

PRIDE COMETH BEFORE THE FALL

Pride is something that we all deal with on a daily basis. This is the one sin that possibly more people get caught up in than any other. When Satan cannot tempt us with any other thing, he uses pride to take control of our lives and keep us inefficient for God's work. We will never grow into the Christians that God wants and desires for us to be until we let go of our pride. Too many of us think that we are good enough on our own. We don't believe that we need God in extreme ways because in all actuality we are good people. We tend to believe that we can make it on our own and can choose the right decisions for ourselves. When we do something good we take all the credit and forget about the One who always helps us through it. We don't lean on God for our strength and believe that we can make it through all life's situations on our own. This is when it happens. God allows us to fall flat on our faces. All of a sudden our life that seemed so perfect and planned starts to unravel. We can no longer pretend that we are good enough to get through life on our own. For the first time we realize that God has been the One who has blessed us throughout our lives. He helps us to realize that He is in control and we can only make it through His guidance and support.

Pride has been an issue within the Christian life for many years. Even during the times of Paul in 1st Corinthians, pride was prevalent. We need to realize that many individuals suffer from the stronghold of pride in their lives. We need to try to depend on God for all our needs and decisions rather than focusing on ourselves. God will help us through our trials when we truly put our faith and trust in Him. All He wants from us is a humble and willing heart and He will lovingly take care of the rest.

1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-21

DO NOT JUDGE (vs. 1-5)

One thing that constantly divides and ruins churches is judgment. Many Christians criticize and condemn other believers. God has not called us to be the judges of the world, as He is the only One able to judge accurately. Paul was telling the Corinthian believers that they should not judge those who were stewards or managers of the faith. Paul was letting the believers know that it did not matter what humans thought of their ministry, but rather that God would find him faithful. As Christians, we have no right to judge others. If we judge others, we are setting ourselves to also be judged. God is the only one who can truly judge. We cannot judge because all we see are the outside effects of a person. God can judge because He can see inside someone and view the motives of their hearts. God will praise those who have done well and will reveal what has been kept in the darkness through the light. He judges with a full view of the person, while we judge with little amounts of information. We have no right to judge today, just as Paul told the Corinthians of his day. We must leave the act of judgment to God and Him alone.

DO NOT HAVE PRIDE (vs. 6-13)

Paul wants the believers in Corinth to understand that pride only hinders the work of Christ. The Corinthian believers were choosing sides between Apollos and Paul when really both of them were common servants for Christ. The Corinthians were full of pride, thinking that they were excellent by the world's standards. Paul wanted them to realize that they were not superior to anyone because of the "things" that they had. Everything that they had was given to them and thus was God's. God entrusts us with things in our lives. Everything that we have has been given to us by God and we should treat it as such. Nothing is ours, but rather is on loan from God until we reach eternity. In this way we cannot have pride as we have not earned anything. God used many of the apostles and disciples of the New Testament because they were humble and willing. As Paul describes in these verses, God had made them into lowly people on the world's standards. In God's eyes, however, these men were some of the richest He knew. We cannot become prideful over materialistic things and worldly viewpoints. Our focus should be on pleasing Christ and living for Him. We do not need to allow pride to develop a stronghold in our lives where we cannot properly function and depend on Christ.

DO IMITATE CHRIST AND THOSE WHO FOLLOW HIM (vs. 14-21)

Paul did not want the Corinthian believers to think that he was just disappointed in them. Rather he wanted them to realize that what he was saying was for their own benefit and would help them in the long scheme of things. He was not trying to shame them, but to just open their eyes to some inconsistencies in their lives. Paul urged them to be imitators of him. That meant to follow his lifestyle and in his footsteps. That is scary! Paul had to have been really close to Christ and followed in Christ's path in order to urge people to follow his lifestyle. We need to follow Christ in our lives. It is also important that we find some good Christian people who we feel confident following as well. We should find someone who is a mentor and would allow us to follow their lives. Paul only told the Corinthian believers this because he was confident in his walk with Christ. Paul continued on to tell the believers that we should not be inflated with pride and that we should live our lives in humility. God does not care about how we talk concerning our Christian life, but rather how our walk is. God is not about talk, but about power in our lives. We need to constantly focus on keeping judgment and pride out of our lives as we walk in the footsteps of Christ.

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