

# Killing Pride & Cultivating Humility

Securing the Attention of Our Father  
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"The sin of pride carries with it God's swiftest and most severe judgment. It blinds you to other sins in your life and hinders you from repenting of them. Pride is the "Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome" or the (AIDS) of the soul. When a person dies as a result of acquiring AIDS, he doesn't really die of AIDS rather, he dies of an AIDS-complicated illness like pneumonia, tuberculosis, or meningitis. Not unlike a cataract, the AIDS virus somehow blinds the eyes of its victim's bodily defense system. This prevents his auto immune system from seeing and consequently destroying those deadly viruses and bacteria that ultimately kill him.

Like AIDS, pride blinds you not only to itself, but to every other sin tucked away in the recesses of your heart and life. It causes you to hate correction and reproof. It hides your sin from you, it justifies your sin, it excuses your sin, and it keeps you from repenting of your sin. It deceives you into thinking that you're spiritually well when, in fact, you have deadly cancer and are in desperate need..." *The Complete Husband*, Lou Priolo, p. 21-22

## Five Habits to cultivate humility and kill pride:

**John Stott**, "At every stage of our Christian development pride is our greatest enemy and humility our greatest friend."

### 1. Study The Attributes Of God – especially the incommunicable ones!

**Job 26:7-14** "He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing. He binds up the water in His thick clouds, yet the clouds are not broken under it. He covers the face of His throne, and spreads His cloud over it. He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters... indeed these are the mere edges of his ways, and how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?"

### Isaiah 40

"Thoughts that reach up toward the excellency of God's majesty are beautiful and delicious to the soul, but they come with unpleasant side effects. Even a hint of His greatness shows us up as grasshoppers, dust, and 'less than nothing' in comparison (Isaiah 40:12-25). No one wants to go out of his way to feel small, weak, and defiled; but this strong medicine gives us hope against sin. In this humiliation our sin withers... Our puny minds can't take Him in. And that helps, because it humbles us before Him... Can you walk up to the edge of infinity and not feel vertigo? Can you stare at the sun and not go blind?" *The Enemy Within*, Kris Lugaard, P&R, 1998, p. 128-129

**I Timothy 1:17** "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever, amen."

"The grand difference between a human being and a supreme being is precisely this. Apart from God I cannot exist. Apart from me God does exist. God does not need me in order for Him to be. I do need God in order for me to be... we are dependent, we are fragile... no human being has the power of being within himself. Life is lived between two hospitals. We need a support system from birth to

death in order to sustain life. We are like flowers that bloom and then wither and fade, and this is how we differ from God. God does not wither. God does not fade. God is not fragile.” -R.C. Sproul

When you stop thinking about the attributes of God and start focusing on yourself, you get the telescope of your life turned around backwards.

The more aware you become of the infinite distance between you and God the more humility you’ll EXPERIENCE and EXPRESS. Arrogant, prideful people don’t know God very well and don’t think about God very often!

“Pride is a telescope turned the wrong way. It magnifies self and makes the heavens small.” –C.S. Lewis

**Psalms 10:4** “The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.”

**Recommended Reading:** *Knowledge of the Holy* by A.W. Tozer, *Attributes of God* by A.W. Pink, *Knowing God* by J.I. Packer

## 2. Every Day Survey the Wondrous Cross on which the Prince of Glory Died

“Nothing in history or in the universe cuts us down to size like the cross. All of us have inflated views of ourselves... until we have visited a place called Calvary. It is there, at the foot of the cross that we shrink to our true size.” John Stott, *The Message of Galatians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1968), 179

The Gospel was designed to humble us, not puff us up.

“God deliberately designed the gospel in such a way so as to strip me of pride and leave me without any grounds for boasting in myself whatsoever... Nothing suffocates my pride more than daily reminders regarding the glory of my God, the gravity of my sins, and the crucifixion of God’s own Son in my place... Pride wilts in the atmosphere of the gospel.” *The Gospel Primer*, Milton Vincent, pgs. 27, 29

If you’re getting puffed up in the presence of the Gospel then you probably don’t understand the Gospel.

**Philippians 2:5-11** v. 8 “And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God has also highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**Isaiah 53:4-5, 10-11** “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed... Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief, when You make His soul an offering for sin... He shall see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many.”

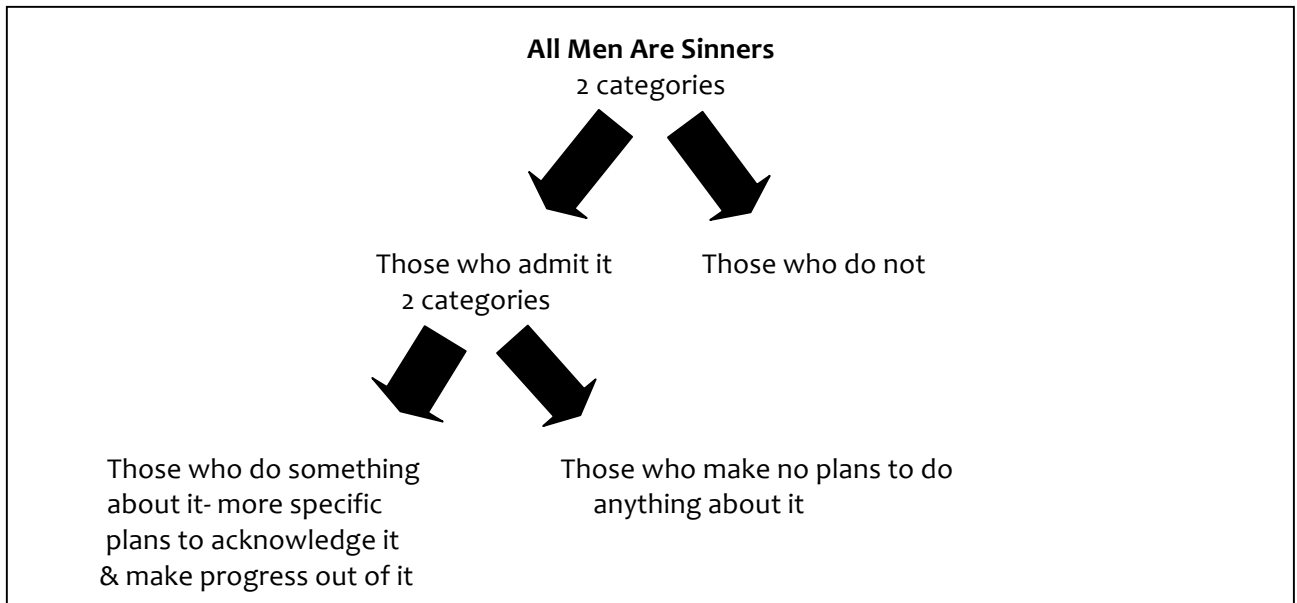
**Recommended Reading:** *The Cross of Christ* by John Stott, *Comforts from the Cross* by Elyse Fitzpatrick, *The Cross Centered Life* by C.J. Mahaney

### 3. Study and Apply the Doctrine of Sin to Your Own Life

#### Romans 1- 3

- Are you specifically confessing sins to the appropriate individuals, as well as your present temptations?
- Are you confessing sin specifically? And are you confessing sin fully?

“Men do not like to admit their faults, nor confess they are sinners. I am guilty on both counts. But the sooner we admit and confess, the quicker we can deal with our pride. The taxonomy of the problem looks like this. Premise: All men are sinners. Upon further examination we find that sinners fall into two distinct classes, those who admit their sin, and those who don’t. Those who admit themselves to be sinners fall into two more classes, those who do something about it, and those who do not. It is only those who deal with their soul’s true dire need before God who may make progress out of their sin.” -Mike Renehan, *Tabletalk* magazine



Make sure you understand this – for the Christian man, any and every sin is AVOIDABLE and not INEVITABLE. But pride makes us blind to the early warning signs that God flashes in front of us.

**I Corinthians 10:12** “Take heed those of you who think you stand, lest you fall.”

**Numbers 32:23** “... be sure your sin will find you out.”

### 4. Practice the Spiritual Disciplines in Your Life

You’re making a statement every morning when you get up and rush off to work without spending time with God.

“Keep his mind on the inner life... Encourage this. Keep his mind off the most elementary duties by directing it to the most advanced and spiritual ones. Aggravate that most useful human characteristic, the horror and neglect of the obvious. You must bring him to a condition in which he can practice self-examination for an hour without discovering any of those facts about himself which are perfectly clear to anyone who has ever lived in the same house with him or worked in the same office.” *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis, p. 21

Pride is what makes it possible to spend an hour in self-examination and still not see the things that are so obvious to everyone else around us.

## 5. Invite and Pursue Correction

- How consistently and aggressively do you PURSUE and INVITE correction in your life?
- Would your spouse and others who are close to you say you are EASY to entreat... that you're APPROACHABLE?
- Can your wife approach you and say something about you? Or have you already made it clear to her that's off limits?

**Prov. 12:1** "Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid."

I don't know about you, but I don't wanna be OBLIVIOUS to what's painfully OBVIOUS to everyone else around me!

"And don't be put off when a friend's observations may not be 100% accurate. I've found that there's truth to be gleaned at times even from an enemy's critique. Humility doesn't demand mathematical precision from another's input; humility postures itself to receive God's grace from any avenue possible." *Humility – True Greatness* by C.J. Mahaney, p. 134

### Isaiah 66:1-2

- Is God irresistibly drawn to you tonight by your humility?
- Or is He actively and passionately opposing you?

It doesn't matter what else is right in your life if this is wrong... then you're wrong. It's gonna be like driving with the emergency brake on.

## Action Plan for My Own Life:

1. Prayerfully ask God to show you which of the five strategies need to be strengthened in your own life to keep you effectively killing pride and cultivating humility. Choose two that you want to begin to cultivate and focus on, by God's grace.
2. What plans will you make to practically incorporate these strategies into your life now?
3. Who will you share this plan with and ask to hold you accountable to follow-through with it?