



Pride & Humility

In our study of Ephesians we've seen how Paul admonished believers to behave rightly and to live in a manner worthy of our calling as Christ's disciples (see [Eph 4:1](#)). Throughout Ephesians 4 and 5, and in many other epistles, we are instructed to walk in love, gentleness, truth, and humility.

Today I'd like to look at humility and its antonym pride. If there is an underpinning to walking the Christian faith, I believe it is humility. It takes humility to admit that we are sinners in need of a Savior, that nothing we do can earn or maintain our salvation, and that we are no better than any other sinner out there. And even Christ, Who sits at the right hand of God the Father, exhibited extreme humility in His obedience coming to earth as a man and dying a cursed death on a cross between two thieves (see: [Gal 3:13](#), [Matt 27:38](#)).

What is humility? It is defined as "*freedom from pride or arrogance*" and "*not proud or haughty, not arrogant or assertive*". It is not thinking less of ourselves, it is thinking less *about* ourselves. As believers, humility should be at the core of all our words and actions. This makes it very difficult to take glory for ourselves and instead we can honestly give all glory to God. Humility allows Christ to be glorified through our lives because the focus is on Him, not us.

The opposite of humility is pride. Pride is defined as "*inordinate self-esteem*" and "*excessive appreciation of one's own worth or virtue*." We're not talking about being proud of others who have done good things, like our kids getting honor roll. Instead, we're discussing the inward pride of self-righteousness in our own accomplishments, religion, or even who we think we are. It's elevating 'me' over others because of something I did, a position I hold, or an ideology I subscribe to. It's the belief that by some reason I'm more important. And this is a grave sin (see [Luke 18:9-14](#)).

It is not surprising how the enemy of our souls uses pride to keep people from Christ. With a heart full of pride it is impossible to come to salvation because a person in that state cannot accept their depravity and need for a Savior. Pride was at the core of Adam and Eve's sin. Pride caused Cain to murder his brother Abel. Pride filled the Pharisees of Jesus's day. Pride ruins lives, families, companies, and ministries because it drives a person to love themselves more than others, seek to fulfill their own needs first, and soak up all the glory for their own pleasure and benefit.



The hard truth is that God hates pride. Yes, He *hates* it. Scripture bares God's feelings toward a prideful heart:.

Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; assuredly, he will not be unpunished. [Proverbs 16:5](#)

Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, but humility goes before honor. [Proverbs 18:12](#)

The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate. [Proverbs 8:13](#)

A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor. [Proverbs 29:23](#)

And that's just a few examples from Proverbs alone. A quick glance at your concordance will reveal dozens upon dozens of stern warnings and cautionary tales against pride and all the sin that stems from it.

In stark contrast, humility is celebrated throughout Scripture. It is a character trait which pleases the Lord and one He looks very favorably upon. It reveals a changed heart and one that is being renewed into the likeness of Christ (see: [Rom 12:2](#)). Here are just a few examples found in Scripture:

It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud. [Proverbs 16:19](#)

The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, honor and life. [Proverbs 22:4](#)

For though the LORD is exalted, yet He regards the lowly, but the haughty He knows from afar. [Psalm 138:6](#)



“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.” [Luke 18:14](#)

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves. [Phil 2:3](#)

Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. [James 4:10](#)

None of us is immune to a prideful heart, and it takes attentiveness and prayer to prevent pride from taking up residence in our lives. But let's be on guard against pride and to instead prayerfully seek to remain humble in everything we do, knowing that our worth is only found in the Lord. And if there is anything to be proud of, let's boast in the fact that we are loved by God and adopted children of His eternal family. We can delight in this because it is not of our own doing or choice, but all by the will and for the glory of God! (cf: [Eph 2:1-10](#))

Thus says the LORD, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the LORD. [Jeremiah 9:23-24](#)