

Putting Off the Flesh: Our Battle with Pride

Shawn Clark – Snowbird Be Strong Men's Conference 2026

Desperate state everyday, I'm just as desperate and need of His help and rescue as I was on the day He saved me

Lord I don't want to hear this session, read these verses and think about someone else that needs to hear it. I know if I do that I am already giving into my flesh, I am already giving into pride. Please Father don't let us do this, You know that temptation is real, that lie is active and please Lord don't let my heart and mind go there.

Define Heart: Our central governing control center of the inner person. Our mind, desires, our will. And as believers this is where the spirit vs flesh conflict happens

Define battle with our pride: our battle with pride refers to the deliberate ongoing spiritual warfare against a deceptive, rebellious heart attitude that foolishly exalts self, seeks autonomy and steals glory from God. This heart attitude blocks spiritual growth and prevents relational reconciliation. Basically with this heart attitude we create a rivalry with God- we think we know better than Him, we seek independence from our Creator, we are self fixated whether through boasting or self pity. The heart infected with pride will have every area of their lives affected, it poisons everything.

Manifestations of Pride

Self Centered- fixated on your own importance, desires, or comfort

Self Willed- stubbornness and insistence on controlling our own path rather than submitting to God's plan

Self Pity- Harboring ungratefulness and feeling resentful because we believe we deserve better than what God has provided.

Self righteous- arrogance and believing you are morally superior or more deserving than others

Self Consciousness/ Vanity- Fixating on your reputation , appearance, or what other people think of you and your accomplishments

In scripture pride is seen as the root of all sin, beginning with the fall of Satan and in original sin with Adam and Eve- we see the beginning of rebellion against God and self worship

God hates pride

Proverbs 16:5 “ Everyone who is arrogant-prideful in heart is an abomination to the Lord, be assured he will not go unpunished”

Proverbs 8:13 “ All who fear the Lord will hate evil. Therefore, I hate pride and arrogance, corruption and perverse speech.”

James 4:6 “ God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble”

Psalms 10:4 “ In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God”

The heart filled with pride brings devastation. God will not let this heart attitude stand without consequences and this prideful attitude will lead to a hardened heart.

Two examples of pride and results of a prideful life in scripture is King Nebuchadnezzar and King Herod.

Daniel 5:20-21

“But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was brought down from his kingly throne and his glory taken from him. He was driven from among the children of mankind, and his mind was made like that of a beast and his dwelling was with the donkeys. He was fed grass like an ox and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until he knew that the Most High God rules the Kingdom of mankind and sets over it whom He will.”

We see in this passage God made King Nebuchadnezzar live like an animal until he came to his senses and repented of his sin.

Acts 12:20-23

“On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. They shouted This is the voice of a god, not of a man. Immediately because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms.”

Just like with King Herod, pride will cause our hearts to harden toward God and in the end God will not allow us to prosper. But with King Nebuchadnezzar scripture tells us that he repented and was restored

Marshall Segal from Desiring God says this about pride

“One of the most dangerous qualities of pride is that it sneaks into places in our hearts where other sin once lived. We begin to conquer some sinful attitude, or habit, or addiction with God’s help, and soon enough we marvel at our own strength, or resolve, or purity, as if we somehow accomplished it on our own. C.S. Lewis writes “ The devil loves curing a small fault by giving you a great one” The confidence we feel in ourselves after defeating sin can carry us as far away from God as, or even farther than the sin we defeated. If we battle some sins, but welcome pride, we will lose the war. But if we suffocate pride, we will starve every other sin of its oxygen.”

Thinking we did this great thing on our own strength, so dangerous— I have been here, or

I know for me before Christ saved me I was a very prideful person, very selfish, self focused. But as I grow in Christ it is not as obvious as it once was, but I know pride, my flesh is still trying to destroy me, I know Satan still hates me, he still lies to me, I know my flesh still lies to me and for the rest of my life here in this body with God’s help He will root out every bit of pride.

I want to work through some questions that God has used and continues to use to help shine His light on areas of my heart where pride is trying to take a hold.

Do I see or notice others sin more easily and focus on others sin quicker than I see my own?

Do I thank God that I’m not like someone else?

Do I place myself at the center of the story?

Do I steer conversations or situations back to my own achievements or importance?

Do I resist advice, warning, or exhortation? And do I get angry or defensive in these situations?

Do I ever think I don't need the help of other believers? Do I isolate or act above being pastored or held accountable by my Gospel community?

Do I neglect genuine heartfelt prayer and time in the Word?

Do I feel hurt, overlooked, or jealous when others are praised or promoted and I am not?

When trials hit, is my immediate response to question God's fairness rather than trust in His Sovereignty?

If the closest people to you, your wife, your kids, your closest friends could describe you in your personal life at home what would they say?

By now if you're like me you are more than likely realizing there are areas in our lives where pride is seeking to take root or has already done so, so what now? What do we do?

We need God's help, we need His strength, we need to confess and repent of areas where we have been prideful and in this pride it has led to being self focused, self exalting, walking in self pity and we need to humble ourselves before a loving Heavenly Father and confess Lord I need You.

I want to read a passage from Philippians 2, this is a passage I continually go to, to remind myself of what Christ has done and wants to do through me.
Read 2:9-11 first

Then read 2:1-8

Humility is referenced two times

True Humility: thinking of yourself less, shifting your focus outward toward others (seeking to serve them, point them to Christ) , shifting your focus to continually seeing your need for God's help in every area of your life rather than obsessing over your flaws or achievements

We need the Lord's help, His strength everyday. We need to continually make confessions like this

Lord I need You to help me start this day with Your Kingdom in focus, to help me to fight against my flesh, to not give in to complaining about my circumstances

Lord I need You to help me in this difficult circumstance at work

Lord I need You to help me in this hard conversation that is looming

Lord I need You to help me lead my family, to continually point them to You

Continually submitting ourselves under His Lordship, His care of our souls and not walking in pride

Let's pray