

Humility Are You Clothed In It

by James Jennings

This sermon focuses on the issue of pride and humility, emphasizing the need for humility in our lives. It highlights various manifestations of pride, such as complaining, lack of gratitude, anger, seeking attention, and more. The speaker urges the audience to cast their cares upon God, trust in His care, and strive to be humble like Jesus Christ. The importance of humility in relationships, submission to authority, and seeking forgiveness is emphasized as essential for spiritual growth and unity in the church.

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:5, Proverbs 16:18, Philippians 2:3, James 4:6, Proverbs 18:2, 2 Corinthians 2:7, Matthew 7:3, Proverbs 10:19, 1 Corinthians 4:7, Amos 5:24

Topics: "Pride vs. Humility", "Spiritual Growth through Humility"

Description

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Transcript

Father, Lord, we do thank You for these glorious hymns, these songs that, Lord, we've just proclaimed and hearkened unto You, our great God. Lord, You are worthy of all praise. And Lord, at times it burdens us to cry out in prayer to You, rejoicing.

And Lord, we don't want to hold back. Lord, we don't want to be a people who quench anything that You could do in our own hearts and souls. Lord, we don't want pride to interfere with raising our hands or shouting an amen or whatever it might be.

Lord, we want to be people here today led of Your Spirit. Lord, not by carnal emotions or a false zeal, but Lord, we're looking to You, Lord, to keep growing us in various areas in our lives that we maybe don't even recognize. We need more progressive growth.

And we're thankful to have You as our God and our Father. Lord, You so tenderly care for us. And we're just so grateful.

We really, really are. And Lord, I just pray You'd use this message, this sermon, Lord, as we look at this issue of pride and humility. Lord, I pray.

Lord, I don't want You to oppose me as I seek to deliver the sermon. And Lord, You give grace to the humble. You oppose the proud.

And Father, I stand here recognizing, Lord, if there's some fleshly thing in my own heart that I gratify, Lord, I'll be a man standing in a pulpit with the living God opposing Him and not blessing what is shared. And so, Lord, I pray You'd spare me from that. I pray You'd spare all of us, Lord, from the various things in our lives that You try to show us and that even I hope You will seek to show us in this next hour.

Lord, help us to hear Your voice. Lord, respond to the convicting work of the Spirit of God in our lives. And so, Lord, please, make us more like Jesus Christ.

I pray You'd bless this time right now. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.

Well, go ahead and open your Bibles to 1 Peter 5. In the exemplary husband study today, the first chapter deals with a husband's resolve, humility, and service. And so as I was reading that this past week, just so struck by the topic of humility, and I didn't have some other sermons I've been working on. I didn't have real clarity on what to bring.

And so, I thought, you know what? This topic of humility, this topic of pride and humility, it's so essential, it's so necessary. It can be so impactful for us to have certain times in our life where God drives something home to us in this area. I thought I want to deal with it in part right now under the title, The Church's Resolve, Humility.

This isn't just for the husbands. It's for all of us. Every one of us as an individual Christian needs to have a resolve to have humility and be putting humility on and be growing in this specific area in our lives.

We've got to make a conscious effort to clothe ourselves with humility of mind. A conscious, ongoing effort throughout the whole Christian life. And on a larger scale, when you think about being resolved to have humility, it's basically being resolved to be like Jesus Christ.

Because Christ is the one who humbled Himself more than anyone else. And we read about that in Philippians 2 in an incredible way. You see Christ humbling Himself and God the Father exalting Him.

And He's our example. He really is. Now in 1 Peter, He doesn't approach it the exact same way as Paul does in Philippians 2. But remember that Christ is the ultimate example.

And what do you find in Philippians 2 when you find this idea of humility? You kind of get a good definition there that it's looking not only to one's own interest, but also to the interest of others. Right, humility is forgetting of self for the service and the needs of others. It's having a low view about self.

Life, you don't view life, you don't view being here today at church as about you. Right, I don't view me being in this pulpit as about me. It's not.

We're thinking of others. There's this mindset. That's what Christ lived His whole life with.

Sacrificially seeking to serve others. And so we're going to be in 1 Peter 5. And we're going to read this section. But if you look at verse 5, He says, likewise, you who are younger be subject to the elders.

And then He addresses everyone. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another.

So you see humility in the church towards one another. And then He explains, do this because God will oppose the proud, but God will give grace and exalt the humble. And so all of us, we have this great need to put on humility.

You know, how much is my own mind right now clothed with humility this morning? In my relationships and even in this week of prayer and fasting coming up, is this something that I'm consciously aware of? That I've got to clothe my mind with humility in the mind of Jesus Christ. And so let's read a few of these verses and explain some of it right here in 1 Peter 5. And then we're going to consider more of this. So 1 Peter, start in verse 19 of chapter 4. Let's consider some of the context.

Peter calls all of them who, there's a lot of suffering going on. You see this in verse 19. Therefore, let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

And let's remember that as we read on. This matters. Entrust their souls to who? How does he describe God the Father? Faithful Creator.

Don't forget that. These things are not accidental when they're put where they are, right? 2 Corinthians didn't say that God of all comfort accidentally. It has an application towards what these individuals are going through to highlight a certain aspect of the character of God.

So, entrust your souls to a faithful Creator. And right away, we know just from that statement, this tells us the trials and sufferings are not brought about to us by blind chance. Right, there is a faithful Creator.

He created everything. So automatically, we're already approaching this, recognizing whatever it is that we're going through is at the hands of a faithful Creator. And Peter's saying you need to entrust your soul to His safekeeping.

So he's calling a church to have a mindset of entrusting their souls to a faithful Creator. And do not forget this. We're going to see there's a connection later on.

This is a vital, important point that you and I are going to have to have if we're actually going to clothe our minds with humility. You've got to have a perspective that God is a faithful Creator having your good in view. You're going to see how this is going to apply in a little bit.

So this is basically the Lord saying entrust your most precious possessions to a bank vault, but He's the one. He's the bank vault. So God believes He should faithfully be trusted.

And then we go on into chapter 5. And Peter here instructs the elders on their conduct. The elders, the pastors. And he identifies three sins that elders are vulnerable to.

And he identifies three remedies to which elders should give attention to. So look at 1 Peter 5. So I exhort the elders among you as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed. Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight.

And here is this first sin for us elders to watch out for. Not under compulsion. What's the remedy? But willingly as God would have you.

So don't just be an elder because someone's got to do it. And how should you shepherd? As God would have you. You don't take orders from culture Christianity.

You go to God. And then he goes on. The second danger.

Not for shameful gain. Not for financial profit, reputation. Then he mentions the remedy.

But eagerly, willingly. Then v. 3, he gives the third danger for elders. Not domineering over those in your charge, but in contrast, the remedy being examples to the flock.

And then v. 4, and this results in what? When the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. It's incredible. So, has he mentioned humility at this point? No.

He hasn't. But right here at least in these verses that we just read, but think about those three sins that elders could fall into. Doing it under compulsion.

Domineering. Doing it for greedy reasons. I'd argue each of those specific sins deals directly with the issue of a lack of humility.

Pride is what leads a man to domineer over a flock. Pride is what leads a man into greed. Pride is a cancer that affects every area of our life.

Why would an elder continue on under compulsion serving when he doesn't have any desire to willingly do it? His pride. He doesn't want to step down because he's worried about his reputation or something. That could be what's happening in his heart.

And so pride is really at the root of so many things, even though we don't have it mentioned here. He's about to call everyone, as we read a moment ago, everyone to clothe themselves with humility. As one brother said, until God deals with your pride, dealing with any other sin is just a waste of time.

It's not going to matter. You try to deal with that, you haven't dealt with the pride, you're going to end up back in the sin. So after this, he shifts focus to the younger people in the church.

Verse 5, Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Now, based on the context of what he just said, dealing with elders meaning the office in the church, I take this as referring to the office, not now switching to those who are older in the church. But look what he says to those who are younger.

Be subject, submissive to the elders. That deals directly with what topic? Pride and humility. Right? Why would he just pick out the young people in this way right here? Why do you think Peter would put that there? We could speculate, but obviously Peter saw that as a need in that church, and that's why he addressed it in that specific way.

And honestly, we see that played out. When you're younger, it's harder to submit, right? I mean, parents, you've got kids, is submission easy for your children when they're younger? They kind of grow into that. Having a willing heart to obey first time quickly, cheerfully.

Right? It takes time to build up to that with the kids. So he doesn't address the whole church right here, but he goes right on from this to deal with all of us. Every single one of us.

He says, clothe yourselves, all of you. So none of us are exempt. This is for everyone here.

All of you who are Christians, this is for you, this is for me. Clothe all of yourselves with humility toward one another. So he's thinking about interpersonal relationships in the church.

How I interact with you all, and you interact with me. I've got to approach it having a specific garment on, and that is that of being clothed in humility. Clothed in having a greater interest about your needs, which is not my own, as Paul says in Philippians 2. And then he says, with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud, but He gives grace to the humble.

Verse 6, humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so at the proper time, God might exalt you. Right? That's the opposite of oppose you. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so at the proper time, He might exalt you.

Casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you. So notice verse 7, and notice chapter 4, verse 19. Notice, you see what this is kind of in the middle of right here? Entrusting your souls to a faithful Creator.

And then he ends right here, this section before moving on in verse 8 with another exhortation, he ends by reminding them about God's care for them. Don't forget that. I want you to make sure you see, you recognizing God's care for you will free you up to serve others and have humility.

If you doubt the care of God for you in your life, you're going to end up being very self-focused, very insecure, very worried about yourself. You see, so your view of God will affect how you view the situations that you face. I really want you to recognize this, because it's worthless to say clothe yourselves with humility if you don't get certain building blocks right, and then you're trying to clothe yourselves with humility, and the clothing, it just doesn't fit.

And it keeps falling off, and it's like, oh, I thought I put humility on, but now it's gone and I'm really proud and defensive. What happened? And remember, God opposes the proud. He either opposes you in your pride or gives you exalting grace as you humble yourself.

So refusal to put these clothes on towards one another actually leads God to come in and oppose you. Isn't that incredible? The opposition of God in your life. Now look, there's certain careers that the importance of appropriate clothing and equipment cannot be overstated.

What would some of those careers be? Firemen? Right. You don't want to be unprepared with the wrong equipment and go into a fire. What else? Police officer.

Yeah, I guess you want to have your taser, your gun, right, and your badge so they know you're a cop. It might not go well. What does someone else say? Construction.

They have a hard hat. Yeah, an astronaut. You can't go up into space like that.

Yeah, underwater welding. You're not going to make it down there. Brethren, I hope you see the point.

This humility, this garment of humility, clothing your mind with humility, it's just like that. You're not going to make it. You will not make it in this Christian life if this is not something that you're clothing your mind with.

You're not going to make it in this church or any church. You're going to make it to heaven. Pride comes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

And so think about this issue of humility, the importance of having this equipment on. It's vital. Without this essential item, your life is at risk.

My life is at risk. The very brother, or professing brother, who gave me the book on humility by Andrew Murray. It's that little book that you highlight something on every page.

He gave that to me as a young Christian. It so impacted me, that book. But eventually in his own life, he got to the point where he couldn't take correction.

He left the church, went to another church, left that church, abandoned the Lord. Pride led and is leading to his distraction. If he doesn't humble himself, where is he going to ultimately end up? It doesn't matter that he gave me the book.

It doesn't matter that I'm giving this sermon right now. The danger about pride is you don't even perceive it. That's the way I prayed how I prayed.

I want to be aware of God's ability to oppose me in my life and be sensitive when I recognize that's happening. That I get the message. That that's an evidence of pride manifesting itself in my heart.

Because God's coming along and He's opposing me. So, without humility, our lives are at great risk. Great risk.

Okay, now let's think of this. How is humbling of ourselves to be done? Well, look at the passage. This is very, very intriguing.

Verse 6, Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God. Okay, what's that look like? So at the proper time He might exalt you. And then He describes what it looks like.

He describes what humbling yourselves under the mighty hand of God looks like. What does it look like? What does He say? What's He say right there? Casting all your anxieties on Him because He cares for you. Wait a minute.

I want to be humble, and you're telling me, yes, yes, don't miss this. Yes, you've got these cares, you've got these anxieties that deal with what? Thinking about self? And He's saying cast those on the Lord? Because when you get those cast on the Lord and you realize how much your faithful Creator cares for you, guess what you're now freed up to do? Oh, I can go serve you. I can go serve you.

Because God's got me covered. So in Peter's mind, he seems to view a barrier that keeps you from humbly putting others first. And he wants that barrier to be stripped away.

And I'm taking this implied barrier, and many others rightly take it. It is worrying who will take responsibility and care for your needs. The worry about your own needs will prevent you from having humility and seeking to serve others.

And so Peter right there, when he says to humble yourselves that God might exalt, he's calling us to cast all our cares on Him because He cares for you. Because the more you're gripped with the care of God for your soul, the freer you are just to go and serve others and not be insecure about yourself and not worry about what others are thinking about you. Because you know how much God cares for you.

You don't get caught up in all of that. It's like, man, my faithful Creator, I've entrusted my soul to Him. He so cares for me.

The opinion of man, all of a sudden, shrinks significantly. I mean, who's going to be accountable for ensuring that my needs are met? You feel that, right? It's essential to identify who in your life is taking ownership and is your point of contact for addressing your needs. You know, you submit that paper, your kid goes to a daycare or something and they ask, who's the emergency contact? Well, you know who my emergency contacts are? The Lord, the Lord, the Lord, right? All my cares are taken care of.

His availability is 24-7. His resources are as rich as in Christ Jesus or endless. Philippians 4.19 If I've got that settled in my mind that all my cares are upon Him, that's part of humbling myself.

And then I'm free. I'm a free man. I'm a free man.

How are you going to care for another if your own is not first cared for? You see, that's the hang-up. You focus on a need in your life and you feel like this isn't being taken care of, and now your life becomes very self-oriented. But the moment you recognize that God's got that covered, God cares about you, now your life is no longer self-oriented.

The anxieties are taken care of. And now you're at the hands and feet of the Lord Jesus Christ seeking to serve others, to bear their anxieties, to bear their concerns. You're not doing it with a false motive because you don't feel the need to do it with some false motive.

You're doing it because God has loved you and you're wanting to love as Christ has loved. Don't you see that in Christ? He's the greatest servant who ever lived. And He's not getting hung up on His own needs.

That's why He could serve with such humility. That's why He could take people denying Him who made promises to Him. It didn't shake His self-confidence because He knows the care of His Father.

So He gives the answer. All your cares, God's going to care for you. So just cast, hurl, hurl those cares upon Him.

Look to the mighty hand of God, your faithful Creator. And what results? Well, as you rely and cast your cares upon the Lord, you're free. You're free to go serve others with no wrong motive, with no pride attached, with no insecurity, because you're so secure in the love of God.

Brethren, it really is true, the more you're secure in God's love for you as a Christian, the freer you are. You're not walking around with some insecurities that taint your motivations on why you do what you do. So is this barrier removed in your life? You're not going to clothe yourselves with humility if you're not casting all of your cares upon the Lord and trusting that He cares for you.

You won't be faithfully free to serve others. So, I hope you guys see this connection. You see what I'm trying to say? This is important.

This is very important. If you don't get this, you can try to have humility all day long and it's not going to result. Having the right gear for the task gives you the confidence to immerse yourselves into a burning building and serve others.

You can think of the scuba diving example or some example where you're going to go under and you want to know the support team up top has fully got your back and they have an ability to supply all of your needs while you're going under. Isn't that what the missionary wants? People up at the top holding the rope as they go down into the well. We need that in every area of our life as Christians.

To believe God is there. Faithful Creator. His mighty hand.

Nothing, not angels or demons or anything, can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus my Lord. And as I rest by faith, he says entrust yourselves. It's an act of faith to trust God that this is true regardless of what you feel.

And as you entrust yourselves to God, you're free to serve people, to not be proud. To not go in a route that is not one of humility. But this is really at the root.

Your view of God. If you don't have the right view of God and His care for you, it's not going to happen, brethren. It's going to be a failed attempt.

So, in other words, if we're going to have a resolve as a church to put on humility, we have to be resolved to daily see first that God cares for you and you cast all your anxieties on Him. You see what I'm saying? That's got to be your life. You've got to come here with your cares casted upon God and then you're free to serve others.

You've humbled yourself. You're relying upon God for the grace and the power. Alright.

So I hope you saw that. But let's think now. Let's think a little more practical.

Well, in a moment. What did I have next? Yeah, I mentioned, I had it in my notes but I already quoted it, but it's amazing that verse, Proverbs 16, 18, pride goes before destruction. What a warning sign.

Pride is a sign of imminent consequences that the person is headed for a fall. This proud person, they're overly confident in their abilities. This leads to decisions that lead to their downfall.

We've got to be able to see that in one another to help one another. I mean, we can be the very hands and feet of the Lord Jesus Christ to help people, right? You've got to help me. I've got to help you when you're falling into pride in your life and the garment of humility is not clothing your mind.

Again, pride doesn't allow you to recognize you don't have the garment on. You think you do when you don't. But others can recognize that by the fruits in our life and they're able to point that out to help us, that we wouldn't end up in destruction.

But pride is incredibly subtle. Humility, it makes you no longer in competition with God or others. Right? You ever feel that? You feel like you're in some competition? You feel like you've got to perform in some way? I mean, all that stuff, you've just got to kill it all.

It's garbage that we'll destroy. Think in the Bible. Think about this list of those who disintegrated because of pride.

I mean, you guys give me some names. Here are some people in the Bible who their pride led to their downfall. Maybe it didn't lead to ultimate destruction in hell, but it led to a miserable failure in their life.

Yeah, Samson. He didn't know the Spirit of God had left him. Right? Nebuchadnezzar.

He said, look at this great kingdom that I've made with my own hands. And what does it say in Daniel 4? God is able to humble those who walk in pride. Right? I mean, God took His reasoning away and made them out there eating grass like an ox.

I mean, isn't that astonishing? God can strip your reason in a way to deal with you because of sin in your life and it's a judgment of God. What's another person? What about King Saul? What was his manifestation of pride? He thought he knew better. Right? Hey, don't offer this until I get here.

Well, you know, I'm a little impatient. I mean, he offered it and bam! Samuel gets there. It's absolutely shocking.

Herod Agrippa. He allowed people to worship him as a god. And God struck him down and the worms ate him.

You want to talk about God opposing you? Imagine being struck dead and being eaten by worms. Or even, you know, some versions rendered the worms, he had a stomach cancer that killed him on the inside. Uzziah.

He followed God's instructions initially, but due to his fame and pride, what did he do? He went to do something he didn't have the rights to. To offer incense in the temple. Eighty-one men of valor came to rebuke him.

And he basically said, don't you know who I am? He rejected their reproof. But you can't hide from God because God opposes the proud. And God struck him with leprosy on his head.

You know what? There's really a great comfort in knowing that God opposes the proud. Isn't that one of your fears in life? Is you becoming the proud person? Right? So knowing that God opposes the proud, it kind of comforts me in the sense that there's opposition that God brings about in my life. It's the warning sign and you're able to do something about it.

You know, I like that. I like when there's a warning. Kind of like Evan said in the 10am, when you're driving down the road and there's no warning, you just have all these cars piling up.

Well, that's not helpful. But when there's a warning sign. Think of the list of world leaders whose pride was their downfall.

Napoleon. What was his issue? He was too ambitious. Too ambitious.

He overextended his empire and he got defeated. What about Gaddafi? He refused to relinquish power and ultimately it led to his downfall. What about Richard Nixon? He attempted to protect his reputation by covering up the illegal activities.

Eventually, he had to resign in 1974. What about Charles I of England? He refused humbly to work with Parliament. He couldn't get along with them and eventually led to rebellion and he got executed in 1649.

What about Louis XVI of France? He had no ear to hear the needs of the people. He was deaf to their needs. Unteachable.

He fell to reform in an economic crisis. Led to the French Revolution and he got executed in 1793. I mean, you just look at history.

The history of the Bible. The history of the world. You see people doing great.

And then pride. It crushes them. It takes them out.

Brethren, our names could end up on these lists one day. We're living in the here and the now. We're living in the realm where we need to make sure we're clothing ourselves with humility.

And we need to live in the realm of making sure that we recognize God really does care for me and He is a faithful Creator and I've entrusted myself to Him. And as that happens, you're able to go and live a life for others, serving others. Not for your own vainglory.

Well, let me share some more examples of manifestations of pride. And a lot of this was taken from Stuart Scott's book. He has a really good list of practical ways to recognize pride.

And so as I read this list, look in your closet and see if you've got any of this clothing that you occasionally put on. It's not a garment of humility. It's garments of pride.

Do inventory. Spring cleaning. I don't know what spring cleaning is.

I've never done it. I'm going to describe some of these appearances of these garments that are not humility, but mix some thoughts with humility in there. So here we go.

This first piece of clothing, it's often a firm hat on a person's head. Pride leads you to complain and judge God. We already saw not believing God cares for you.

Well, if you're judging God, then you're clearly not believing God cares for you. You think God hasn't treated you right. Martha complained about Mary not helping her.

She thought, how could Christ not notice and act on that? So that's one way pride manifests itself. You complain at God. Pride leads to a lack of gratitude.

The proud person, they're not thankful. They believe they deserve better. Sometimes they complain things aren't better.

Their tendency is to complain, criticize, be dissatisfied when something is wrong. They're going to right away find that out. Just a lack of gratitude.

I remember someone telling me that in my own life. They said, James, you tend to think of the negative thing first. When you talk about doing something, you tend to list the five reasons why it might not be a good idea.

And they said, why not start with the five reasons why it might be a good idea? You see, clothe yourselves with humility. Yes, we should weigh things out. Is God in this or is He not? But if we're always tending towards the negative, that's not a path of humility.

It breeds a hypercritical spirit in our own hearts. Vance Havner, he said, the man who thinks he's too big for a little place is in fact too little for a big place. Right? God exalts those who are humble.

If you've got any sense of... we get discontent in our hearts about our role or about the opportunities that we have or whatever, and you start festering that in your heart, it just rots you away. Rather than recognizing, you know what, God might be putting me through a season to humble me. And maybe it will lead to some exaltation at a later point.

But if I'm dissatisfied in my heart right now, the last thing that's going to happen is any form of exaltation. Humility. Here, positive is rather we've got to recognize and trust God's character.

Right? We've got to trust. The Lord knows what He's doing. Who am I to think that I understand everything? God knows everything.

He's the faithful Creator. Then I'm going to entrust my soul to. People who are proud, they're often angry.

They lash out at those who don't treat them as they think they deserve. That's the terrifying thing with husbands, right? All these expectations. My wife's got to get in the car this fast.

Or she's got to have the house this clean. And you get angry when things are not done the way that you think they should be done because you're so amazing that you should be treated in such a specific way, and you're not getting treated how you should. How dare these people not treat me as I deserve? Don't they know who I am? And besides angry outbursts, what's anger look like? Withdrawal? Pouting? Just frustrated? Why? You've got an unmet expectation.

Are any of you here today with an unmet expectation in your life? You're going to get angry if you keep feeding that unmet expectation. It's going to breed anger in your heart. Not the righteous anger.

May God search our hearts. Pride. It leads to possessing a sense of superiority over others.

Pride is thinking you're better than everyone else. If there are differences, you automatically conclude you're right, they're wrong. Everyone else has the flawed vantage point.

It's not me. I know that my vantage point is right. We might not speak it, but we can communicate that with the way we reason.

Humility. You see yourself as no better than others. Who knows 1 Corinthians 4.7? Does anyone have that memorized? Anyone have it? What do you have that you have not received? And if you've received it, why do you boast? You see what Paul's saying? How could you boast in that which you've received if you recognize these gifts, these things in your life? If you've received it, why do you boast as if you didn't receive it? Isn't that interesting? Those at Corinth, they can say, oh yeah, God's given it, and then they're boasting over here as if they had something to do about it.

Isn't that incredible? We've got to see ourselves as apart from the grace of God, we're nothing. Pride. It overestimates your importance, your gifts, your abilities.

Proud people often have a mistaken perception of themselves. They really need a dose of reality. Boy, I remember when I first came to this church, and I'm not saying I don't have issues with pride in my life now that God's got to deal with me, but I can tell you one thing, when I came to this church, I had a lot of issues with pride.

My head was so swollen. One example I hadn't thought about in a while, I remember, oh, there was this talk about people being raised up into the eldership. I may have been there six or seven months, but this shows how inflated my own self-perspective was.

I remember some people talking, and I entertained this thought, oh, maybe they're thinking about me. Well, in the end, they were thinking about John Seitzman. There was a world of difference between John and I, but think the fact I even entertained that thought.

I remember at the counter at Fatty's, they were talking about voting for me in the straw poll. Brethren, that would have been a cursed thing if the church was so blind to my character faults, if they would have put me forward in that way. I had a lot of growing I needed to do, but I didn't recognize it.

I honestly thought some people were thinking about me. That's how arrogant I was. Blind.

You see, and I didn't know it. And God used that conversation to show me how full of Myself that I was. And I'm very grateful to God.

The ways He does that over the years and His providence to deal with us. So, yeah, overestimating how important your gifts are. Pride.

It leads you to focus on your lack of gifts and abilities, right? Good old self-pity. Down on yourself. Pity parties.

This lack of trust in God's design. It's just a prideful unbelief. Some believers have a similar fit when they don't get a spiritual gift just like a child does when they don't get a toy.

Do you have any of that in your life? Is there some area in your life you're feeling self-pity and sorry for yourself? Brother, sister, that's pride. You've got to repent of that. Entrust your cares to a faithful Creator and go do good.

And serve others rather than whine, rather than pout, thinking you've got a bad rap, or people don't view you as they should. God knows who you are. And God's given you the opportunities you have because He cares for you more than you care for yourself.

So trust Him. There's always deep purposes God's trying to work in our lives that we might not recognize. It might not be right on the surface, but we're going to be able to see it at a later date.

And so let's not fight the hand of God. The mighty hand of God. That's the last thing you want to oppose is someone with a mighty hand.

And here we're talking about the mighty hand of God. To exalt and to oppose. You don't want to be on the wrong side of that hand.

You want that hand exalting you, not crushing you. Pride. One manifestation, you're devastated or angered by criticism.

Usually the proud people, they have a hard time dealing with criticism. This type of person, they can't accept who they are because they can't accept their imperfections. It's Matthew 7. They've got the log in their eye.

They just can't see. They can't see. Pride manifests itself in perfectionism.

The desire for holiness and perfection can be a manifestation of pride. Who is a good group that had this in the Bible? Who was really proud and they were so much perfectionists? Yeah, the Pharisees. Isn't that interesting? This is a real danger for parents.

You've got some insecurity about people's perceptions of your children or whatever and it kind of motivates a type of parenting to create a type of child for your own praise or something. And you end up

creating a bunch of legalists by putting this hard, firm rod down on the kids of all these laws to try to get law and order rather than winning them by their heart and just trusting God with it. Now there's so many dangers in this area for parents.

But yeah, perfectionism. What if I'm longing for perfectionism in some area and I've got all this pride blinding me from seeing what's really going on? Another manifestation of pride is talking too much. Right? The people who talk too much are often proud people who believe their words matter more.

Proverbs 10, 19, when words are many, sin is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent. I mean, you ever had that happen? All of a sudden, you're in a conversation or you've been at a fellowship and on the way home you think, I blabbered too much. Or I spoke too much.

Or I said something unguarded. That's good if you can recognize that. That is a mercy of God to pick up on that.

To see some unguarded words. The proud person, they don't pick up on that. It's just talking too much or asserting our opinion.

We hear someone talking about a matter that we know we've got the right opinion on, so we've got to let everyone know about it. They're wrong and they don't know that and I need to go let them know on that. What if that's just motivated by pride and not love? Just the other day, I was talking to a brother and I said, hey, do you have any thoughts on this matter? And he said, well, no, I just heard about it.

I'd just be filling up air if I opened my mouth. That's humility. Realizing I've got nothing to say.

If I just give my knee-jerk response to this question that I just got asked and I haven't had time to pray about it, I'm not relying on the Lord. I'm just relying on my own intellect. And he recognized that and he kept his mouth from opening until a later point.

That's humility. That's how we want to be. Another manifestation of pride, the proud person.

They use different tactics to get attention. A proud person, they try to draw attention to themselves. It could be through dress, bizarre behavior, rebelliousness, always talking about their problems.

It could be preaching in their prayers. Right? That's always a subtle way that we can manifest some sort of attention-getting thing is using the prayer as a pulpit. Samuel Wilberfurst, he said, guard against those little tricks by which vanities try to bring around the conversation to yourself to gain the praise or notice which your thirsty ears drink in so greedily.

You hear that? It's pride. Think of that. I know I shared this example before, but another thing from when I was newly saved, there was a young guy that the Lord had used me in his life to lead to his conversion.

And when he got up to give his testimony, pride is saying, oh, I hope he mentions my name so people know I was used in his life. You see, that's just garbage. The thought right there has to be killed before it gives birth and leads to death.

You see these little ways of pride. And once we become pride and we think we've got it all figured out, we're unteachable, we're unable to hear correction, we're unable to... we're not going to benefit others. Another manifestation of pride, the proud person, they voice their preferences or opinions when not asked.

We kind of hit on this, but it's this feeling of pride that can make you kind of incapable of holding back your opinion or your preference despite not being asked about it. Trust you know Proverbs 18.2, a fool takes no pleasure in understanding but only in expressing their own opinion. Is there some opinion I've got on something that I'm too freely talking about? No one's even asked me about it.

But I'm just blabbering it out. What's really at the root there? Pride. I think I've got something to say.

Do I really have something to say? What's happening by what I'm saying? What is it producing? Is it producing building up? Is it producing confusion? Pride. Manifests itself. Like I said, excessive self-promotion.

Focusing on achievements. William Law, he said, the devil is content that people should do good works provided he can make them proud of those good works. You ever thought of that? You kind of look at your life and say, well, I'm doing all these good works.

God's helping me. But if all those works you're doing are just something you become proud in, who really says there's the Spirit of God enabling you to do all of those works? It's terrifying. Pride.

It manifests itself. Seeking independence from authority. Right? People find it difficult to work under someone or to submit to authority.

They just want to be their own boss. They have a headstrong intimidation towards others. It's my way or it's no way.

Brethren, that's something all of us have the potential in any sphere of relationships to fall into whether marriage, with your children, with your spouse, in the church. He mentions right here to the young people, right? You who are younger be subject to the elders. There's something there to think about.

In the areas where I'm under authority, am I joyfully submitting or am I causing those that I'm submitting to to groan? Regardless of their failures or areas that we disagree on, as I was telling the Spanish group in the 9 a.m., all of us have the potential with our pride to just split the church into a thousand pieces. May God help us. Another manifestation of pride.

Proud person. They just obsess over what others think. Right? They're just constantly thinking about their reputation, how others view them, getting approval, trying to impress others.

Another manifestation. We've already mentioned it, but being unteachable. G.P. Duncan, he said, there's nothing that human pride resents so much as to be rebuked.

Right? But humility, receiving reproof, and being grateful to God to have those who love you enough to speak openly, we should be so thankful to God that He's given people in our lives. Didn't David pray, let the righteous rebuke me? It is a kindness. It's not a harshness.

It's a kindness. Pride. You know another scary thing with pride? A manifestation being sarcastic, hurtful, or degrading.

And you think about that in marriage. Think about it in the church. Pride makes people unkind.

In most cases, those who belittle others, they're wanting to elevate themselves above the other individual. And sarcasm is often a clever way to accomplish this. You just enter a little sarcasm to put the person

down, to make them feel bad.

That's your pride. An inability to control one's lips. Another manifestation of pride, a lack of service, a lack of compassion.

Right? Proud people tend to not be the ones who are showing compassion. They tend to make you feel crushed. Not free.

Another manifestation of pride is being defensive or blame-shifting. A proud person, they have a hard time dealing with the question is it really my fault? I hope as you all have faced situations in your life, you genuinely wrestle in your heart to say, Lord, what if all this really is my fault? And I'm just too blind to recognize it. I mean, if you're not even asking that question, you might not find out it actually is.

Did this happen? Maybe I'm really at the blame in this far more than I recognize. But if I'm already defensive or I've already concluded the blame is over there, that it's the woman that you gave to be with me as was said in the garden or whatever, then I'm never going to grow in that area. But you know what? God will oppose you.

I hope. I trust. He'll discipline you if you're His child.

So pride. It makes you unwilling to admit your mistakes. You just lie about it with subtle lies like, I was tired.

Right? The wife says, honey, boy, that was really harsh of you. Yeah, I was tired. Okay, so are you saying you weren't harsh? Well, I was tired.

No, you were harsh. Are you going to admit you were harsh? Or are you going to blame it on being tired? Because I'm saying you were harsh. And now you're trying to blame it on being tired.

You see, it's just trying to weasel out of these things. Or I was having a bad day. I don't know in the Bible where it says having a bad day makes sin okay.

They'd rather lie than take ownership for their mistake. Pride. It leads to a lack of asking for forgiveness.

Right? You're not really admitting your own fault. Humility. It leads to a quickness in granting and asking for forgiveness.

Pride. It leads to a lack of biblical prayer. People who are proud, they rarely pray.

Or when they pray, they usually focus on themselves and their desires. They're not focusing on God. John Owen, he said, we can have no power from Christ unless we live in a persuasion that we have none of our own.

Isn't that amazing? Again, it goes back to 1 Peter 5 at the beginning. You've got to cast your cares upon the Lord. If you're not entrusting yourself to the mighty hand of God, you're going to have no ability to have humility.

Well, these are just some of the lists that Stuart Scott gives in the book that I think are something for all of us to consider, brethren. Lord, where is it at in my life? Where is there some area in my life where there's pride? And I don't recognize it. And I'm too blind to see it.

Lord, would You deal with that? Am I exaggerating others' sins and their shortcomings? Am I minimizing my own sin and shortcomings? What am I doing? Or are you giving an dishonest, imbalanced perspective about a person? Or pride. They get impatient, irritated with others, or jealous or envious of others. Or pride.

It uses others. Right? You think, oh, these people are in my life because they benefit me. But when they no longer benefit, they're no longer in my life.

What's that? That's called using a person. Pride. It leads to deceitfully covering up sins and faults.

You know what pride leads to? You don't have any close relationships. You don't want to let anyone in because you're scared if they're going to reject you or not. Right? That's pride.

That's pride. Jonathan Edwards, he said, the imminently humble Christian thinks he needs help from everybody, whereas he that is spiritually proud thinks everybody needs his help. The humble Christian thinks he needs help from everybody.

Do you think like that? I know I've said this, but one brother mentioned to me, he viewed every Christian in the church as having something he didn't have that he wanted to learn from them. Right? If I could survey everyone here and say write down a massive spiritual lesson you've learned in the last five years that God showed you in your life, and you wrote that in in a concise way, and I had a whole document with a list of everything God has shown you all, there's no way I've already been shown all of those same things in my own life. There's things I'm going to learn from you that God's taught you.

2 Corinthians 2, right? Comfort others with the comfort you received. It makes you able to comfort others. We have so much to learn from one another.

And that's why he even says to clothe yourselves with humility toward one another. This really deals with us. Our interpersonal relationships in the church.

And so brethren, if you've got any of these garments on, these manifestations of pride, don't be too proud to remove it. You say, well, if I remove it, someone's going to notice I recognized I was proud in that area. Yeah, that's humility.

Replace it with the mind of Christ. Pride could even manifest. Is James talking about me when he's saying any of this? No, I'm not.

I'm just dealing with this and giving this list from this husband's book. If the shirt applies in your life in some way or in my life, let us humbly receive it. We're here to serve one another.

There's millions of opportunities in your life and in mine to have humility specifically towards one another in the life of the church. So we should say, Lord, are You in any way opposing me because of my pride? Nebuchadnezzar became a temporary beast because of pride until God humbled him. You and I might not turn into a beast and you might not find me at the graveyard eating grass.

I hope that never happens. But the Lord has a way of getting the message across if we're too blind to see it. So may He do that in all of our lives.

As you and I cast our cares upon God, He cares for us. He's got a mighty hand. He's a faithful Creator.

He's providentially controlling the trials, the sufferings, the things you and I are going through. Trust Him in that. May He continue to grow us in this area.

Arthur Wood, he said, the greatest hindrance to revival is pride among the Lord's people. And I would say one of the greatest hindrances even to this week of prayer and fasting is pride in your heart and pride in my heart. It's like what Tim shared at that prayer meeting.

He felt like we had revival in this church and we weren't even praying for it. You know what? If you have a group of people entrusting their cares to the Lord and manifesting humility, you don't have to pray for revival. God's going to come and draw near to those people.

He's going to exalt them just by seeking to be like Jesus Christ. For years, we had a group of us young people praying for the baptism of the Spirit and making all this focus on these experiences. And it's almost like when we stopped focusing on that and just served one another, then in some of our lives, God came in a unique way.

It wasn't when you sought this experience. It's when you seek the Lord. And so, I want revival.

You better believe it. Jeff Johnson just messaged me the other day about a website him and Paul Washer are making about October 2nd and the 3rd praying for revival. I'm all for that.

Praise God. They're getting a group of churches to pray for two days and fast for revival. But brethren, you go cast your cares on the Lord, you go have humility, that will lead to God drawing near in your life.

I mean, that's what it says. C.T. Studd, he said, God can do little with those who love their lives or reputations. So what do you take pride in? What causes your heart to inflate with pride? And what do you glory? Brother, sister, there's only one person and one thing in the entire universe that calls for our pride and that's Jesus Christ and the cross of Calvary.

He alone and this alone deserves recognition and boasting. It's not us. And if you're lost in your pride, if you're not a Christian here today and you're on a road to destruction, I would plead with you, you don't need to make yourself more humble to come to Christ.

He wants you to come just as you are to Him. And He'll change your heart. He'll make you a new person.

He'll do it for free. And He's someone who wants you to cast all of your cares upon Him. You can trust in His mighty hand.

There's a lot of hands and a lot of arms and a lot of people you trust in and it falls. But this is the mighty hand from the faithful Creator who made you and in love, He sent His Son to be a Redeemer to pay for our sins. That's the Gospel.

That's the great news. And that's what we want to boast in. That's what we want to live for.

Well, that's all I have, brethren. May God work this in our lives. Let's pray.

Lord, we do want to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. Lord, there's a proper time even to come eternity when we're going to have the ultimate exaltation. Lord, what a day that's going to be.

But Lord, here we are right now in the present. Lord, we're here casting our anxieties upon You because You care for us. Lord, You really do.

You are a faithful... Lord, we don't even call You Creator, but Peter does. And Lord, it's true. You did create everything.

And so, we entrust ourselves to You, the faithful Creator. Lord, You created our brains, our bodies, everything. Lord, You've made us.

And Lord, we want to be a people who's humble. Lord, I know that there's areas in my own life that I don't recognize where there's pride. Lord, I ask that You would humble me and show me those areas and grow me more.

And I pray You do that for all of my brothers and sisters. Lord, that You give us a greater humility. But Lord, do give us a greater sense of trust in You that You care for us.

Lord, that we'd just be a free people. Lord, forgive us the times we've worried about man's approval. Forgive us the times we had pride and Lord, we had a desire to raise our hand in worship and we didn't do it because we thought about what people were going to think.

Lord, forgive us for times we've... Lord, we've let on with some details to someone to get a pat on the back when pride was motivating it. Lord, forgive us when we've been proud and we don't even recognize it. Lord, we don't even know.

We can't even remember. Lord, if without the blood of Christ, Lord, we'd all be damned because of all the manifestations of pride we've had in our life at different points. Lord, forgive us.

Please, Lord, forgive me. And Lord, continue to grow us and make us like Christ. Lord, even in this week to come and the time of prayer, Lord, we want You to draw near to us.

Lord, we don't want You opposing us. We don't want You imposing the church corporately. Holy Lord, we want You being with us.

So please, Lord, grow us, help us. We pray all of this in Jesus' name, Amen.

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