does the Bible say about it?

Pr 21:4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin.

Pr 6:16 There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him:

Pr 16:5 Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the Lord; be assured, he will not go unpunished.

Lk 18:11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

Mt 19:16–21 And behold, a man came up to him, saying, Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life? And he said to him, Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments. He said to him, Which ones? And Jesus said, You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The young man said to him, All these I have kept. What do I still lack? Jesus said to him, If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.

Pr 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Mal 4:1 For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.

Pr 26:12 Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

1 Sam 2:3 Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

Mk 7:22 coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness.

1 Tim 3:6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.

Lev 26:19 and I will break the pride of your power, and I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze.

Ja 4:6 But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

A.2 Pride in ours lives

Ps 10:2 In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor; let them be caught in the schemes that they have devised.

Ps 10:4 In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him; all his thoughts are, There is no God.

Eze 28:12 Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God: You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

1 Cor 2:2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

2 Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

Jer 13:17 But if you will not listen, my soul will weep in secret for your pride; my eyes will weep bitterly and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock has been taken captive.