

# SICK OF EVIL • Week 3: What Are You Going to Do About It?

## Daily Briefing • Day 3 of 5 • All About Me

### WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*

**Matthew 28:19-20a**

Yesterday we looked at Jesus washing the feet of the man about to betray Him. Today we ask why serving is so hard for us, and what serving actually kills off when we do it despite its difficulty for our appetites. You can watch or listen to the sermon at [1mso.church](http://1mso.church) or on the One Missoula app.

### OPENING PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, this world constantly tells me it's all about me. I pray that You would protect me from that lie. You call me to use my skills, gifts, talents, and abilities to help lift others, and point people to You. I pray that Your Word would counter the lies and Your Spirit would empower the action. Help me walk in Your footsteps and trust You to exalt me in Your own time, in Your own way. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.*

### TODAY'S TEACHING

We all know someone who believes the universe revolves around them. It is the only child who never had to share attention with a sibling, or the one who did have siblings but was clearly the favorite. It is the A+ student, the gifted artist, the star athlete, the one who got all the attention from the opposite sex.

More subtly, it is the person who was none of those things and swore they would grow up and prove to the world that they are someone. They became the top sales rep, or the employee who made their boss's life miserable, or the boss with no real concern for their employees. It does not have to be blatant. Sometimes it is just a person at church who will not lift a finger to help. Sometimes it is a spouse, parent, or child who talks constantly about what they deserve instead of what they could make better for others in the family. The sketches are limitless but the thoughts underneath the examples are always the same: "It is all about me. Everyone should adjust on my account. People need to get out of my way. How dare anyone get praised instead of me."

This temptation to make it "all about me" is as old as it gets. God created people and placed them in a perfect garden with everything they needed. Then a spirit in rebellion against God showed up and made an offer: "*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). That is the original pitch. You get to decide what is right and wrong. You get to decide what to do with your life, your body, and your time. You get to be like God.

That same appetite shows up full-grown in Isaiah 14. The prophet writes a taunt against the king of Babylon, one of the most powerful and prideful men alive, and puts these words in his mouth: "*I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high... I will make myself like the Most High*" (Isaiah 14:13-14). Some Christians believe this passage is also describing the fall of Satan himself, and that has been debated for centuries. It is not settled, so hold it loosely. Either way, the self-exaltation trait is identical to the one in the garden, and it is identical to the one possibly sitting in your chest right now: "I will make myself like God."

This is worth taking seriously because of where God stands on it. "*God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble*" (James 4:6). That is not God being touchy. Pride invites God's opposition and is the exact thing that wrecks schools, churches, families, and whole cities. Because God loves people, He hates your pride.

So what do you actually do about pride? You cannot just decide to feel humble. But you can practice a habit that kills pride over time, and serving is that habit. Here is the honest problem: most of us are slaves to whatever we feel like doing in the moment. Nobody wakes up wanting to cut into their leisure time to go set up chairs. That is where higher wants come in. You may not want to get up early and exercise, but you want to be healthy, so you go. You may not want to take a specific class, but you want the degree, so you take it. The immediate want submits to the bigger one.

Serving works the same way. You may not want to serve today. But you want to follow Jesus, and He served. You want to be a humble person rather than a proud one, so you practice humility by serving while you wait on God to reshape your nature. And you are sick of what pride is doing to your school, your church, your family, and your city, so you go do something about it.

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## READ & MEDITATE

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### Genesis 3:4-6

*But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

### Isaiah 14:12-14

*How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! <sup>13</sup>You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; <sup>14</sup>I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'*

### James 4:6, 10

*But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'... <sup>10</sup>Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

Read Genesis 3 and notice what the offer actually was. Not pleasure. Not knowledge for its own sake. Position. Then read Isaiah 14 and count how many times the word I shows up in three verses. Then read James 4 and notice who does the exalting at the end.

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## REFLECT

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Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment is far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

The offer in the garden was not really about fruit. It was about who gets to sit in the chair and who gets to make the call.

*Where in your life are you currently deciding what is right and wrong for yourself instead of submitting that call to what God said about it in His Word? Is it your money, your body, your schedule, your relationships, your career, or something else? Name the specific area where you have quietly kept the final say.*

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Fill in the blanks from Isaiah 14:13-14:

*You said in your heart, '\_\_\_\_\_ will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God \_\_\_\_\_ will set my throne on high... \_\_\_\_\_ will make myself like the Most High.' (Isaiah 14:13-14)*

\*These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.

What does the repetition of that one word tell you about what pride actually sounds like from the inside?

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James does not emphasize that God dislikes pride or is disappointed by it. He says God opposes it.

What does it tell you about God that He would actively position Himself against a proud person, and what does that mean for anyone who keeps choosing it?

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Unfortunately nobody can feel humble on command. But you can do the thing humble people do, and let God work on your desire, drive, and appetite while you trust and obey. The opening teaching talked about higher wants and lower wants and the power that higher wants should have over lower immediate wants.

*Which higher want is actually strong enough to get you serving when the immediate want says no? Is it wanting to follow Jesus because He served, wanting to become a genuinely humble person, or being sick of what pride is doing to the world around you (are you SICK of EVIL)? Which one honestly moves you most?*

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Pride is easiest to spot in someone else and hardest to catch in yourself.

*What is one specific way pride showed up in you this past week? Think about a conversation you dominated, credit you craved, or a request you brushed off.*

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What is one specific act of service you could do this week that would directly cut against that exact form of pride? Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on. If pride isn't where you struggle most, what would it look like to serve someone who could never repay you anyway?

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#### PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

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#### MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Matthew 28:19-20a from memory:

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