

September 8, 2019
LOVE UNLEASHED - Part 3
"Love Acts"

1 Corinthians 13:4 (NIV): "...[Love] does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud."

1 Thessalonians 2:20 (NLT): "Yes, you are our pride and joy."
versus

Proverbs 16:18 (NLT): "Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall."

Destructive pride is selfish to the core, focused on trusting self rather than God, making it sin.

SEVEN SUBTLE SYMPTOMS OF PRIDE (Jonathan Edwards):

- Fault-Finding
- A Harsh Spirit
- Superficiality
- Defensiveness
- Presumption
- Desperation for Attention
- Neglecting Others

Luke 18:9-12 (NLT): "9Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: 10Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. 11The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: "I thank you, God, that I am not like other people – cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! 12I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.""

The Pharisee is not confessing his own sins - he's trying to confess everyone *else's* sins!

1 Timothy 1:15 (NIV): "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst."

The Apostle Paul didn't try to deceive himself or anyone else, but at the same time he was also confident that Christ had died to save him, too, and his past was no longer what defined him.

Luke 18:13 (NLT): "But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, "O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.""

God wants us to acknowledge the truth about ourselves because anything else is a lie, a deception, that leads us down the wrong path.

Hosea 7:10 (CEV): "I am the LORD, their God, but in all of their troubles their pride keeps them from returning to me."

Frank Schell Ballentine: "...the essence of humility is courage..."

Humility is not about tearing ourselves down - it's about having the courage to see and admit the truth, good and bad, and trust God to redeem us.

Luke 18:14 (NLT): "I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

Philippians 2:5-9 (NLT): "5You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7Instead, 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, 8he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. 9Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names"

Love accepts someone for who they are and works sacrificially for their good.

Love sacrifices for the sake of another, regardless of whether it benefits me or not.

Philippians 2:3 (NIV): "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."

Philippians 2:3 (Message): "Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead."

The question is not am I loved, but how am I to treat others, and the Bible says we're to treat them as if they were better than us; in other words, give them our best.

Humble love doesn't knock ourselves down - it just doesn't knock others down to lift me and help me feel better about myself.

We need Jesus in our lives to cleanse us and empower us to love in ways that don't envy, boast or act prideful.

As Jesus showed us, love doesn't envy, boast or act proud - love sacrifices!

Where can I set aside my pride this week and sacrifice for the sake of another?

Next Week: Love Honors

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