

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. We are currently looking at 1 Corinthians chapter 4.
2. In verse 6, we saw Paul use himself and Apollos as examples of humility.
3. In verse 1, he refers to himself and Apollos as “servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”
4. They were not celebrities.
5. In verse 6 he wanted the Corinthians to “learn not to exceed what is written” in Scripture about respecting leaders and he didn’t want any of them to “become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.”
6. But they did.
7. They had formed cliches in the church.
8. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:12 (NASB) “...that each one of you is saying, “I am of Paul,” and “I of Apollos,” and “I of Cephas,” and “I of Christ.”
9. How does a person get to this place of self-exaltation or the exaltation of others?

10. One way is by being fleshly...not walking in the Spirit.
11. When you are walking in the flesh anything can happen, especially pride, even not understanding how deadly pride is.
12. The puritan Henry Smith, who lived from 1560-1591, says:  
  
“I may say of pride, many sins have done wickedly, but thou surmountest them all; for the wrathful man, the prodigal man, the lascivious man, the surfeiting man, the slothful man, is rather an enemy to himself than to God; the envious man, the covetous man, the deceitful man, the ungrateful man, is rather an enemy to men than to God, but the proud man sets himself against God (because he does against His laws), he maketh himself equal with God (because he does all without God and craves no help of Him); he exalteth himself above God (because he will have his own will).”
14. Before we go on to verses 8-21, I want to spend our time together this morning looking once again at the subject of pride.
15. I want to address this in 4 ways this morning.
16. First with *the definition of pride*.
17. What is pride?

## **I. The Definition of Pride**

There are 2 passages found in Proverbs chapter 25 that shed light on our definition of pride.

The first is found in verses 6-7: “Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, and do not stand in the place of great men; for it is better that he say to you ‘Come up here,’ than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, whom your eyes have seen.”

The second passage is found in verse 27 of the same chapter: He says, “It is not good to eat much honey; so to seek one’s own glory is not glory.”

Both of these passages begin our topic because they both talk about the same thing.

One prohibits exalting yourself in the presence of the king and the other says it’s not good to seek one’s own glory.

John MacArthur says, “In the royal court as in all of life, self-seeking and pride bring one down. Do not intrude into such a place, for the elevating of the humble is honorable, but the humbling of the proud is disgraceful” (The MacArthur Study Bible).

We can say that our first definition of pride is:

A. It is Seeking One's Own Glory

1. This is what Lucifer did with God and it's what he sought to lead Eve to do in the Garden of Eden
  - a) Notice what Lucifer said in Isaiah 14:13, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High."
  - b) God said of Lucifer in Ezekiel 28:15, "You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you."
  - c) What was this "iniquity?" It was pride – Paul identified it as such when saying that a new convert should not be considered for the office of elder "lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil" (1 Tim.3:6).
2. In the Garden of Eden we see that Satan left out this part of his story to Eve in getting her to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

He begins by causing them to question God by asking “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the Garden?’” (Gen.3:1).

Eve responds by saying, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’” (vv.2-3).

But Satan continued by saying, “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (vv.1-4).

That apparently sounded pretty good because verse 6 says “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.”

Ignoring God’s specific command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil illustrated the destructiveness of the sin of pride.

Instead of trusting God by not eating of it, they both chose the way of Satan rather than the way of God.

This is how it is with pride.

It says, “Go ahead seek your own glory. You deserve it after all.”

Again I remind you – this is exactly what Satan did and it cost him his place in heaven and it will cost him his life in hell.

Luke 14:11 says, “For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Adam and Eve were both humbled that day when God passed His judgment on them for their sin and drove them out of the Garden (v.24).

A second definition for pride is also found in the proverbs – chapter 27:2.

#### B. It is Praising Yourself

1. Solomon said it is better if this comes from someone else rather than your own lips

Prov.27:2 says, “Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.”

This verse further highlights what is behind seeking one's own glory. It hits right at the heart of the matter.

When you praise yourself you are no different than Nebuchadnezzar walking through his palace saying:

“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.” That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws” (Dan.4:30-33).

2. Paul said this attitude is not wise

a) In 2 Cor.10:12 he says, “For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among

themselves, are not wise.”

J. Vernon McGee says, “Paul is injecting a little note of humor. A great many folk compare themselves among themselves, which is the reason that many people in our churches think they have arrived. They feel they are really fine, outstanding, spiritual Christians because they compare themselves with other Christians in their group. That is not the yardstick we are to use, my friend. This is one of the tragedies of the hour. A person can be in a cold church and grow cold himself and yet not be conscious of it because he compares himself with the cold Christians around him” (Thru the Bible).

So Paul says, “We don’t have anything to do with anything like this because it’s foolish.”

- b) In verse 18 he says, “For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.”

In other words, the Lord is the standard not ourselves nor anyone else. We must measure ourselves by that standard not by any other. This is the truth but pride doesn’t let it be so. It will continue to cause you to want to praise yourself measuring your life on the life of others.



Warren Wiersbe makes some good statements regarding this point. He says, “In His personal examination of the seven churches named in Revelation 2-3, the Lord Jesus measured them far differently than they measured themselves. The church that thought it was poor, He considered to be rich; and the church that boasted of its wealth, He declared to be poor (Rev. 2:8-11; 3:14-22). Some people measure ministry only by statistics. While it is true that the early church did take note of numbers (Acts 2:41; 4:4), it is also true that uniting with the church at that time was a much more difficult (and dangerous) thing (see Acts 5:13). Some years ago, one of America's large denominations had as its theme, "A Million More in '64, and Every One a Tither!" I heard one of their leading preachers comment, "If we get a million more like the last million, God help us!" Quantity is no guarantee of quality. The Judaizers were great on measuring their ministry, because a religion of external activities is much easier to measure than one of internal transformation” (The Bible Exposition Commentary).

What happens when you live your life like this is you will begin to despise others who do not meet up to YOUR standard.

Notice the parable that Jesus gave in Luke 18:9-14 “to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and

despised others:

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

A third definition for pride that builds on the first two is:

C. It is Forgetting God and His Grace

Thomas Manton said, “This is certainly pride, for it is a lifting up of the heart above God and against God and without God.”

A good illustration of this is found in the OT.

Deut.8:11-19 – this is the chapter where Moses is giving the law to the second generation of those who were to go in and possess the land of Caanan.

Seeking one's own glory, praising yourself, forgetting God and His grace are all good reasons for *destroying pride* in your life. But probably the greatest definition of pride is simply this:

#### D. It is Sin

Listen to what Proverbs 21:4 says, “A haughty look, a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked are sin.”

These two qualities or attitudes are literally “lifting up of eyes,” that is, “haughtiness” or “pride,” and “extensive of heart,” which is an idiomatic expression for “arrogance” (Taken from A Handbook on Proverbs, p.440).

John Gill says, The man that looks above others, and with disdain upon them, shows that pride reigns in him, and swells his mind with a vain opinion of himself” (John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible).

You must understand that pride is sin no matter how you look at it, whether it be in a “haughty look” or a “proud heart.” It is also a sin that will not go unpunished.

Psalm 101:5 says, “Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure.”

That leads me to:

## **II. The Dangers of Pride**

What are it's dangers and how I can avoid it before it happens?  
First you need to understand what pride does in the heart. Because pride is "seeking one's own glory, praising yourself and forgetting God and His grace,"

### **A. It Stirs Up Strife and Contention**

Prov.28:25 says, "He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife."

Prov.13:10 says, "By pride comes nothing but strife."

What is strife? Contention and discord.

John Gill says the one with a "proud heart" could refer to one with "a "large heart" or has an enlarged one; not with useful knowledge and understanding, as Solomon had; nor a heart enlarged with love and affection to the souls of men, as the Apostle Paul had; but either has a covetous one, who enlarges its desire as hell, and is never satisfied with what he has, and so is continually contending with his neighbours, engaging in lawsuits for their property, or unwilling to pay his lawful debts; or of a proud spirit, and despises all around him, and cannot bear opposition and contradiction; and is of a wrathful

and revengeful spirit, and always at variance with his neighbours and quarrelling with them” (John Gill’s Exposition on the Entire Bible).

If you’re stirring up strife recognize that it is coming from the pride in your heart and it is sin.

The second danger is:

#### B. It Does Not Seek God

If pride causes strife and contention then it cannot cause one to seek God. It does the very opposite.

Psalm 10:4 says, “The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.”

What a blow to the seeker-sensitive movement!

“The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God!”

Why? Because “God is in none of his thoughts!”

Just like Romans 3:11 says, “There is none who seeks after God.”

The only one who can “seek after God” are those who have

been sought after by God!

You can't seek Him until He seeks you because you're pride won't let you.

So the dangers of pride are it stirs up strife and contention and it does not seek God. A third danger is:

### C. It Leads to the Worship of Idols, Destruction and Disobedience

Going back to the Deuteronomy passage. What did Moses say would be the consequences for their pride?

Deut.8:19-20 - "Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the Lord your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroys before you, so you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the Lord your God."

What would lead them to "forget the Lord your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them" would be their pride – that part inside them that wants to seek its own glory and praise.

That leads to the fourth danger:

## D. God Does Not Tolerate It Because He Hates It

1. Psalm 101:5 says, “Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; the one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure.”
2. Prov.6:16-17a says, “These six things the Lord hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him. A proud look.”

God will not endure him “who has a haughty look and a proud heart” because He considers this to be an abomination. He hates pride and all that is associated with it because it a sin that destroys lives.

That’s why we see the culmination of the dangers of pride in this last one.

## E. God Resists Those Who Are Proud

Two verses in the NT that speak directly to this:

1. James 4:6 says, “But He gives more grace. Therefore He says, ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”

“Resists” Gr.antitassomai, “to oppose,” “to stand against”

“Proud” Gr.huperephanos, “haughty, one who thinks above and beyond that which is proper, arrogant” (Rienecker).

Paul said not to do this in Romans 12:3:

“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”

2. 1 Peter 5:5 - “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.’”

We have looked at *the definition of pride*, and *the dangers of pride*. Now let’s see *the destruction of pride*.

### **III. The Destruction of Pride**

#### **A. Pride Brings With It Destruction**

Prov.16:18 says, “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

Adam Clarke says, “Here pride is personified: it walks along, and has destruction in its train.”



John Gill says, “As it did in the angels that sinned, who, through pride, fell into condemnation, not being able to bear the thought that the human nature, in the person of the Son of God, should be advanced above theirs; and as it did in our first parents, who, not content with their present state and circumstances, and ambitious of being as gods, knowing good and evil, ruined themselves and all their posterity; and as it has done in many of their sons, as in Haman, Nebuchadnezzar, and others” (John Gill’s Commentary on the Entire Bible).

One writer says, “Pride and shame. You’d never know they are sisters. They appear so different. Pride puffs out her chest. Shame hangs her head. Pride boasts shame hides. Pride seeks to be seen. Shame sees to be avoided. But don’t be fooled, the emotions have the same parentage. And the emotions have the same impact. They keep you from your Father. Pride says, ‘You’re too good for him.’ Shame says, ‘You’re too bad for him.’ Pride drives you away. Shame keeps you away. If pride is what goes before a fall, then shame is what keeps you from getting up after one” (Max Lucado, *He Chose the Nails*, pp.65-66).

## B. Pride Shall Be Destroyed

1. Psalm 52
2. Prov.15:25 says, “The Lord will destroy the house of the proud.”

## **IV. How to Deal with Pride**

### **A. Put Your Hand on Your Mouth**

Prov.30:32 says, “If you have been foolish in exalting yourself, or if you have devised evil, put your hand on your mouth.”

### **B. Confess It As Sin**

Prov.28:13 says, “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”

### **C. Humble Yourself**

James 4:10 says, “Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Ask yourself this morning, “Am I seeking my own glory or praising myself?”
2. “Have I forgot about God and His grace?”
3. If I have then it is sin and Lord I ask you today to forgive me of my pride – that thing that you consider to be an abomination.

4. If you're having trouble answering the first three questions due to pride then consider these:

“Am I causing strife and contention?”

“Have I stopped seeking after God and His Word?”

“Am I following after that which will bring about my destruction?”

5. I want to encourage you today to forsake your sin and turn to Jesus as we pray.