

Flint Hills Bible Church
Biblical Soul Care Sunday School
Resolving Conflict Chapter 1: Humility

I. Pride and Humility - a review

It seems that the Lord in his sovereignty has had us talking about pride and humility quite a bit over the last several months. We have talked about the need to seek and destroy the roots of pride in our lives, and have seen many examples in scripture about the pride of humanity. This morning we are addressing the pervasive sin of pride once again, as it relates to conflict and conflict resolution. First, let's review some definitions and Scriptures about pride and humility for a wide angle understanding of pride and humility:

Definitions:

Pride: "The mindset of self (a master's mindset rather than that of a servant): a focus on self and the service of self, a pursuit of self recognition and self exaltation and a desire to control and use all things for self." (Stuart Scott - From Pride to Humility pg 6)

Here are some texts demonstrating that glory belongs to God alone:

Isaiah 42:8

⁸ I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols

Romans 11:33-36

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

³⁴ "For who has known the mind of the lord, or who has been his counselor?

³⁵ "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?"

³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Summary: God is the only one who deserves glory. Pride is our attempt to steal it away from Him.

Proverbs 8:13

¹³ The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil, and perverted speech I hate.

1 Peter 5:5

⁵ Likewise you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

Summary: Pride is serious because God hates it, promises to punish it, and actually says that he opposes the proud. Even as believers, when we are proud, God will oppose us. For our good and his glory.

Humility: “The mindset of Christ (a servant’s mindset): a focus on God and others, a pursuit of the recognition and the exaltation of God and a desire to glorify and please God in all things and by all things He has given.” (Stuart Scott - *From Pride to Humility* pgs 19-20)

Isaiah 66:1-2

Thus says the LORD: Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? 2 All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

Summary: God loves the humble and promises to be a help to those who are lowly.

II. Pride in *Resolving Conflict*

Lou Priolo derives four prerequisite traits for being a biblical conflict resolver from Ephesians 4:1-3

Ephesians 4:1-3

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

In chapter 1 we are addressing the prerequisite of humility. Priolo gives four definitions of pride that I found helpful for our discussion and review of this topic. Each of the following definitions will have a counter definition for humility.

Definition 1: “Pride is the delusion that our achievements are primarily the results of our own doing.”

1. How do we see this in our culture?
2. How might a believer be tempted to be proud in this way?

On the other hand, humility is the realization that God (and to a certain extent through His grace, others) is responsible for our achievements. James 1:17

Definition 2: “Pride is esteeming ourselves above and beyond the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us.”

Read page 27, paragraph 2 “By condition...”

3. What are some objections we might hear from friends and family to this definition of pride?
4. With this definition in mind, how do we go about pursuing a promotion or otherwise trying to improve our condition? Is it ok to pursue this?

On the other hand, humility is esteeming ourselves soberly according to the condition and proportion God has appointed for us.” Rom. 12:3, Prov. 18:20

Romans 12:3

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.

Page 28, paragraph 3

5. How can we grow in Paul’s command to think of ourselves with sober judgment?

Definition 3: “Pride is the desire to be esteemed by others above and beyond the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us.”

“It is bad enough to esteem ourselves above and beyond the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us. It is worse to want others to do so.”

Acts 5:1-5

But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, 2 and with his wife’s knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles’ feet. 3 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? 4 While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.” 5 When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it.

6. What was so wrong about what Ananias and Sapphira did?

7. Why did they do it?

On the other hand, humility is the desire for others not to esteem us above and beyond the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us. 2 Cor. 12:6

Definition 4: “Pride is the desire to exalt ourselves above and beyond the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us.”

James 4:1-3

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

“On the other hand, humility is contentment with the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us.”

8. How can we foster humble contentment in our church and our families?

III. Manifestations of Pride in Sinful Conflict

As we read these scenarios, identify the manifestations of pride in the characters.

Scenario 1: Wayne and Robert are brothers from a large family of 8 children. They never seem to get along, and always seem to come down on opposite sides of every discussion or debate. As the boys grew older they seemed to grow more and more apart. Never was this more apparent than the recent election of 2020, with Wayne voting Democrat, and Robert voting Republican. The relationship between the two brothers has deteriorated so much that Robert skipped the family Christmas, therefore avoiding his gloating brother's victory speeches about how he was right and America was now finally back in good hands.

9. How is Robert showing his pride in this scenario?

10. How is Wayne showing his pride in this scenario?

11. What could be a humble response from Robert? From Wayne?

Scenario 2: Agnes and Val were close friends for years. Right up until Val disclosed a piece of sensitive information to Agnes with a clear request for confidentiality. Agnes later revealed this information to several other friends and before you know it, rumors were swirling around Val and various sin struggles. Now there is a palpable tension whenever Agnes and Val are in the same room. They have yet to speak to one another in the 7 months since the incident.

12. How is Agnes showing her pride in this scenario?

13. How is Val showing her pride in this scenario?

14. What could be a humble response from Agnes? From Val?

These two scenarios are designed to get us thinking about just a few of the ways that sinful pride can cause conflict and also keep conflict going. To wrap up our discussion about pride and humility in conflict resolution, let's examine a few more ways that pride can show up in relationships.

Pride in the offender:

- a. Pride can prevent the offender from realizing the damage he/she has done by the sinful action or comment.
- b. Pride can cause the offender to discount the damage inflicted by his sin, or explain why it wasn't that bad.
- c. Pride can cause the offender to bristle at the offence being brought up during a reproof or correction
- d. Pride will tempt the offender to "play the victim" by accusing the reprover of such sin as over-sensitivity, partiality, being too picky, unjust, unreasonable, or proud.
- e. Pride will cause the offender to justify the sinful behavior by shifting responsibility to some other person or condition
- f. Pride can cause the repentance and reconciliation to "short-circuit", revealing a lack of biblical repentance and godly sorrow over his/her sin.

Pride in the victim:

- g. The victim's pride can prevent him from considering how he may have had a part in contributing to the sinful behavior in some way.
- h. Pride can cause the victim to assume the worst possible intentions and motives on the part of the offender.
- i. Pride can emphasize the hurt or damage done to himself over and above the hurt done to the name of Christ, to God's glory, and to the standing of the offender before God.
- j. Pride can tempt the victim to prescribe additional, unbiblical burdens of repentance and reconciliation to the offender
- k. Pride can prevent the victim from granting true, enduring forgiveness to the offender.