

OVERCOMING PRIDE AND SELFISHNESS IN RELATIONSHIPS

Proverbs 11:2; 12:9 and many others

"Sanctify them
by the Truth.
Your Word is Truth"
John 17:17

I. Introduction

II. When you're truly humble you actually end up getting what pride pretends to offer.

A. Pride and arrogance leads to public shame while humility is what actually earns lasting respect.

- Proverbs 11:2 (NKJV) ² When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble *is* wisdom.
- Proverbs 18:12 (NKJV) ¹² Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor *is* humility.
- Proverbs 22:4 (NKJV) ⁴ By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *Are* riches and honor and life.
- Proverbs 29:23 (NKJV) ²³ A man's pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor.

B. Contentment and honesty are far better than playing pretend just to impress people.

- Proverbs 12:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Better *is the one* who is slighted but has a servant, Than he who honors himself but lacks bread.
- Proverbs 13:7 (NKJV) ⁷ There is one who makes himself rich, yet *has* nothing; *And* one who makes himself poor, yet *has* great riches.
- Proverbs 19:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Luxury is not fitting for a fool, Much less for a servant to rule over princes.
- Proverbs 25:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ *It is* not good to eat much honey; So to seek one's own glory *is not* glory.

C. Openness to wise counsel prevents the destructive drama that pride creates.

- Proverbs 13:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ By pride comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised *is* wisdom.
- Proverbs 26:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ The lazy *man is* wiser in his own eyes Than seven men who can answer sensibly.
- Proverbs 27:2 (NKJV) ² Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.

D. God actively opposes self-righteous attitudes while protecting the humble.

- Proverbs 15:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ The LORD will destroy the house of the proud, But He will establish the boundary of the widow.
- Proverbs 16:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Everyone proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD; *Though they join* forces, none will go unpunished.
- Proverbs 16:18-19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall. ¹⁹ Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud.
- Proverbs 20:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"?

III. Selfish motives spoil our heart, our character, and our community.

A. When we often give haughty looks and constant criticism to others it reveals a deep problem inside our hearts.

- Proverbs 21:4 (NKJV) ⁴ A haughty look, a proud heart, *And* the plowing of the wicked *are* sin.
- Proverbs 21:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ A proud *and* haughty *man*--"Scoffer" *is* his name; He acts with arrogant pride.
- Proverbs 27:21 (NKJV) ²¹ The refining pot *is* for silver and the furnace for gold, *And* a man *is valued* by what others say of him.

B. Harboring envy, greed, and jealousy eats away at our personal health and our peace.

- Proverbs 14:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ A sound heart *is* life to the body, But envy *is* rottenness to the bones.
- Proverbs 27:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Wrath *is* cruel and anger a torrent, But who *is* able to stand before jealousy?
- Proverbs 28:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will be prospered.

C. Isolating ourselves or envying the wicked twists our view of God's justice.

- Proverbs 18:1 (NKJV) ¹ A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment.
- Proverbs 24:19-20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the wicked;
²⁰ For there will be no prospect for the evil *man*; The lamp of the wicked will be put out.

IV. Conclusion

Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. Looking back at the idea that constant criticism is actually a form of scoffing, what are some everyday areas (like driving, shopping, or social media) where critical thoughts tend to creep into your mind?
2. How do you usually react when someone praises you? What can our private reactions to compliments reveal about whether humility or pride is growing in our hearts?
3. When someone else gets recognized, praised, or blessed in a way you wished you were, what is your immediate natural reaction? How can we actively combat feelings of envy or resentment in those moments?
4. The study notes that isolating ourselves can sometimes be a sign of pride rather than just introversion. How can we discern the difference between healthy solitude and self-serving isolation that pushes away accountability?
5. We learned that pride often hides behind our anger or "righteous indignation." What is one practical way we can pause and inspect our motives before reacting when we feel angry or mistreated?
6. Of all the subtle ways pride operates—holding back forgiveness, dodging accountability, or demanding special treatment—which one do you feel God is prompting you to address with Him this week?