

The Essence of Pride



Pride vs Humility (Part 6)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again at the beginning of a new week, sharing with you Keys to Successful Living that God has placed in my hand through many years of personal experience and Christian ministry.

This week I'm continuing with the theme that I commenced last week, "Pride vs. Humility."

This is truly a vast theme. It spans the whole universe, from eternity through time and on into eternity again, from heaven to earth and even to hell. And yet, although this theme is so vast, it also applies in the personal lives of each one of us individually.

I'll begin today by looking back in outline over the material that we covered last week. Our review will take us through five main stages.

Stage number one: the first sin committed in the universe was the sin of pride committed by an angel, not a man; committed in heaven, not on earth. The name of that angel was Lucifer, the bright and shining and glorious one. But because of his sin of pride and the subsequent rebellion, he was cast out from God's presence and his name was changed to Satan, the adversary, the resister.

The second stage: God responded by making a creature from dust—Adam, man. God stooped right down into the dust to make this creature. He wanted to cut away all ground for pride from man and from the whole creation.

The third stage: alas, man was enticed by Satan, the adversary, into the same sin of pride that Satan himself had been guilty of. And being guilty of pride, he likewise fell.

The fourth stage: God had a plan of redemption for fallen man, and in this plan God stooped still lower. In Christ, He stooped to the very level of fallen humanity and became one with that fallen humanity to lift man up again from his fallen condition to a place of fellowship with God throughout eternity.

And the fifth stage: throughout eternity these redeemed creatures, the redeemed members of Adam's race, in the very presence of God, in brightness of heaven's glory, will be a

demonstration to the universe that God reserves the highest place for the lowest.

So all through this entire outline of God's dealings with His creatures we see this principle runs, that God exalts the lowly and abases the proud, that the one who exalts himself will be abased but the one who humbles himself will be exalted. I also want to point out to you the essential nature of the sin into which Adam fell, into which he was actually enticed by Satan. I pointed out that it was the same in essence as Satan's own sin, the sin of pride, leading to rebellion against God.

Let me just read one verse from Genesis 3:5, where Satan presents his ultimate temptation to Adam and Eve. His temptation was to disobey God and eat of the fruit in the middle of the garden that God had forbidden them to eat of. This is what Satan, in the person of the serpent said to them:

> "For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (NIV)

You see, Satan's own motivation that prompted his rebellion in heaven was summed up in the statement, "I will make myself like the most high"—self-exaltation. Now his ultimate temptation to Adam and Eve was, "If you eat of this tree of knowledge of good and evil, you will be like God—equal to God." The same motivation, the same disastrous consequences. Pride that led to a fall.

What is, therefore, the essential nature of pride? It's most important that we see this. I'll sum it up in one simple sentence: Pride of this kind is seeking to be independent of God. It wasn't that there was open throwing off of God's sovereignty in the universe. There was simply a personal decision that Adam and Eve could do without God. They didn't need God. If they acquired the knowledge of good and evil, then they would no longer have to depend upon God. Satan, in his temptation, had implied that they were in a position of slavish dependence on God, a position that was not worthy of all their potential. That they could be much better off without depending on God.

The essence of this temptation is summed up in one word: independence, the desire to be independent of God. And that in it's essence is pride. It's satanic pride. It's the very pride that caused Satan's fall. There is therefore, a consequence. Any life that is not lived out in willing dependence on God is motivated by pride. See, this is very subtle. Many, many people who would not acknowledge that they are proud, are seeking to live their lives without willing dependence on God and the motivation behind that is pride and the results of pride are always the same: rebellion and disaster.

In Luke 12, Jesus relates a parable of a man who was guilty of just this kind of wrong attitude toward God, this kind of independence, which is really pride. He tells the story of a certain rich man and as we read the story, unless we are aware of the real nature of pride, we might miss the real mistake that this rich man made. Here is the parable as Jesus related it, Luke 12:16–21:

> "And He told them this parable: 'The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crop.' Then he said, 'This is what I will do, I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink, and be merry.'"

Have you ever heard people in contemporary America speak like that? Doesn't that really picture a very, very common attitude in people in America today? Now let's go to the end of the parable:

> "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' [And then there in the commentary of Jesus:] This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself, but is not rich toward God." (NIV)

God called that man a fool and yet he did what millions and millions of people in our contemporary civilization are doing. He took care of himself. In a certain sense, he was prudent. He was a good manager. He could bring forth a good harvest from his field and when he knew he needed larger storehouses, he was capable of building them. Most people would regard that man as a rather respectable, sensible type of man. Frankly, he could be a churchgoer, accepted in many of our contemporary churches. The same attitude is found in millions of professing Christians and churchgoers today.

What was the problem? Why was he a fool? What was the essence of his sin? My answer is this. He acted as if he were independent of God. He didn't take into account the fact that he depended on God for the very breath he breathed, that he depended upon God for his seed to mature and bring forth a harvest, that he depended upon God for health and strength. For everything that was in his life, ultimately, he was dependent upon God. Why was he a fool? Because he didn't see his dependence, he didn't acknowledge it. He tried to live

as if it weren't so. And the root of that is pride. The desire to be independent of God, in itself, is pride.

The New Testament diagnoses this problem very clearly. For instance, let me read to you from the epistle of James, chapter 4, verses 13 through 16:

> "Now listen to you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city and spend a year there and carry on business and make money.' [Do you hear people talk like that today?] Why [James continues] you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. [A heart attack and you are gone in an instant] Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.' [Remember your living depends upon the Lord. Let alone what you can do with your money and your cleverness.] As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil." (NIV)

See? That's boastfulness, it's pride, the desire to be independent of God, to act as if God had no real authority over our lives. It's summed up in 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." (NASB)

That's what it is. The boastful pride of life, living as though God didn't really matter, living as though God had no claims, no authority. Seeking to be independent of God is pride in its essence.

Radio Program

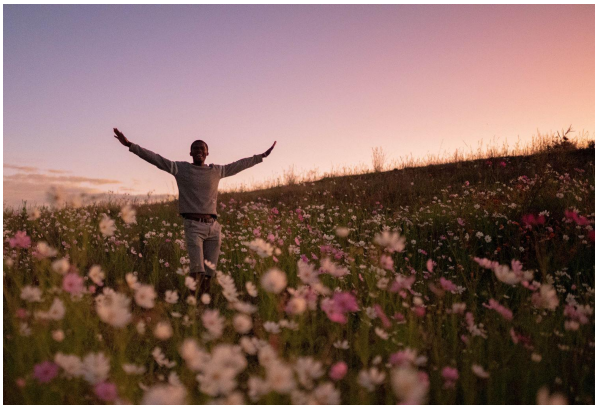
Transcript: TS-R054-101-ENG
Last Updated: 13 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

Bible Teaching Resources



Books

Illuminate and expand your understanding of the Bible with the Derek Prince collection of Christian books.



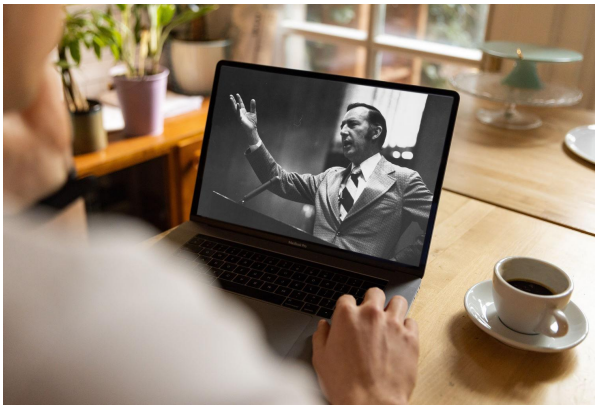
Daily Devotionals

Browse free biblically inspired daily devotionals by Derek Prince for practical teachings to uplift your Christian faith.



Legacy Radio

Listen to inspiring 10-minute messages and connect faith to life with the Derek Prince Legacy Radio podcast.



Sermons

Watch original and digitally remastered sermons by Derek Prince. Includes full message transcripts (free download).



Official App

Available free, download the official Derek Prince Ministries app and equip your faith, anywhere, anytime.



Proclamations

Declare life and experience the transformative power of God's Word with our bible-based Proclamations.

Copyright © Derek Prince Ministries