

7 Deadly Sins Pride

I first half of video

Is pride a vice or virtue?

We want our children to be proud of who they are
To be proud of their achievements.

We want to instill in them a sense of self-worth.

I tell Zherina, "Great job! I'm proud of you, girl!"

I want my parents to be proud of me
I want my wife, my kids to be proud of me.

One of my unfulfilled desires in life
Was for my Grandfather Whitten and Grandfather Bittinger
Both long-time Brethren ministers
To know I followed in their footsteps.

It'd make me proud knowing I've made them proud.

It seems a little pride is helpful!

Pride sparks us to do things well
To take pride in our work!

In this sense, pride is a virtue.

But there is a limit, isn't there?

No one likes a braggadocio.

No one wants a conceited person to corner them
To hear them go on and on and on
Ad nauseam, about how cool they are.

Too much pride, then, becomes a vice.

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From a Biblical perspective, pride is a sin.

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James 4:6 ESV God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

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According to early church leaders

Of all the 7 deadly sins

Lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, anger, envy

Pride ranks the worst.

John Stott considered Pride to be *the essence of all sin*.

So why is Pride so bad?

In our day of excessive celebrations in sports

The dance in the end zone

The strut following the basket

The primeval roar over a goal

What so bad about a little self-exaltation?

Well according to author Jason Meyer

Of *Killjoy, the 7 Deadly Sins*

Other sins lead the sinner away from God

But pride . . . attempts to elevate the sinner above God.

C. S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity*

Devotes a whole chapter to Pride.

Entitling it, *The Great Sin*.

Let me read a couple of sentences from the chapter:

According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere flea bites in comparison: it was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind . . . (p. 109).

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**Psalm 10:4 (NLT) The wicked are too proud to seek God.
They seem to think that God is dead.**

The reason that Pride is at the top of the list
Is because, Pride replaces love of God with love of self!

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Pride work this way.

Pride is competitive.

It gets no pleasure out of having something.
It gets its pleasure from having more of something.

We think people are proud
By being rich, successful, good looking or smart.

But that doesn't make them proud.

What makes them proud is being richer, more successful
Better looking and smarter than the other.

Pride comes when comparing yourself to another.

Similar to our subject envy last week . . .

Envy, on one hand,
Compares itself to someone above them
With resentment

Pride, on the other,
Compares itself to someone below them
With haughty arrogance.

Pride becomes pride only by comparison.

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Pride led Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit.

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Genesis 3:3-5 (ESV) 3b He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” 2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” 4 But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God”

If it was food that caused Eve to sin
Pride prompted her!

Pride shifted Eve’s focus from dependency on God
To the proud notion she could compete with God.

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This attitude continues on in the history of humanity.

The story of the tower of Babel
Is another story of the prideful desire to be like God.

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Genesis 11:4 (NRSV) 4 Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves”

Making a name for ourselves has been our sin ever since.

Pride is the ruination for so many of God’s people.

A case in point was King Uzziah.

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2 Chronicles 26:5 (NIV) 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.

However, later on we read:

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2 Chronicles 26:16 (NIV) But after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall.

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Now I'm not saying a healthy sense of self-worth is wrong.

That a high self-esteem is not vital for a person's psyche.

What I am talking about is the kind of pride

That evolves into arrogance, conceit,

And an overly inflated sense of self.

When we think more highly of ourselves than we ought

We are doomed for failure.

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Proverbs 16:18 (NRSV) Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

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Galatians 6:3 (NIV) If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves.

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In its extreme form, pride becomes narcissism.

A narcissistic person is one whose pride has gone awry!

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Six signs and symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder:

- Grandiose sense of self-importance
- Lives in a fantasy world that supports their delusions of grandeur
- Needs constant praise and admiration
- Sense of entitlement
- Exploits others without guilt or shame
- Frequently demeans, intimidates, bullies, or belittles others

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Pride is corrupted love.

Really, all of the 7 Deadly Sins are misdirected love affairs.

Lust is a distorted love of sex.

Gluttony, a misguided love of food and consumption

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Greed, an obsessive love of wealth

And Wrath, Sloth, Envy and Pride, all warped loves of self.

But Pride or in perhaps today's language Narcissism

Is by far, the most corrupted form of love.

Pride puts self in the center of the universe.

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C. S. Lewis stated a proud person is always looking down on people, *and of course, as long as you're looking down you cannot see something that is above you.*

John Stott stated that *Pride is your greatest enemy.*

But let me complete his sentence:

Pride is your greatest enemy, humility your greatest friend.

C. S. Lewis states *humility is not thinking less of ourselves, but thinking of ourselves less.*

Humility is the antidote to Pride.

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Jesus tells a story found in Luke 18

Comparing two men . . .

One a religious leader, the other a sinner.

They went to the temple to pray.

Jesus' story has pride and humility praying side-by-side.

Jesus says the religious leader prayed somewhat like this:

Thank you God, I'm not like other people, especially like this one over here. I am better than them!

And the sinner like this: *God have mercy on me, a sinner.*

Jesus says that God answered their prayers

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Luke 18:14b For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

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In our passage today, Paul speak to Timothy
Of how it will look, come the end of time.

So much of what he described back then
Looks a whole lot like now!

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2 Timothy 3:2-5 (CEV) ² People will love only themselves and money. They will be proud, stuck-up, rude, and disobedient to their parents. They will also be ungrateful, godless, ³ heartless, and hateful. Their words will be cruel, and they will have no self-control or pity. These people will hate everything that is good. ⁴ They will be sneaky, reckless, and puffed up with pride. Instead of loving God, they will love pleasure. ⁵ Even though they will make a show of being religious, their religion won't be real

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If humility is the anecdote to pride
Then Christ himself exemplifies humility

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Philippians 2:6-8 (NLT) Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.

⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

Jesus' whole life and ministry, his death
His complete submission to God's will
Is our saving grace.

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And it is in our own response to Christ's saving grace
That we find healing and wholeness.

And it is in imitation of Christ. that we model humility.

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Pride would never stoop so low
As to kneel at the foot of the cross
Admit wrongdoing and seek forgiveness.

Pride would never accept God's mercy and grace.

Because Pride will never see God as a Savior.
And that's why Pride is the One, Great, Deadly Sin.

So how do you cure a pride-filled heart?

The first, the biggest, and the hardest step is to admit it.

How many narcissistic people do you know
That admit they struggle with pride?

In fact, they'll tell you the opposite
Why, I'm the most humble person in the world!

However, usually through self-destruction
Once pride is able to admit and confess its guilt

Do as James tells us:

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James 4:7-10 (NIV) ⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

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