



Let Pride Lead You
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The Crossing Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING

We are in week #2 of our series “How to Wreck Your Life in 3 Easy Steps.” Most of us don’t need any pointers on how to wreck our lives – we do a pretty good job of that all by ourselves, so this series is looking at what is behind the sins and the temptations we struggle with. If we don’t acknowledge them and confront them, they have the potential to wreak havoc with our futures.

SCRIPTURE¹

1 John 2:16 For everything in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – comes not from the Father but from the world.

Matthew 4:5-7 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ “ Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ “

James 4:1-3 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

James 4:6b-7 That is why the Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

Proverbs 3:34 He mocks the proud mockers, but shows favor to the humble and oppressed.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

OBSERVATION

After being baptized in the Jordan River the same Spirit that met Him there immediately led Jesus into the desert where He faced the devil’s temptations. This is a warning for us: When we experience a spiritual moment, we can expect Satan to attack us. He absolutely doesn’t want us to enjoy the presence of God! It was a Jewish tradition that the Messiah would miraculously and spectacularly appear at the top of the temple, so when Satan tempts Jesus to jump off, and the angels saved Him, it would be clear to everyone that He was the Messiah. It would be a short-cut to revealing who He was! So, the devil was taunting Jesus because that’s what pride does: It says, “I want everyone to know how important I am.” We all want to be respected and recognized for what we’ve done and Jesus was no different. He was tempted in every way that we are, but resisted Satan’s temptations in every instance.

QUESTION: As you study Jesus’ ministry, describe all of the ways He resisted temptation.

QUESTION: Which of those ways are you using today to protect yourself from sinning?

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture referenced here is NIV

APPLICATION

The model that Satan used to tempt Jesus in the desert is the same model he uses on us. The root of every temptation is one of three things: **Pleasure, or lust of the flesh**, is craving physical pleasure that is outside God's design for us. **Possessions, or lust of the eyes**, are those things we are jealous of when someone else has them and we don't – it is greed at its worst. Temptation will always involve going around God to get something we want, or to evaluate God's goodness by our circumstances. And then there is **Pride of Life** which keeps us from celebrating other people's success and keeps us from admitting fault or showing weakness. It causes us to feel good when others fail or to elevate ourselves over others. Pride is so deceptive it convinces us that we are better than we really are. Satan's playbook has not changed since the beginning. Think about Eve in the Garden: When Satan tempted her, she saw the fruit of the tree that was pleasing to the eye and good for gaining wisdom so she could become like God – that was pride.

QUESTION: When have you listened to Satan's twisted "facts" and regretted it?

QUESTION: In what way does pride manifest itself in you?

Our Scripture reading shows us that Satan knows the Word of God. If he knows Scripture, why don't we? It is the Sword of the Spirit – the only offensive weapon listed as the of Armor of God.² It is God's Word, given to us for protection in the battle against Satan because he misuses it, misapplies it and twists it. He is the great deceiver and, if we don't know the truth of Scripture, we are dangerously inadequate in battle. The number one indicator of spiritual growth in us is Bible engagement.

QUESTION: What chapters in the Bible have you read this week?

What causes fights and quarrels? James tells us they come from the desires that battle within us. The source of conflict is pride. Sometimes there are things we want so badly we are willing to hurt the people we care about the most in order to get what we want. Every time there is a fight or quarrel, it is because we want something and we believe we deserve it. At the height of our arrogance, we not only try to manipulate others, we also try to manipulate God. We try to take control which is the opposite of submission. When we get defensive, it is our pride that is at the core of our problem and it is keeping us from God. We camouflage our pride by calling it confidence, showing arrogance, or boasting our intellect, but the core of the problem is defensiveness. We defend ourselves against blame or criticism due to pride. Will we wait a month or a year to say, "I'm sorry?" or to tell our children how much we love them? or to admit we have a problem or an addiction? or to finally ask for help and not hide behind our pride?

QUESTION: What is causing conflict in your family today?

QUESTION: If pride is damaging your relationships, what do you plan to do about it?

QUESTION: In what ways are you camouflaging pride in your life?

The antidote to pride is submission to God. Submission means placing ourselves under someone's authority – for us, it is surrendering to God's plan for us. The only way to break the stronghold of pride is submission. Wouldn't it be best to recognize our pride so when it starts to creep back in we can say, "Go away, pride. We're done with you!" If we don't recognize and confront it, pride will cheat us out of the lives God has for us. Instead of telling God what we deserve, let us submit to His will for our lives. Submission is the pathway to humility. Just as the clay submits to the hands of the potter, we need to be molded and shaped into a disciple of Jesus through submission and humility. When we are humble, God's favor and grace rest upon us.

QUESTION: How much longer do you plan to let pride get in the way of your journey with Christ?

QUESTION: What is God calling on you to submit to Him?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come to You with our pride and arrogance repenting of them in the name of Jesus. He showed us the way to defeat those temptations in our lives and He calls us to submit to His will so we can live righteously and have peace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

² Ephesians 6:10-20

QUESTIONS

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