

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“The Dangers of Pride ”

By Brian Meade

There are some very good reasons why the Bible warns us against the dangers of our own foolish pride. In **Mark 7:20-23**, Jesus is answering the question asked by the Pharisees and scribes about why His disciples ate with unwashed hands and thus, supposedly defiling themselves. But Jesus’ answer gives us a clearer picture of what defiles us, when He said, **“That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. “All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”**

Pride is a sinful attitude of the heart.

The word *pride* in Mark 7:22 is defined as arrogance, which is an overbearing pride evidenced by a superior manner toward others. Thayer’s Greek Lexicon defines pride as, *“The character of one who, with a swollen estimate of his own powers or merits, looks down on others and even treats them with insolence and contempt.”*

And the Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church says about pride, that it is *“the inordinate love of one’s own excellence.”*

Pride comes to existence in our hearts by several ways:

- (1) **Our Ability.** With great (or even just perceived great) ability comes great temptation to think more of our worth than we should. We can easily start to have an inflated ego and lose all sense of humility in service to God.
- (2) **Much learning.** One of the great dangers to developing pride in our heart is the accumulation of knowledge through much study. Paul warned about the danger of this happening in 1 Corinthians 8:1, *“...Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.”* It can become a source of our pride— that we know more than other people.
- (3) **Social Status.** Most people are not born to royalty and do not have the tremendous luxury of being privileged from birth, but some do. To those who are so privileged, it could be so easy to look down with pride and prejudice on the commoners of this world. Celebrities often have a developed form of *diva-ship*, that most folks don’t have to worry about. Their pride becomes a barrier to the ordinary life, and especially the spiritual life in Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:26)
- (4) **Our Possessions.** What we own can be a source of pride, if we let it be one. There are a lot of material possessions that are status symbols that those who are wealthy can boast about. We can drive the BMWs, Cadillacs, and other fancy cars; we can wear the Rolex watches that other people can’t afford; we can live in mansions here on the earth; We can simply have the best possessions money can buy, but it is how we look at our possessions that means everything! It is not wrong to own any of those things, but letting them be a source of pride is sinful!



Several righteous men of faith— such as Abraham, Job, David, and Solomon were wealthy— but did not let what they owned make them arrogant.

(5) Religious Pride. Jesus spoke a parable, in Luke 18:9-14, that truly defines what it means to be *eaten up* with religious pride. The tax collector of the story was thanking God that he was “*not like other people.*” (Luke 18:11) And, even more than that, he gives to God, a list of reasons why he is so superior to others. Religious pride is still alive in the hearts of the proud, who exalt themselves over their fellow worshipers.

(6) Our Accomplishments. Very similar to the tax collector, many people today have the same malady: the need to brag about their accomplishments. They will often lead many conversations, with whomever will listen, all about what all they have done of any merit. They so readily, do what I call, pull out their trophies, and dust them off for your benefit, and then begin to tell you in great detail how they got their accolades.

But to many people pride seems harmless, but in that reality lies the danger. Pride is dangerous because.....

III. Pride Makes Us Selfish, Self-Centered, & Ego-Centric.

God’s word teaches us to forsake selfish behavior and to be humble, unselfish, and sharing in all of our ways. (Matthew 16:24; Philippians 2:3) But the major problem of developing pride is: that it keeps us from seeing past ourselves. It conditions us to think only of what, “*I have done!*” Others who see us, often wonder if we even care about anyone other than ourselves.

II. Pride Makes Us Just Like The World.

Notice in 1 John 2:15-16, “*Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 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.*” Pride makes us just like all others who are going the wrong ways in the avenues of sin. It is at this point we need to ask ourselves, “Am I behaving like the world?”

III. Pride Leads Us To Sin In Other Ways.

Pride can be a gateway sin that leads us to sin in different ways. If we note the development of sin in King Saul’s life, we will see a progression of what stemmed from pride. Pride lead him to become angry at the words sang by the women, “*Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.*” (1 Samuel 18:7-9) From anger to jealousy and to even the attempted murder of David with his spear in 1 Samuel 18:11.

IV. Pride Leads Us To Reject God’s Way.

In 2 Chronicles 26:16, King Uzziah rejected God’s way in attempting to burn the incense himself— something reserved only for God’s priests. The king’s pride was the underlying motivation for such an action: “*But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the Lord his God, for he entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense.*”

Because many are filled with intellectual pride, they will reject what does not seem to fit their mold of thinking. (1 Corinthians 1:18-31) This seems to be the obstacle the apostle Paul had while preaching to the learned men of Athens (Acts 17:16-33). When men already know everything, it is extremely difficult to teach them the truth of the gospel (1 Corinthians 1:21).

V. Pride Brings Strife & Competition.

James 3:16 teaches us, “*For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.*” Imagine if you will a church filled with envy, jealousy, and the desire to get ahead of each other in preeminence? (See Matthew 20:20-24; Proverbs 28:25)

Pride and the desire for the spotlight in the praises of men, will make any effort to move forward in the Lord’s work infinitely more difficult. Pride and competition among brethren is one of the Devil’s ways of dividing churches and stifling church growth.



VI. Pride Is The Reason Why We Are Not Close To God.

James 4:6 reminds us of the great danger to our spiritual life, when James says, “*God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*”

We should want to be as close to God as we can be— but pride causes God to resist and oppose us! If anything causes us a disruption in our walk with God, we need to discard it! Pride is not the way of the righteous.

VII. Pride Causes Us To Fall.

Proverbs 16:18, “*Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*” The Bible gives us examples of such who stumbled because of their pride: King Saul, Haman, King Uzziah, King Nebuchadnezzar, (also see Isaiah 14:12-15).

GOSPEL Allen Shepherd **MEETING** Sunday April 21st Monday-Friday 22nd-26th 7:00 PM

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Clois Wright, Debbie Keplinger, Gaddy Hall, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Pam Zeanah, Katie Ward Cobern (cancer)

Betty Hurst had some good results from her tests last week!
Sandi Poole was admitted to the Booneville Hospital for a possible blood clot.
Thankfully, she was later released (no clot was found).

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Dan Cottrell
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: "What Do You Desire?"

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Fred Johnson
The Book of Acts (Jason Longstreth)
Page 16, Question #1

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Paul Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Russell Briggs
Matthew 13:44-46
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Lord's Supper: Jerry Kennemur
Assisting: Adam Harris & Nathan Meade
Preaching: Brian Meade
Invitation: "The Value of the Church"
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

March 13th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
1 & 2 Chronicles (Mike Willis)
Page 76, Question #1
Invitation: Adam Harris
Song Leader: Dan Cottrell
Closing Prayer: Paul Johnson