

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

PRIDE

"Pride cometh before the fall." What a well-known quote that we have all used at one time or another to judge prideful people. You're going to spend this week looking into pride and how you can be proud of your choices, proud of God, and proud of others, yet not prideful about your accomplishments, traits, etc. Let's celebrate that God is proud of us while changing our prideful thoughts...

DAY 1

DESTRUCTIVE PRIDE

“PRIDE, THE FIRST PEER AND PRESIDENT
OF HELL.”

-DANIEL DEFOE

New International Version

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction, a haughty
spirit before a fall.

Matthew 23:12

For those who exalt themselves will be
humbled, and those who humble
themselves will be exalted.

DAY 1

PRAY: Dear God, I don't want to be prideful. You say pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit comes before a fall, so help me to humble myself before You and others. And if I am exalted may it be because You lifted me up. I don't want to lift myself up, before You or other people. Please give me a humble heart, God, and help me to keep my eyes on You every day. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.

REFLECT: As the Church, we have certain sins that we think are better or worse than others. We can almost make a list of sins, from "not so bad" to "horrible." And then we judge others based on which sins of theirs are the "bad" or "worse" ones. And we tend to ignore the "not so bad" sins in ourselves and in others. But do we ever look at, respond to, or try to change the sin of "pride" in ourselves? God tells us pride leads us to destruction and yet aren't we prideful when we judge others, when we talk against others or decide that their sins are worse than ours? The world could be a completely different place if we just eradicated the sin of pride in our hearts. Ponder that thought. How does that start with you?

DAY 1

ACT: When was the last time you talked against someone, or you judged someone's words or actions? When did you last feel superior to someone else because they dressed inappropriately, acted poorly, had messy hair, or used bad language? Think of each occasion and then, without condemnation, notice your pride in that situation. Could it be that if you try to check your pride, you'll end up not pointing a finger at other people? How many examples of that have you thought of right now? How can you respond to others with more humility? Make that a priority this week as you study pride. That's the hardest sin to see in ourselves!

DAY 2

PRIDE SEPARATES US FROM GOD

"PRIDE IS AN INDEPENDENT, ME-ORIENTED SPIRIT. IT MAKES PEOPLE ARROGANT, RUDE AND HARD TO GET ALONG WITH. WHEN OUR HEART IS PRIDEFUL, WE DON'T GIVE GOD THE CREDIT AND WE MISTREAT PEOPLE, LOOKING DOWN ON THEM AND THINKING WE DESERVE WHAT WE HAVE."
-JOYCE MEYER

New International Version

Psalms 10:4

In his pride the wicked does not seek him;
in all his thoughts there is no room for God.

Isaiah 37:23

Who is it you have insulted and
blasphemed? Against whom have you
raised your voice and lifted your eyes in
pride? Against the Holy One of Israel!

DAY 2

PRAY: Father in Heaven, I can't imagine ever turning from You, or blaspheming You. But You say our pride can get us to turn from You. Who is it that I have insulted or blasphemed? Against whom have I raised my voice or lifted my eyes in pride? Lord, have I ever turned against You, because of pride? Please help me to always keep my eyes on You and never get too prideful. I need you and Your Holy Spirit to keep my heart pure. Father, keep me humble every moment of every day. Thank You for helping me walk humbly in Your sight. Amen.

REFLECT: Most Christians say that we would never turn from God. We can't imagine ever committing the most horrible sin, of blaspheming God or the Holy Spirit. But we must do it or the Lord wouldn't be warning us about it. What subtle things could you be doing in your own pride that would get you to turn from God, or worse yet, blaspheme Him. It sounds impossible but reflect on these verses and consider how the enemy makes you prideful, and keeps your eyes away from God. All of us are just one choice away from being prideful.

DAY 2

ACT: Seek God and ask Him to show you if, or how, pride is in the way of getting closer to Him, or of loving other people. Ask Him if there is any area of your life where pride is causing you are turn from Him, or worse yet, blaspheme Him. Take 10 minutes to lay out all of your prideful thoughts and concerns, and ask God to humble you and reveal where your pride has become a barrier between you and Him. We can't see our own pride, only the Holy Spirit can. Take time to seek Him and ask Him to show you how to make more room for Him.

DAY 3

DON'T LET WEALTH MAKE YOU PROUD

"IN THE MIDST OF A WORLD OF LIGHT AND LOVE, OF SONG AND FEAST AND DANCE, LUCIFER COULD FIND NOTHING TO THINK OF MORE INTERESTING THAN HIS OWN PRESTIGE."

-C.S. LEWIS

New International Version

Ezekiel 28:5,17

By your great skill in trading you have increased your wealth, and because of your wealth your heart has grown proud....Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor...

DAY 3

PRAY: Dear Lord, help me not to get so much wealth, fame, beauty, success, or status that it becomes more important than You. Let me stay humble with all that You've given me and never think that I achieved it myself. I don't want my pursuit of splendor to corrupt my wisdom. Let me be wise and know that anything good I have is because of You and Your splendor. Keep my human pride humbled and may only You be exalted in my life. Thank You for all I have, and may I always know that everything I have comes from You! Amen.

REFLECT: Reflect on the fact that nothing we do, who we are, or what we think or say is because we're smart, clever, funny, or wise on our own. All of the good in us comes from the Lord. He created us, He gives us our gifts, talents, and character traits. He had a plan from when we were in our mother's womb. So, as we work hard, make money, and gain success, we must never forget that it's a gift from God and it's all His. We are the stewards of what He gives us, from material things to intelligence, to humor, and joy, and we have to stay humble "for the Lord alone, is to be exalted." (Isaiah 2:17)

DAY 3

ACT: Make a list of your successes, your accomplishments, joys, attributes, and even great qualities. Then pray through that list and thank the Lord for each one, giving Him the glory, appreciating that He alone has given you everything; your abilities, achievements and intelligence. Ask Him to take away any pride that would allow you to take credit for what you have, do, say, or accomplish, and praise Him for everything in your life that He has graciously given you. Keep that list and occasionally review it, with thanks and praise!

DAY 4

DON'T LET THE PROUD OPPRESS YOU

"IN THE MIDST OF A WORLD OF LIGHT AND LOVE, OF SONG AND FEAST AND DANCE, LUCIFER COULD FIND NOTHING TO THINK OF MORE INTERESTING THAN HIS OWN PRESTIGE."

-C.S. LEWIS

New International Version

Psalms 56:2

My adversaries pursue me all day long; in their pride many are attacking me.

Proverbs 16:19

Better to be lowly in spirit and among the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud.

DAY 4

PRAY: God, I need You. I feel attacked, for my adversaries are pursuing me and in their pride, they are attacking me. It's so hard to respond to people who treat others terribly or who take credit for things they haven't done. Help me to remember that it's better to be lowly in spirit, and oppressed, rather than to share the plunder with the proud. I don't want to be jealous of evil, prideful people. Let me choose to be righteous, even though others treat me unfairly. Give me strength to find joy in my lowly position and thank You for lifting me up and blessing me. Amen.

REFLECT: It's difficult to accept being treated unfairly or being the victim of injustice. We all want justice, and we want the unjust to be punished for their sins. So how do we handle prideful people who gain success, money, and status through their wicked ways, while we are pushed aside as we live with integrity, honesty, and humility? In our hearts, we know that the Lord does not let anyone ultimately get away with wrongdoing and abusive behavior. In what situations have you felt wrongly treated by prideful people? How did you respond?

DAY 4

ACT: Write down these verses and then pray through them so that you can completely embrace the humility it takes to live them out. Ask the Lord to let your heart believe that as your adversaries pursue you, it is better to be lowly in spirit, along with the oppressed, than to share in the plunder with the proud. Memorize these until they're in your heart and will never leave you. You will become more Christ-like as you ponder this truth in your heart.

DAY 5

APPROPRIATE PRIDE

"THAT'S WHAT ROCKY IS ALL ABOUT:
PRIDE, REPUTATION, AND NOT BEING
ANOTHER BUM IN THE NEIGHBORHOD."
-SYLVESTER STALLONE

New International Version

Galatians 6:4

Each one should test their own actions.
Then they can take pride in themselves
alone, without comparing themselves to
someone else

DAY 5

PRAY: Dear Lord, would You help me to keep my eyes on my own heart, my own work, and my own progress. Help me not compare myself to other people or to the celebrities I look up to in Hollywood. Paul tells me that I should test my own actions so that I can be proud of my accomplishments – what You’ve done in and through me. But I need You to help me to not compare my works with others. Lord, I understand that it is OK to actually take pride in who You’ve made me to be. When I talk against Hollywood, I’m being prideful in judging them because I’m comparing their sinful ways to my righteous way, and that’s wrong. Let me not judge with pride those I’m praying for. In Jesus name, Amen.

REFLECT: Reflect on the difference between being proud and taking personal pride in what we’ve accomplished. God wants us to be proud of our lives, knowing that He gets the glory, and to celebrate what He’s doing in us and through us. But, when we become prideful in our accomplishments that takes God out of the equation. We can’t compare who is better or worse than we are, such as when we judge the creative decision-makers in Hollywood. We can be proud of being a follower of Jesus but not prideful that our way is right and their way is wrong. Test your own thoughts and actions; don’t compare our choices with “those immoral Hollywood celebrities,” or anyone else.

DAY 5

ACT: Get a piece of paper and make two columns. On the top left side write PRIDEFUL OF: On the top right side write PROUD OF: Draw a line down the middle of the page and then start thinking of everything you have and all you've accomplished, or with whom you compare yourself. Be honest with yourself and write details of your life on one side or the other. What do you give yourself credit for achieving or becoming and what do you give God credit for doing in your life? Look at the columns and ask the Lord to show you how He feels about your list. This is how you can test your own actions and reveal your own pride.

DAY 6

DON'T TAKE PRIDE IN WHAT YOU SEE

"IF YOU ARE HUMBLE NOTHING WILL TOUCH
YOU, NEITHER PRAISE NOR DISGRACE,
BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE."
-MOTHER TERESA

New International Version

2 Corinthians 5:12

We are not trying to commend ourselves to
you again, but are giving you an
opportunity to take pride in us, so that you
can answer those who take pride in what is
seen rather than in what is in the heart.

DAY 6

PRAY: Jesus, I want You and Your followers to be proud of me because of what I see in people's hearts, not by being impressed by what people do, say, or appear to be. I don't want to praise myself or other people, as if I or they are better than You. I want to live a life of integrity, wisdom, and Christlikeness so that I can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. Thank You for teaching me how to be wise, not full of pride, and how to live a Christ-like life. Amen.

REFLECT: Paul is trying to teach the people in Corinth that he wants to be an example to them of someone who cares about what's in their hearts, not how they appear to be on the outside. And he wants us to do the same thing. Do you try to become friends with the cool people and be seen with the "in" crowd? Or are you trying to choose friends who live Christ-like lives and to pursue people of strong moral integrity? Does human pride lead you to the most successful or the wealthiest people in your company, school, or church group? We have to understand the subtlety of pride and commend ourselves to people of truth, goodness, honesty, purity, kindness, and love. What kind of people do you hang around?

DAY 6

ACT: Think of your best friends at work, in your neighborhood, at school, or in your community. Are they the cool people, the wealthiest and most prestigious, or, regardless of their status, are they the most Christ-like people of integrity? Are you friends with people who accept you for exactly who you are, yet encourage you to grow? Evaluate your friends and business acquaintances and see if you choose them out of pride, or out of a hunger to be around people who will make you a better person. Then decide if you're on track with what Paul is saying and check your own pride.

DAY 7

GOD IS PROUD OF YOU

"AT THE END OF THE DAY, EVERYTHING IS GOD'S PLAN, AND HE CARES ABOUT WHAT WE DO. HE CARES ABOUT OUR HEARTS, HOW WE PLAY THE GAME, AND HOW WE TREAT PEOPLE. HE'S DEFINITELY INVOLVED WITH HOW WE HANDLE SPORTS AND NOT JUST THE OUTCOME OF IT. I'M PROUD WHEN ATHLETES MENTION GOD IN ANY WAY."

-TIM TEBOW

New International Version

2 Corinthians 7:4

I have spoken to you with great frankness; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.

DAY 7

PRAY: Dear Lord, just as Paul loved the Corinthians and was proud of them, I want You to be proud of me and my family! I want You to be greatly encouraged by me and that my life can be proof of Your love for me. Help me to be a good Ambassador and in all my troubles let my joy know no bounds, so that people can see You in me. Thank You for Your frank words. I love You, Lord. Amen and Amen.

REFLECT: We all want to hear the words, "I'm proud of you!" That fills up our hearts and our souls. Paul was very generous with his words of praise to the people he wanted to encourage. In fact, he told the Corinthians that it didn't even matter what he has suffered, his pride in them superseded anything that he had to go through to see them grow in their relationship with Jesus. Can people say that about you? Are you living a life that makes other people proud? If not, what can you do to change your reputation? Are you living a life that not only Jesus and Paul would be proud of, but also everyone around you would be proud of?

DAY 7

ACT: What are qualities in others that make you proud of them? Who are the people in your life whom you take great pride in? Right now, choose someone whom you're proud of. Tell them that you're proud of them and why. Tell him or her that you are greatly encouraged by them. Even in your troubles, your joy will know no bounds if you focus on all of your friends, family members, and co-workers whom you're proud of! What a beautiful way to end your week and make God proud of you!