

INTRODUCTION

If someone were to ask you if you are a proud person, what would you say?

We do our best to distill good pride from the bad - family, positive achievements, growth, etc. And certainly we don't want to create a bunch of people with worm-like self image. You were created in the image and likeness of God, and this is nothing to disdain or shake a stick at.

It is very important for us to note, however, that when we play around with pride as if it is an gentle house pet, we are likely to be struck and wounded by the crouching lion that it is.

John Maxwell wrote an article about pride in 2014, and in it he pulls two helpful quotes from C.S. Lewis. They are separate quotes, but for our purposes today I will combine them into one, since they are linked:

The point is that each person's pride is in competition with everyone else's pride. It is because I wanted to be the big noise at the party that I am so annoyed at someone else being the big noise.... Now what you want to get clear is that Pride is essentially competitive, is competitive by its very nature, while the other vices are competitive only, so to speak, by accident. Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. We say that people are proud of being richer, or cleverer, or better looking than others. If every one else became equally rich, or clever, or good looking, there would be nothing to be proud about. It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest...

If anyone would like to acquire humility, I can, I think, tell him the first step. The first step is to realize that one is proud. And a bigish step, too. At least, nothing whatever can be done before it. If you think you are not conceited, you are very conceited indeed.

Fighting pride requires constant examination, but here's the thing: Our whole walk with Christ requires examination. The biblical authors are constantly warning us to be watchful.

1 Peter references Genesis and Cain and Abel

Sin is crouching at your door, seeking someone to devour, but we can resist in the Spirit.

And so here we are in Advent; a natural time for reflection as a year ends and another one is on the horizon.

We are in a series called "Mary's Song", and we are looking at Mary, the mother of Jesus, and her song of praise upon discovering that she, a peasant girl of humble origin, would be the one to bring the Son of God into the world. She doesn't fully understand what is happening, but she is fully surrendered in love and obedience to God, who is a good Father to those who humble themselves before him.

We take this humility for granted in our lives, and what I hope to do today is show us the depth of our pride, and how healthy, deep examination is required, and that the reward for humbling ourselves is greater than we could imagine.

Let's dive in together.

INTRO

① PRAISE GOD FOR SEEING MARY IN HUMBLE PLACE

Luke 1:50-52 BEFORE ② GOD DOES GREAT THINGS FOR HER IN HIS MIGHT + HOLINESS

GOD IS MERCIFUL TO THOSE WHO FEAR HIM AND OPPOSES THOSE WHO DO NOT

Luke 1:50 - 50 And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

MERCY COMPASSION JOINED WITH DESIRE TO HELP TO BETTER THE SUBJECT OF THE MERCY.

• OUR EXPERIENCE: EMPTY GESTURES, HOLLOW VIEW
⇒ WE ARE MOVED WHEN WE SEE THE REAL THING

• PETER - GIVE TO HIM WHO ASKS, AND DO NOT REFUSE THE ONE WHO WOULD BORROW

• GOD IN ALL OF HIS MIGHT + HOLINESS, HAS A SETBACKING MERCY TO OFFER.

HOW IS THIS BEAUTIFUL THING ACCESSIBLE?

FEAR TWO ELEMENTS: FEAR + DURATION

WE TEND TO SIGNIFY: YES REVERENCE, ALSO FEAR. WORD MEANS BOTH.

• WHITNEY - NIGHT BEFORE SUMMIT
- WILL I MAKE IT?
- THEORETICAL TO VERY PRACTICAL

• TRUTH: WHAT IS TERRIFYING - OUR PERSPECTIVE KEEPS IT TAME

• FEAR SHOULDN'T MAKE US HIDE; THERE IS NO FOREWIT WORSHIP FOR SMALL GOD

• BALANCED BY GOD'S INVITATION: "FEAR NOT"

• FEAR NOT JUST ABOUT US
• NO FEAR = SELFISH
• FEAR = CONTROL FOR YOUR LIFE + OTHERS

THE PROUD + THE HUMBLE

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GENERATIONS

EXODUS 20 - 10 COMMANDMENTS

Exodus 20:1-6 - And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

NO FEAR: GENERATIONAL PUNISHMENT
FEAR/LOVE/OBEDIENCE: FAITHFULNESS/MERCY/COMPASSION WILL NOT DEPART

Proverbs 9:10 - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

• NO WISDOM, GROWTH, BENEFIT IF WE DON'T SEE GOD RIGHTLY

• HUMILITY → FEAR → WORSHIP + JOY

GOD IS NOT PASSIVE IN INDIFFERENCE BUT IS ACTIVE IN LOVE AND HOLINESS

Luke 1:51a - 51 He has shown strength with his arm... UNDERSTANDING HOW HE WORKS IS VITAL

WHY DID GOD LET THIS HAPPEN?
L.A. PAIN OF DEEP PAIN
I DON'T KNOW = HONEST

BUT GOD IS NOT INDIFFERENT OR PASSIVE

GOD IS ALWAYS WATCHING

2 Chronicles 16:9 - For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him.

Proverbs 15:3 - The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.

Job 34:21 - For his eyes are on the ways of a man, and he sees all his steps.

Hebrews 4:12-13 - For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

1 Peter 3:12 - For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

GOD IS ALWAYS REDEEMING

• GENESIS 50 - EVIL/GOOD
• JOB 2 - I WILL RESTORE WHAT WAS LOST

GOD'S ARM IS ALWAYS WORKING

SALVATION + JUDGMENT

Deuteronomy 26:8 - And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great deeds of terror, with signs and wonders.

Isaiah 63:5 - I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me.

• HUMBLE IN SIN
• GRATEFUL FOR ACCOUNTING

I LOVE YOU...

• WE THINK WE ARE ENTITLED TO GOD'S GRACE + WE ARE NOT PRIDE.

• BUT WE HAVE ACCESS INTO THE PERSON, PRESENCE, + PROMISES OF GOD.

IF WE SPENT MORE TIME HERE, WE WOULD NOT BE SO QUICK TO USE HEART.

• MARY'S POSTURE WILL CHANGE US
• GOD IS NOT PASSIVE OR MODIFIED. CONSTANTLY WORKING IN LOVE + HOLINESS

GOD SHOWS STRENGTH, OUR POSTURE DETERMINES PROTECTION OR OPPOSITION

Luke 1:51b-52 - 51... He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; 52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate...

Proverbs 3:33-34 - The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the dwelling of the righteous. Toward the scornful he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor.

OUR POSTURE DETERMINES

EXAMPLE YOUR HEART

2 Timothy 3:1-5 - But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

MY JOB AS PASTOR

ASSURANCES TO WARD OFF DESPAIR

TREMBLING TO WARD OFF APATHY

Humbled himself Philippians 2

JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO YOU THIS LIFE

JOHN 15

ABIDE IN HUMILITY
GOD'S SACRIFICE
BROKENHEART PEOPLE

ADVENT PEOPLE