

Love Is Not Arrogant

「Introduction」

Love does not show off or exalt itself. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul describes this as “not boasting and not being arrogant.” In this sense, arrogance/pride is a primary cause that destroys love. No matter how good something may be, if pride seeps into it, the fruit of love is lost. So, pride is like a ‘zero factor’. As in the Book of Proverbs, “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” Through this meeting, I hope we can all examine the pride within us and address it together.

「Beginning of pride」

The history of pride began in the Garden of Eden. To properly understand pride, we need to first look at the conversation between Eve and the Serpent. The event in which Adam ate the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil can be considered the most significant event in human history because all human suffering originated from it.

1. Pride is the desire to become like God.

“For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:5)

2. Pride is the root of all sin.

Just as a tree not uprooted will grow again, if pride—the root of sin—is not completely removed, various sinful fruits will continue to appear.

「The Nature of Pride」

- **Universality** : Pride is universal. Even without anything special, it is an inherent sinful trait found within every person.
- **Persistence** : Pride clings tightly like a leech that is difficult to remove.

Satan does everything possible to prevent people from becoming humble. The Screwtape teaches a subtle yet cunning strategy in his 14th letter to his nephew Wormwood: When people begin to desire humility, lead them to focus on the remarkable fact that they have become humble. Then, when they try to reflect on and repent of this new form of pride, make them feel pleased with themselves for even attempting such reflection. In this way, every form of humility is ultimately turned back into pride. [C.S. Lewis, 『The Screwtape Letters』]

- **Lack of Self-Awareness** : Pride, the most dangerous disease of the soul, does not allow self-awareness. Even when symptoms appear, pride deceives and leads one to boast instead.
- **Lack of Discernment** : Pride causes a loss of discernment. (Proverbs 14:3; Obadiah 1:3)
- **Growth** : Pride gradually grows over time.

(4) **Conceit**: An unwelcome guest that appears when one becomes too comfortable and confident in his/her own abilities.

(3) **Pride**: Elevating oneself inwardly, even if it is not outwardly expressed.

(2) **Haughtiness**: Considering oneself superior, looking down on others, and behaving in a condescending manner.

(1) **Arrogance**: The incurable, extreme state of self-exaltation that refuses to listen to others and treats them as insignificant.

The Four Brothers of Pride That Lead to Destruction [Ryu In-hyun 『A Dancing Whale Is Happy』]

- **Unconcealability** : Pride cannot be hidden no matter how hard one tries to.

Sharing

Pride is a sin above all sins that we must constantly guard against. Because pride is universal in nature, none of us is exempt from it. Among the ‘four brothers of pride’ (conceit, pride, haughtiness, arrogance) reflect on where you are currently and share with one another.

「 Symptoms of Pride 」

From the list below, identify five that frequently appear in your life.

Comparison / Competition / Self-exaltation / Conceit / Stubbornness / Boasting / Exaggeration / Self-defense / Selfishness / Control / Blame shifting / Disobedience / Complaining and grumbling / Judging and criticizing / Quarreling / Superiority or inferiority complex / Envy and jealousy / Anger and rage / Harsh speech / Self-righteousness / Unteachableness / Restlessness / Deviance / Ingratitude

「 The Consequences of Pride 」

1. Broken Relationships

(1) Separation from God

(2) Separation from others

2. Shame

“May the arrogant be put to shame for wronging me without cause; but I will meditate on your statutes” (Psalm 119:78).

3. Repeated Failure

“But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory” (Daniel 5:20).

4. Final Judgment (Malachi 4:1)

「 How Can We Deal with Pride? 」

Looking back on life, I cannot help but confess that every step I took was marked by pride. When God showed grace and lifted me up, I became extremely prideful. When God humbled me, I fell into deep despair like one without faith.

Pride pretended to please me, but in the end it always cast me down into misery and led me toward destruction.

Every time I suffered because of pride, I resolved to be humble, but ended up with greater pride. It is comforting to hear that no one is free from pride, yet it is also frightening to know that pride is always followed by God’s judgment. [Ahn Chang Cheon, 『Pride: the Enemy of Success』]

「 12 Ways to overcome pride 」 (Ahn Chang Cheon)

1. Declare war against pride.
2. Become aware of your own pride.
3. Confess the sin of pride before God.
4. Pray for a humble heart.
5. Dream big but keep your heart low.
6. Use suffering for training in humility.
7. Let go of the comparison complex.
8. Remember the grace you have received.
9. Practice ‘dying daily’.
10. Submit to authority.
11. Give thanks in all circumstances.
12. Love Jesus the King of humility.

「 Read together 」

Philippians 2:6-8

⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Sharing

In today’s meeting, we have examined the origin, nature, symptoms, consequences, and ways to deal with pride. Let us share what stood out in a new way and discuss some specific applications.