



SELF
EXALTATION

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Forward

Isaiah 14:12-15

“Ezekiel calls Lucifer "the anointed cherub who covers," which means he was one of the chief angels whose wings covered God's throne in heaven.

He is specifically shown to be a created being, possibly the most beautiful, wise, and perfect of God's creations.

But this mighty angel grew proud and vain in his beauty.

He began to become envious of God's authority over the universe, and he schemed to induce other angels to support him in an attempt to overthrow God.

He finally led one third of the angels (Revelation 12:4) to war against God in heaven, God cast him and his angelic troops back to the earth (Luke 10:18).

These who follow his example exalt themselves with pride and arrogance.

This is an act of aggression against God. God hates pride and self-exaltation.

Those who practice pride and self-exaltation will not spend eternal life with God.

It is time to Exalt Jesus.

Chapter 1

Pride goes before destruction.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling.

Proud people take little account of their weaknesses and do not anticipate stumbling blocks. They think they are above the frailties of common people. In this state of mind they are easily tripped up. Ironically, proud people seldom realize that pride is their problem, although everyone around them is well aware of it. Ask someone you trust whether self-satisfaction has blinded you to warning signs. He or she may help you avoid a fall.

Pride brings dishonor.

Proverbs 11:2

When pride comes, then comes dishonor, but with the humble is wisdom.

“The day of wrath” refers to when we die or to the time when God settles accounts with all people. On judgment day, each of us will stand alone, accountable for all our deeds. At that time, no amount of riches will buy reconciliation with God. Only our love for God and obedience to him will count.

God hates pride.

Proverbs 8:13

“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate.

The more a person fears and respects God, the more he or she will hate evil. Love for God and love for sin cannot coexist. Harboring secret sins means that you are tolerating evil within yourself. Make a clean break with sin and commit yourself completely to God.

Pride will bring you low.

Proverbs 29:23

A man’s pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor.

Attitudes of Pride

Deuteronomy 8:14

Then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

In times of plenty, we often take credit for our prosperity and become proud that our own hard work and cleverness have made us rich. It is easy to get so busy collecting and managing wealth that we push God right out of our lives. But it is God who gives us everything we have, and it is God who asks us to manage it for him.

Kings and Pride

Proverbs 14:28

In a multitude of people is a king's glory, but in the dearth of people is a prince's ruin.

A quick and proud temper can be like a fire out of control. It can burn us and everyone else in its path. Anger divides people. It pushes us into hasty decisions that only cause bitterness and guilt. Yet anger, in itself, is not wrong. Anger can be a legitimate reaction to injustice and sin.

When you feel yourself getting angry, look for the cause. Are you reacting to an evil situation that you are going to set right? Or are you responding selfishly to a personal insult? Pray that God will help you control your quick temper, channeling your feelings into effective action and conquering selfish anger through humility and repentance.

Characteristics of Pride

1 Timothy 3:6

And not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.

New believers should become secure and strong in the faith before taking leadership roles in the church. Too often, when the church is desperate for workers, new believers are placed in positions of responsibility prematurely. New faith needs time to mature. New believers should have a place of service, but they should not be put into leadership positions until they are firmly grounded in their faith, with a solid Christian life-style and a knowledge of the Word of God.

Younger believers who are selected for office need to beware of the damaging effects of pride. Pride can seduce our emotions and cloud our reason. It can make those who are immature susceptible to the influence of unscrupulous people. Pride and conceit were the devil's downfall, and he uses pride to trap others.

Chapter 2

The Evil of Pride

1 Samuel 15:23

"For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king."

When Saul asked David to be in his service, he obviously did not know that David had been secretly anointed king (1 Samuel 16:12). Saul's invitation presented an excellent opportunity for the young man and future king to gain firsthand information about leading a nation ("David went back and forth from Saul," 1 Samuel 17:15).

Sometimes our plans—even the ones we think God has approved—have to be put on hold indefinitely. Like David, we can use this waiting time profitably. We can choose to learn and grow in our present circumstances, whatever they may be.

Examples of Pride

Exodus 5:2

But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and besides, I will not let Israel go."

Pharaoh was familiar with many gods (Egypt was filled with them), but he had never heard of the God of Israel. Pharaoh assumed that the God of the Hebrew slaves couldn't be very powerful. At first, Pharaoh was not at all worried about Moses' message, for he had not yet seen any evidence of the Lord's power.

The Origin of Pride

Luke 18:11-12

"The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

“Path” people, like many of the religious leaders, refused to believe God’s message. “Rock” people, like many in the crowds who followed Jesus, believed his message but never got around to doing anything about it. “Thorn patch” people, overcome by worries and the lure of materialism, left no room in their lives for God. “Good soil” people, in contrast to all the other groups, followed Jesus no matter what the cost. Which type of soil are you?

Results of Pride

Jeremiah 43:2

Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie! The LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'You are not to enter Egypt to reside there';

Johanan and his tiny band had come to Jeremiah for God’s approval of their plan, not for God’s direction. This is a recurring problem for most of us—seeking God’s approval of our desires rather than asking him for guidance. It’s not good to make plans unless we are willing to have God change them, and it is not good to pray unless we are willing to accept God’s answer.

Pride brings deception.

Galatians 6:3

For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Chapter 3

Insolence brings strife.

Proverbs 13:10

Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.

Every day has 24 hours filled with opportunities to grow, serve, and be productive. Yet it is so easy to waste time, letting life slip from our grasp. Refuse to be a lazy person, sleeping or frittering away the hours meant for productive work. See time as God's gift and seize your opportunities to live diligently for him.

God is opposed to the proud.

James 4:6

But He gives a greater grace Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

Conflicts and disputes among believers are always harmful. James explains that these quarrels result from evil desires battling within us—we want more possessions, more money, higher status, more recognition. When we want badly enough to fulfill these desires, we fight in order to do so. Instead of aggressively grabbing what we want, we should submit ourselves to God, ask God to help us get rid of our selfish desires, and trust him to give us what we really need.

James mentions the most common problems in prayer: not asking, asking for the wrong things, asking for the wrong reasons. Do you talk to God at all? When you do, what do you talk about? Do you ask only to satisfy your desires? Do you seek God's approval for what you already plan to do? Your prayers will become powerful when you allow God to change your desires so that they perfectly correspond to his will for you (1 John 3:21-22).

There is nothing wrong with wanting a pleasurable life. God gives us good gifts that he wants us to enjoy (James 1:17; Ephes. 4:7; 1 Tim. 4:4-5). But having friendship with the world involves seeking pleasure at others' expense or at the expense of obeying God. Pleasure that keeps us from pleasing God is sinful; pleasure from God's rich bounty is good.

The cure for evil desires is humility (see Proverbs 16:18-19; 1 Peter 5:5-6). Pride makes us self-centered and leads us to conclude that we deserve all we can see, touch, or imagine. It creates greedy appetites for far more than we need.

We can be released from our self-centered desires by humbling ourselves before God, realizing that all we really need is his approval. When the Holy Spirit fills us, we see that this world's seductive attractions are only cheap substitutes for what God has to offer.

The lips of the wise will protect them.

Proverbs 14:3

In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for his back, but the lips of the wise will protect them.

The Haughty and Scoffers act with insolent pride.

Proverbs 21:24

"Proud," "Haughty," "Scoffer," are his names, who acts with insolent pride.

The proud are an abomination to the Lord

Proverbs 16:5

Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; assuredly, he will not be unpunished.

Pride is the inner voice that whispers, “My way is best.” It is resisting God’s leadership and believing that you are able to live without his help. Whenever you find yourself wanting to do it your way and looking down on other people, you are being pulled by pride. Only when you eliminate pride can God help you become all he meant you to be. (See the chart in Proverbs 18:12.)

The boastful are from the world.

1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Some people think that worldliness is limited to external behavior—the people we associate with, the places we go, the activities we enjoy.

Worldliness is also internal because it begins in the heart and is characterized by three attitudes:

(1) *The cravings of sinful man*—preoccupation with gratifying physical desires;

(2) *The lust of his eyes*—craving and accumulating things, bowing to the god of materialism; and

(3) *Boasting of what he has and does*—obsession with one’s status or importance. When the serpent tempted Eve (Genesis 3:6), he tempted her in these areas. Also, when the devil tempted Jesus in the desert, these were his three areas of attack (see Matthew 4:1-11).

By contrast, God values self-control, a spirit of generosity, and a commitment to humble service. It is possible to give the impression of avoiding worldly pleasures while still harboring worldly attitudes in one’s heart. It is also possible, like Jesus, to love sinners and spend time with them while maintaining a commitment to the values of God’s kingdom.

What values are most important to you? Do your actions reflect the world’s values or God’s values?

Humility goes before honor.

Proverbs 18:12

Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, but humility goes before honor.

There are three basic principles for making sound decisions:

- (1) Get the facts before answering;
- (2) Be open to new ideas;
- (3) Make sure you hear both sides of the story before judging.

All three principles center on seeking additional information. This is difficult work, but the only alternative is prejudice—judging before getting the facts.

Patience of spirit is better than haughtiness.

Ecclesiastes 7:8

The end of a matter is better than its beginning; Patience of spirit is better than haughtiness of spirit.

To finish what we start takes hard work, wise guidance, self-discipline, and patience. Anyone with vision can start a big project. But vision without wisdom often results in unfinished projects and goals.

Chapter 4

The wicked do not seek God.

Psalm 10:4

The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him All his thoughts are, "There is no God."

Some people succeed in everything they do, and they brag that no one, not even God, can keep them down. We may wonder why God allows these people to amass great wealth while they despise him as they do. But why are we upset when the wicked prosper?

Are we angry about the damage they are doing or just jealous of their success? To answer these questions we must gain the right perspective on wickedness and wealth. The wicked will surely be punished because God hates their evil deeds.

Wealth is only temporary. It is not necessarily a sign of God's approval on a person's life; nor is lack of it a sign of God's disapproval. Don't let wealth or lack of it become your obsession.

The lowly need not divide the spoil with the proud/

Proverbs 16:19

It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud.

We want other people to like us, and sometimes we will do almost anything to win their approval. But God tells us to put our energy into pleasing him instead.

Our effort to be peacemakers will usually make us more attractive to those around us, even our enemies. But even if it doesn't, we haven't lost anything. We are still pleasing God, the only one who truly matters.

God will break down your pride.

Leviticus 26:19

'I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze.

If the Israelites obeyed, there would be peace in the land. If they disobeyed, disaster would follow.

God used sin's consequences to draw them to repentance, not to get back at them. Today, sin's consequences are not always so apparent. When calamity strikes us we may not know the reason.

It may be (1) the result of our own disobedience, (2) the result of someone else's sin, (3) the result of natural disaster.

Because we don't know, we should search our hearts and be sure we are at peace with God. His Spirit, like a great searchlight, will reveal those areas we need to deal with.

Because calamity is not always the result of wrongdoing, we must guard against assigning or accepting blame for every tragedy we encounter. Misplaced guilt is one of Satan's favorite weapons against believers.

God will put an end to arrogance and pride.

Isaiah 13:11

Thus I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud and abase the haughtiness of the ruthless.

Those conceited fall into condemnation.

1 Timothy 3:6

And not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.

In this short hymn, Paul affirms the humanity and divinity of Christ. By so doing he reveals the heart of the gospel, “the mystery of godliness” (the secret of how we become godly). “Appeared in a body”—Jesus was a man; Jesus’ incarnation is the basis of our being right with God.

“Was vindicated by the Spirit”—Jesus’ resurrection showed that the Holy Spirit’s power was in him (Romans 8:11). “Was seen by angels” and “was taken up in glory”—Jesus is divine. We can’t please God on our own; we must depend on Christ. As a man, Jesus lived a perfect life, and so he is a perfect example of how to live. As God, Jesus gives us the power to do what is right. It is possible to live a godly life—through following Christ.

Chapter 5

The Pride of man will be humbled.

Isaiah 2:17

The pride of man will be humbled and the loftiness of men will be abased; and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day,

Lofty towers were part of a city or nation's defenses. This phrase refers to security based on military fortresses. "Every trading ship" pictures economic prosperity; and a "stately vessel" is a pleasure vessel. Nothing can compare with or rival the place God must have in our hearts and minds. To place our hope elsewhere is nothing but false pride. Place your confidence in God alone.

Love is not arrogant.

1 Corinthians 13:4

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant,

Our society confuses love and lust. Unlike lust, God's kind of love is directed outward toward others, not inward toward ourselves. It is utterly unselfish. This kind of love goes against our natural inclinations. It is possible to practice this love only if God helps us set aside our own desires and instincts, so that we can give love while expecting nothing in return. Thus the more we become like Christ, the more love we will show to others.

When the spirit is lifted up, behavior is arrogant.

Daniel 5:20

"But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from his royal throne and his glory was taken away from him.

Belshazzar knew Babylonian history, and so he knew how God had humbled Nebuchadnezzar. Nevertheless, Belshazzar's banquet was a rebellious challenge to God's authority as he took the sacred goblets from God's temple and drank from them. No one who understands that God is the Creator of the universe should be foolish enough to challenge him.

Often kings would kill the bearer of bad news. But Daniel was not afraid to tell the truth to the king even though it was not what he wanted to hear. We should be just as courageous in telling the truth under pressure.

With Pride, The arrogant speak

Psalms 31:18

Let the lying lips be mute, which speak arrogantly against the righteous with pride and contempt.

The guilty did not help the poor and needy.

Ezekiel 16:49

"Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy.

It is easy to judge and condemn Sodom, especially for its terrible sexual sins. Ezekiel reminded Judah, however, that Sodom was destroyed because its people were arrogant, overfed, and unconcerned about the needy people within their reach.

It is easy to be selective in what we consider gross sin. If we do not commit such horrible sins as adultery, homosexuality, stealing, and murder, we may think we are living good enough lives. But what about sins like arrogance, gluttony, and indifference to the needy? These sins may not be as shocking to you as the others, but they are also forbidden by God.

Pride brings humiliation.

James 1:10

And the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away.

If wealth, power, and status mean nothing to God, why do we attribute so much importance to them and so much honor to those who possess them? Do your material possessions give you goals and your only reason for living?

If they were gone, what would be left? What you have in your heart, not your bank account, matters to God and endures for eternity.

Pride prevents a return to the Lord.

Hosea 7:10

Though the pride of Israel testifies against him, yet they have not returned to the LORD their God, nor have they sought Him, for all this.

Arrogance (pride) keeps a person from returning to God because arrogance acknowledges no need of help from anyone, human or divine. Pride intensifies all our other sins because we cannot repent of any of them without first giving up our pride.

Psalm 89:9

You rule the swelling of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them.

Psalm 59:12

On account of the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, Let them even be caught in their pride, And on account of curses and lies which they utter.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: Life Application Study Bible.

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