

A Few Signs of the Sin of Pride

Pride is more easily recognized than defined and is more easily detected in others than in self. Pride embraces many synonyms that reflect attitudes as well as acts—such as arrogance, presumption, conceit, and especially, vanity and self-satisfaction. Pride ignores one's true condition before God as well as the ability and worth of others. Pride is the very essence of sin.

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

Self-Righteousness and legalism - Pride measures oneself against others, instead of an infinitely holy God. Pride also measures other against oneself, deeming oneself as better than and superior to those more deserving of judgment. *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of your own doing; it is a gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast* (**Ephesians 2:8-9**). Believers caught in pride cast themselves as super Christians, spiritualizing every conversation, talking a lot about how much they pray, etc., speaking with a different accent or voice about spiritual stuff. Seeing themselves as morally superior, they despise and detest those they deem as sinners.

Prayerlessness - Pride deceives us into thinking we can "do life" on our own—that we're capable, independent, and self-reliant—no prayer, no dependence, no dependence, no humility, just pride.

Fear - Pride is at the root of fear and anxiety, when we refuse to humbly rest in God's sovereign care. Fear simultaneously reveals our lack of trust and a poisonous self-reliance and preoccupation with self.

Defensive and argumentative - An opposing idea or differing viewpoint is taken as a personal attack. The response is one of defensiveness because we feel assaulted, even if it's a simple disagreement. This kind of fear reveals our lack of trust and need to be in control.

Fault-finding and critical - Pride requires us to look better than others. A pride-filled person becomes an expert at finding fault in others. They are highly opinionated, critical, harsh, and mean-spirited.

A complaining spirit - A proud heart says it is good, that we should get what *we want*, and if we don't, we're justified in our ingratitude. If we're uncomfortable or inconvenienced in any way, we can complain. It's *our right*. Again, it's a spirit of entitlement.

People-pleasing - Pride is self-worship and self-preservation at all costs—and people-pleasing is the direct result of pride. Some think people-pleasing is a positive trait because they're so clearly concerned with serving others. But that belief is nothing more than a sneaky sheepskin we put over a wolfish habit. People-pleasing is all about self-satisfaction—fearing man more than God—and seeking the fleeting happiness that comes from man's approval.

Refusal to be influenced by others; i.e., unteachable - Humility is open to change while pride paralyzes us into our

current state. When we think we are better than others, we stop being influenced by them.

Oblivious to other's needs - Pride causes us to become so focused on self that we are unaware of the hurts and struggles in others.

Addiction to attention, credit, and approval - Pride fixates on having the attention and approval of others. Believing ourselves to be of more importance, we assume everything is and should be about us.

Inability to see other viewpoints - Pride causes us to crown our way of thinking as king. Anyone who sees the world differently is viewed as wrong. Other cultures are seen as inferior to one's own.

Racial prejudice - The diversity in human ethnicity (*the nations and their boundaries*) was created by God (**Acts 17:26**) as an expression of his manifold glory (**Revelation 7:9**). Warmly embracing the diversity of ethnicity is a biblical mandate. However, race is a very different thing. The insidious evil of human pride created the idea of race as a social construct 400 years ago. Race was not simply the recognition of ethnic diversity, but the creation of a caste system where human value was determined by where someone fell in the hierarchy of racial difference—white people being at the very top. This *narrative of racial difference* as a part of God's design was the necessary story used to justify the colonization of America through the brutal displacing of native communities and the enslaving of Africans. The evil of racial prejudice is embedded in the psyche and social structures of America, even to this day.

Refusal to submit to authority - A prideful person believes they have it all figured out, so they don't need to listen to those God has put over them. It shows itself in a lack of submission—wives to their husbands; husbands to their wives, children to their parents; employees to your bosses; congregants to their spiritual leaders, citizens to their government. Rebellion against God ordained authority, except in cases where that authority requires us to disobey God, says, *"I know better than you, God."*

Never asking for help, but always expecting service - It's an odd combination, but pride weds the two. When we overvalue ourselves, we refuse to ask others for help. We see it as a weakness. But, at the same time, we regularly expect others to serve us, because we think we are due their sacrifice. Pride is expressed in a spirit of entitlement.

Absence of sacrifice - Pride says we deserve to do our own thing and go our own way. Pride convinces us that sacrifice is below us.

Refusal to say "I'm sorry" - Pride refuses to apologize for two reasons. First, a prideful person may not be able to see they are wrong. Second, a prideful person might not be willing to admit fault, even when they know it's there. Either way, the words *"I'm sorry"* are rarely heard or if they are, they are quickly followed by *"but you...."*

A Few Biblical Passages on the Sin of Pride

Psalms 138:6 *For though Yahweh is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar.*

Proverbs 11:2 *When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.*

Proverbs 15:33 *The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom, and humility comes before honor.*

Proverbs 16:18-19 *Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.*

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

Proverbs 22:4 *The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life.*

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

Proverbs 29:23 *One's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.*

Isaiah 2:11 *The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day.*

Isaiah 57:15 *For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite."*

Matthew 23:12 *Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*

Matthew 11:29-30 *Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. — Jesus*

Mark 7:21-23 *For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.*

Romans 12:16 *Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.*

Romans 12:3 *For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.*

1 Corinthians 10:12 *Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.*

Ephesians 4:2-3 *With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

Philippians 2:3-6 *Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and humbled himself to death on the cross.*

Colossians 3:12 *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.*

James 4:6, 10 *But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

1 Peter 5:5-6 *Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you.*

1 Peter 3:8 *Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.*

Kingdom Kindness

Humility

Matthew 5:3