

Consequences of (Negative) pride

July 20, 2020

PROVERBS 29:23 NIV - (23) Pride brings a person low, but the lowly in spirit gain honor.

There is blessing found in humility. When we hold on to pride, there are consequences that result. Here are some consequences of pride:

Isolation: Think about the person who is the know-it-all. They tend to drive people away. A prideful person will fail to ask for help because they will not be able to admit they need help. Because they fail to ask for help, they will end up going it alone. If someone comes along to help, a prideful person will quickly push the other person away by making them feel unwanted. Pride will isolate us from others.

Disillusionment and Despair: If you put confidence in yourself, you will eventually be let down. There will come a time when your body will fail you. Your mind will fail you. Your money will fail you. Wise King Solomon recognized that even though he was considered the wisest man in the world, that his fate was the same as a fool (**Ecclesiastes 2:14**). In Proverbs King Solomon also wrote: Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall (**Proverbs 16:18**). Remember that pride is too much belief in you. If you put too much belief in something (Humanity), it will only lead to disappointment.

Spiritual suppression: Pride prevents growth. It leaves us stagnated. Pride gives us a sense of accomplishment. We believe we have arrived. We close ourselves off from learning, from listening, and from opening ourselves to new ways of thinking and doing.

Fault finding: While pride causes us to filter out the evil we see in ourselves, it also causes us to filter out God's goodness in others. We sift them, letting only their faults fall into our perception of them. When I'm writing a sermon or studying a passage, it's pride that prompts the terrible temptation to skip the Spirit's surgery on my own heart and instead draft a mental blog post or plan a potential conversation for the people who "really need to hear this."

Harsh spirit: Those who have the sickness of pride in their hearts speak of others' sins with contempt, irritation, frustration, or judgment. Pride is crouching inside our belittling of the struggles of others. It's cowering in our jokes about the 'craziness' of people we know. It may even be lurking in the prayers we throw upward for our friends that are — slightly or not — tainted with exasperated irritation.

Shallowness: When pride lives in our hearts, we're far more concerned with others' perceptions of us than the reality of our hearts. We fight the sins that have an impact on how others view us, and make peace with the ones that no one sees. We have great success in the areas of holiness that have highly visible accountability, but little concern for the disciplines that happen in secret.

Defensiveness: Those who stand in the strength of Christ's righteousness alone find a confident hiding place from the attacks of men and Satan alike. True humility is not knocked off balance and thrown into a defensive posture by challenge or rebuke, but instead continues in doing good, entrusting the soul to our faithful Creator. For the humble Christian, the more the world is against him, the more silent and still he will be, unless it is in his prayer closet, and there he will not be still.

Desperation for attention: Pride is hungry for attention, respect, and worship in all its forms. Maybe it sounds like shameless boasting about ourselves. Maybe it's being unable to say "no" to anyone because we need to be needed. Maybe it looks like obsessively thirsting for marriage — or fantasizing about a better marriage — because you're hungry to be adored. Maybe it looks like being haunted by your desire for the right car or the right house or the right title at work: all because you seek the glory that comes from men, not God.

Neglecting others: Pride prefers some people over others. It honors those who the world deems worthy of honor, giving more weight to their words, their wants, and their needs. There's a thrill that goes through me when people with "power" acknowledge me. We consciously or unconsciously pass over the weak, the inconvenient, and the unattractive, because they don't seem to offer us much.

We tend to close ourselves off from break-through because we think we have got it all figured out. Are you teachable? Are you open to learning even in an area where you may be knowledgeable and accomplished? Humble yourself, let the Lord lift you up to new heights never imagined! Take the time to learn and listen. Consider new possibilities with new ways of seeing and doing.

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 CORINTHIANS 2:18

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Do you keep your Bible as close as your cell phone?

"A JOURNEY OF THE HEART"