Lesson Seven: Proud Hearts

*“Whoever exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” Ma 23:12*

C.S. Lewis calls pride “the complete anti-God state of mind.” Pride is a sin of the heart and God hates it (Proverbs 6:16-17). Both Old and New Testaments warn of the dangers of pride and even the disciples of Jesus struggled with it. Pride is said to be one of the sins that would characterize the perilous times of the last days. (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

1. **Defining pride and arrogance.**
2. To be proud can mean several things:

* One who glories in his own abilities, knowledge, or possessions. Pride may describe one who brags, is haughty, or lifted up. One who feels superior to others.
* Pride can describe a self-conceited, high-minded, arrogant, or over-confident person.
* One whose attitude is “lofty.” One who has too high of an opinion of oneself.

1. **What the Scriptures teach about pride.**
2. Pride is an abomination to the Lord. Proverbs 6:16, 16:5
3. All men are susceptible to some form or degree of pride:

* The Kings of Judah and Israel.
* Prophets, Apostles, Christians.
* Kings and Emperors of the past.
* The Gentiles.

**Question: How were those closest to Jesus (His disciples), affected by pride? (Ma 20:20-28)**

**Question: Is it possible to view pride in a positive, non-sinful way?**

1. **Types of pride.**

**The heart of man is his worst part before it is regenerated, and the best afterward; it is the seat of principles, and the fountain of actions. The eye of God is, and the eye of the Christian ought to be, principally fixed upon it. The greatest difficulty in conversion, is to win the heart to God; and the greatest difficulty after conversion, is to keep the heart with God. Here lies the very force and stress of religion; here is that which makes the way to life a narrow way, and the gate of heaven a strait gate. – Marvin Vincent**

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1. Pride in how well I serve God. Luke 18:9-14, Matthew 6:1-18
2. Proud of what I know. Romans 14, I Corinthians 8, Jeremiah 9:23-24
3. Proud of what I possess. Luke 12:16-21, James 1:17
4. Pride that prevents me from socializing with others. Galatians 2:11-17, James 2:1-9
5. Proud of my position. (See below)

**Question: Name the great Syrian army commander and his prideful objections that nearly prevented him from being cured of his leprosy? 2 Kings 5:1-14**

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**Question: Who was the Apostle John ready to confront over his high-minded attitude? (3 John 9-10)**

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1. **Consequences of pride in the heart.**
2. Pride makes us think we are stronger than we really are. Mark 14:27-31, Romans 12:3
3. Pride causes contention among brethren. Proverbs 13:10, Galatians 2:11-14
4. Pride will prevent one from becoming a Christian. Luke 7:29-30
5. Pride’s reward:

* Nebuchadnezzar eating grass like a cow. Daniel 4:28-37
* Belshazzar’s pale face and knees knocking, then slain. Daniel Chapter 5
* Haman swinging from the gallows. Esther Chapters 3-7
* Herod eaten by worms. Acts 12:20-23

**Question: David’s counselor, Ahithophel, had a tragic end. Describe what happened to him and how pride influenced his final act. (2 Samuel Chapter 17)**

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But for pride, the angels, who are in hell, should be in heaven (Jude 6); but for pride, Nebuchadnezzar, who is in the forest, should be in his palace (Dan. 4); but for pride, Pharaoh’s army would not lie with the fishes, (Exod. 14); no sin hath pulled so many down as this, which promised to set them up.

Henry Smith

**Question: How can pride affect members of the Lord’s Church?**

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1. **Humility – God’s answer to a proud heart.**
2. Christians are called to be humble.

* As a child. Matthew 18:1-5
* With an attitude of lowliness and gentleness. Ephesians 4:1-4
* Clothed with humility. 1 Peter 5:5-7
* Associating with the humble. Romans 12:16

1. Being in God’s kingdom requires that we acknowledge some things:

* We must walk humbly with our God. Micah 6:8
* We are dependent on God for everything. Acts 17:25-28
* What can we possibly boast about? 1 Corinthians 4:6-7, Galatians 6:14

1. Jesus our supreme example.

* “I am meek and lowly in heart.” Matthew 11:28-30
* “Even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.” Mark 10:45
* Washing the feet of His disciples. John 13:3-17
* We must seek to be last, not first. Mark 10:41-45

1. The mindset of humility.

* We are to have a proper view of ourselves. Romans 12:3, Galatians 6:3
* Refrain from calling attention to yourself. Matthew 6:16-18
* “Let this mind (mind of Christ) be in you. Philippians 2:3-8

1. Let our heavenly Father do the exalting.

* Our exaltation must always come from the Lord. Matt 23:12, James 4:10
* He will lift us up in due time. 1 Peter 5:6

1. **Taking the “Pride” test. (Self-examination questions).**

Answering the following questions may help us to see if we have a proud heart. *(Taken from Wendell Winkler’s Heart Diseases and Their Cure).*

1. When we were constructively criticized, did we resent it because our selfish pride had been offended?
2. Are we jealous when someone else out-does us?
3. Are we envious or jealous when someone else is commended, and we are not?
4. Do we have difficulty accepting that another individual received an award that I was better qualified for?
5. Have we ever been so controlled by pride that we would not admit that the position we held on a given matter was wrong?
6. Are we ashamed to speak with, or associate with certain brethren?
7. Has pride ever prevented us from responding to the Lord’s invitation when we knew we should?