

Proverbs 11:2

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. (NIV)

When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom. (KJV)

I don't know about you, but if I'm not very careful, my pride can sometimes trip me up.

Unfortunately, pride is not something that we deal with once and we're done.

Pride stays with us and is typically an issue in some form or another our whole lives.

Not that we are bad or a failure, but because the flesh is stubborn and wants what it wants.

For this reason...

We have to choose to set our pride aside and humble ourselves on a daily, sometimes moment-by-moment basis.

Now there are 2 kinds of pride. One is good and one is bad.

The good one is like when you take pride in something you are doing.

You want to do a good job and you want to get it right.

You care about your work.

Wanting to do a good job and do the best you can is a good thing.

You enjoy doing a good job instead of a half-baked job.

That kind of pride is okay.

The other kind of pride is the one being addressed here.

It's the bad kind.

Here's Google Dictionary's definition of it:

Pride - over-inflated sense of self-importance.

When you think more of yourself than you should.

This pride is stubborn and likes to scream, “I’m so important I am the captain of my own ship! I decide how my life is going to be lived and run.”

It might also say, “I know what’s best! I can do this! I know how to do it. I know what I’m doing.”

It might even say, “I don’t need anyone else to tell me. I know what’s best. My way is better.”

In other words, we are so sure of ourselves that we are calling the shots.

Sometimes it’s in a lot of things.

Sometimes it’s in a few things.

Sometimes it’s in big things.

Sometimes it’s in small things.

Whatever it is, we are operating by our wants and ways instead of God’s.

Now let’s contrast that with humility.

Google Dictionary says,

Humility - a modest or lowly view of one's own importance. Humbleness.

To have humility or to be humble doesn’t mean thinking of ourselves as less than okay, it’s thinking about ourselves less often and God more.

Humility is realizing that the world does not revolve around us.

Or our opinions or ideas.

It’s realizing we are not always right.

That we don’t know as much as we think we do.

Humility is understanding that God is over us, larger than us, better than us, mightier than us, and then responding to that by willingly stepping into our rightful and proper place.

Humility is the wisdom to realize there are more important things than us and what/how we want things.

In other words, it's knowing it's not about us and acting accordingly.

It's about choosing to defer to God, His will, and His way, realizing that God's way is always best.

Pride and humility are the exact opposites.

One says, "I think I'm so important that what I think and decide is what matters."

The other says, "God is so important that what He thinks and decides is what matters."

It can be a tough thing at times.

There are 2 sides to us - our spirit and our flesh.

Truly they sometimes are at war with us.

This is one of those times.

As Christians we are learning how to walk in the spirit so we don't try to gratify the desires of the flesh. [Galatians 5:16](#) NIV

This is a very important part of that.

We are learning how to step out of the role of god of our own world (little g) and to allow the God of the Universe to step in and run things.

That's not always easy.

It requires letting go of control of our lives and how certain things are going to go.

It means accepting the fact that there is a very real possibility that things aren't going to turn out how we want them to, and being okay with that because we trust that God knows more than we do, including what the right way to do it is.

We have to choose which path we are going to take.

Are we going to be “large and in charge”?

Or, are we going to recognize that God’s way of doing things is what matters, even when we disagree, don’t like it, or are disappointed by it?

Here’s a verse that warns against being prideful:

*Pride goes before destruction,
a haughty spirit before a fall.* Proverbs 16:18 NIV

In this verse, haughty means prideful, grandeur, self exalted, loftiness

Here’s another one.

This one says pretty much the same as the one we’re looking at:

*Before a downfall the heart is haughty,
but humility comes before honor.* Proverbs 18:12 NIV

It’s clear having a haughty or prideful heart is dangerous.

Back to the original verse - what does it say is the result of each?

Pride results in disgrace.

The KJV translates it as shame.

When we act with pride we dishonor both ourselves and God.

We embarrass ourselves before God and others.

But, when we act with humility we gain wisdom.

We get a better understanding of God, life, and all that’s around.

Our spiritual walk gets better because we begin to see and understand God, His will, and His way of doing things.

Other aspects of our lives get better, too, because we better understand what the right and best thing to do is.

As we become wise we start to put those better things more into practice.

That's what leads to a happy and fulfilling life.

So, how do you know if you are being prideful or humble?

Stop, take a step back, and look honestly at yourself.

Is there an area or areas where you kinda do your own thing instead of deferring to God's way of doing things?

Is there an area or areas where you don't think you need to refer to God's word because you know what's right without being told?

In either of those situations you might be struggling with pride.

(If I had to guess, since we've started talking about this something has popped into your mind that needs your attention. I encourage you to work on that first.)

So, whether we think we have a pride issue or not, how can we know for sure?

1 - Pray about it - regularly.

-Ask the Lord to show you where you are prideful so you can change it.

He will show you.

It can be hard to admit you have a pride problem.

The thing is, not being willing to admit we have a pride problem, means we might be being prideful about our pride problem.

We have to humble ourselves and admit we have issues and that there are things in our life that we need to work on.

Not just pride, but other things, too.

This humbling ourselves opens the door for wisdom to come in.

It also opens us up for the Holy Spirit to work in and on us.

It makes room for growth.

I heard a preacher on the radio talking about it once.

He said we should have the relationship with Jesus and the attitude toward sin so that when we see a flaw in ourselves we go to the Lord in prayer and say,

“Hey, I have this sin thing going on. I want to get rid of it because I know it offends you. Will you work with me so that together we can eliminate it?”

That’s a good attitude to have.

That’s humbling yourself before Him and asking Him to bring you closer to what He would have you to be.

Being humble like that, we are more malleable and easier to be molded into His image.

A big part of this walk is becoming more like Jesus every day.

Humbling ourselves makes it easier for it to happen.

2 - When He does show us something, be brave enough to face it.

Then, work on it.

It might not be easy, it might be painful.

But, it's best for us.

We have to do our part.

We have to submit to Him and obey His promptings.

We have to choose to do it His way.

Choose to humble ourselves and put Him first.

Not just in the big things, but in the little things.

It's the little things that will trip us up if we're not careful.

The little things matter as much as the big things.

We have to choose to seek His guidance on everything, to try to do things the way He would have us to do them.

Make decisions that will grow the kingdom and spread the truth of His love.

Overall, we have to choose to let Jesus be the hero in the story, not us.

That's how it really is.

Pride is trying to be the hero of the story - and we're not.

Jesus is.

Trying to make it us is just lying to ourselves and others.

Jesus is the hero.

It's our job to step back, honor that, and respond accordingly.

I encourage you to spend some time this week prayerfully considering whether you have an area where pride is an issue.

If it is, I hope you will bring it before the Lord and ask Him to help you work through and overcome it.

For Further Reading

[Ephesians 4:2](#) - *Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.* NIV

[Philippians 2:3](#) - *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,* NIV

[James 4:10](#) - *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.* NIV

[Proverbs 22:4](#) - *Humility is the fear of the LORD; its wages are riches and honor and life.* NIV

[James 3:13](#) - *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.* NIV

[1 Peter 3:8](#) - *Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.* NIV

[Proverbs 15:33](#) - *Wisdom's instruction is to fear the LORD, and humility comes before honor.* NIV