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THE SIN OF PRIDE

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“The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee.”

—Obadiah 3

1. Pride Is a Sin.

Messages on sin have never been popular, but they are ever needful if indeed we expect to get to Christ and His salvation. Every man, woman, young person, or child ever saved, must face the fact of sin, acknowledge it, confess it, forsake it, and repent of it, if he ever is to find that salvation which is by faith in Jesus Christ by the marvelous grace of God.

The Word of God does not picture man as a good person, but to the contrary, it pictures him as having no goodness, no righteousness that God will accept. It does not picture man as being bad in some ways, but to the contrary, it pictures him as being totally depraved, running away from God, and with a “heart that is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer 17:9). God does not picture man as just needing a face-lift, or a little moral guidance, or a little soothing salve; but it pictures man as being in need of the grace of God, the power of God, the love of God, and a new heart and nature (Eze 36:26). In other words, the Word of God pictures man as being in need of a new birth, being made a new creature before he is fit to enter into the kingdom of God and the presence of the thrice holy God.

Therefore we must know our own hearts, which can only be done as the Word is preached and God the Holy Spirit works in us to show the desperate need of the grace and mercy of God in Christ. This is the reason then that I preach the Word of God, showing the awfulness of sin, God's hatred for it, and your need of repentance—which is a turning unto God from it. No prophet has ever been loved for the messages of warning that he brings, until souls in true repentance have heard and acted upon the Word, by the grace of God; and then they will never cease praising the Lord that some man held their feet to the fire and told them the truth of God's Word.

There is one sin that has damned more souls than any other—the sin of pride. As I search the Word of God, I find that God hates the sin of pride seemingly more than any other sins. Truly he hates all sin, and will punish all sin; for God cannot condone anything contrary to His holy nature. But His hatred seems to go out more forcibly against this sin of pride, for it robs Him of His glory; and through His rebellious, sinful creatures, it even tries to take Him off His throne.

The fact that pride is *universal* is undeniable. Haughtiness, arrogance, conceit, inordinate self-esteem, vanity, and vainglory are as common as the air we breathe. You and I both know that this is true. Ours is a proud, defiant age! Yes, internationally, nationally, socially, and personally. The sin of pride is responsible for so much of the confusion, sorrow, heartache, and tragedy in our world today. Yes, pride in its various guises is an evidence that we are living in the last days, as we are told in 2 Timothy 3:2-4: “Men shall be lovers of their own selves...boasters, proud...heady, highminded.” So I believe this is a timely message, warning men of the sin of pride, of God's hatred for it and His judgment against it.

Pride heads the list of the seven deadly sins held to be *fatal to spiritual progress*. These are pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and slothfulness. The Scriptures also give pride the place of preeminence in these verses found in Proverbs 6:16-19, “These six things doth the LORD hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

So we see then that God's Word plainly declares that He hates pride, for it is an *abomination* to Him as we read in Proverbs 16:5, “Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD.” That word “abomination” means that God loathes, abhors, and is disgusted with everyone who is proud in heart—“Pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate” (Pro 8:13). And to show you that God's anger burns against this sin of pride, we find it included in the list of sins given in Revelation 21:8 under the word “abominable.” Listen to God's Word and hear the doom of every proud man who dies outside of Christ! “The fearful, and unbelieving, and the *abominable*, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

Yes, pride is a sin, a wicked sin. “An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin” (Pro 21:4). You see, pride merits no divine response. Yea, God revolts from it: “Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off” (Psa 138:6). “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble” (Jam 4:6).

Therefore we read that *destruction* accompanies pride, “by his understanding he smiteth through the proud” (Job 26:12). Again, in Proverbs 15:25, “The LORD will destroy the house of the proud.” Also in Proverbs 16:18 we read, “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” Oh, how we need to hear God's Word, that He hates the proud in heart, and that if the proud turn not in repentance, God will whet His sword and cast the proud man into hell.

Also, the Word of God describes pride as being the *source of contention* among men: “Only by pride cometh contention...He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat” (Pro 13:10; 28:25).

Do you understand God's Word? He hates the proud in heart, they are an abomination to Him: “The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, who shall bring me down to the ground?” (Oba 3). That's man's question in his pride, but this is God's answer: “Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD” (vs. 4). Yes, every proud person must be brought down: “The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low” (Isa 2:11-12).

The Scriptures not only abound with references which show the Lord's hatred of this sin, but they also describe a proud, haughty, conceited, vainglorious, boastful man, as being a *child of the devil*, a child of Satan. Why? Because when Satan was in heaven as the highest created being in the universe, when he was known as Lucifer, the head angel, his heart was lifted up in pride and he fell to become Satan, the deceiver. Yes, ever since that moment of haughtiness when Satan's heart was lifted up with pride, he has sought to blight angels and men with the same form of iniquity according to 1 Timothy 3:6. Do not ordain a novice—a beginner—to be a pastor, "lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

Pride, then, was the *first sin* to destroy the calm of eternity, and shadow the heart of God in the realm of eternal harmony. Satan began to be occupied with his own splendor and beauty, according to Ezekiel 28, and his lofty thoughts led to his expulsion from heaven. Isaiah's account of his fall, because of pride, is given in Isaiah 14. Listen as we hear Satan speaking! "...I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation...I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." We see then, that although Satan was an angelic being of the highest rank, he suffered from "I" trouble. The middle letter in pride is "I," just as "I" is the middle letter in sin. Therefore self is at the heart of all sin; for sin is centered around "I." I must have my pleasure; I must have my way; I must have everything my heart desires no matter what it costs me or others.

Are you beginning to see from God's Word that when you put "I" on the throne you are taking the place that belongs to God? And being lifted up with pride you shall fall. Yes, you shall fall as did our first parents, for they, like Satan, were lifted up with pride in thinking that they would be like gods if they ate of the forbidden fruit. Therefore, when they disregarded God's command, they fell in their pride because they flaunted God's authority and proudly asserted their own self-will.

The same is true today. The unregenerate nature remains the source of pride. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed...pride" (Mar 7:21-22). I ask: Proud of what? Who has made any of us to differ from another? What have we received that has not been given to us from above? Is it wealth? God gives power to make wealth (Deu 8:18). Is it wisdom? All true wisdom comes from God. Is it health? All our times are in His hands. Is it a gift? The Scripture says the Holy Spirit gives to every man gifts as He pleases. Is it power? Power comes from God and He gives it to whomever He pleases. He sets up one and brings down another. Do we have a good portion in this life? The Psalmist says that promotion comes not from the east or the west, but from God. So what do we have to be proud of? All that we have comes from God Himself.

Did you know that pride comes in many dresses? One prides himself in his humbleness. Another prides himself on his learning. Another prides himself on his ability to do things others cannot do. Another prides himself on the fact that he is not like other men, and yet he commits the same sins the other men commit! Another prides himself on the fact that he is not a drunkard, but yet he gambles. Another prides himself on the fact that he is not a wife-beater, but yet he is a tyrant in his home. Another prides himself that he would not steal, and yet he robs his soul of heaven by staying away from Christ. Another prides himself on his ability to invent and make things, while he cannot control his own passions. Another prides himself on having the truth of God's Word and yet he will not share it with others; he holds it to himself and his friends, he is clannish. Another prides himself on the fact that he is not as other men; he looks down with disdain upon the weak and sick, poor and needy, and gives them no helping hand; he cries, "Let them get it the way I got mine; I worked hard for what I have. Do you think I'm to share it with someone else?"

This list of the sins of pride could go on and on; it is in the warp and woof of every man. Therefore it is a sin to confess; it is a sin to hate; it is a sin to flee; it is a sin to mourn over; it is a sin to fight out against. Yes, it is a sin to bring to the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ and to ask forgiveness for; a sin that can only be washed away by His blood.

While pride is among the sins God hates, yet He has made it possible for us to be delivered from its penalty and power. He is able to save us from all our fancied greatness and haughtiness, and to grace our hearts with a sweet humility ever pleasing to Him who delights to dwell in humble and contrite hearts. We read in Isaiah 57:15: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Therefore by virtue of the cross, God can "hide pride from man" (Job 33:17); His blessings can abide upon the humble and the broken in heart. Fall down at the feet of the Saviour crying for mercy on the basis of His shed-blood, that you might be broken from this hideous sin.

2. Characteristics of Pride

We have brought before you from the Word of God the fact of sin, the result of sin upon God and man, the awful condition that man is now in because of his fall in Adam, and the need of a Divine Substitute, God's Beloved Son.

Before continuing on this sin of pride—which God hates because it robs Him of His glory—I desire to preface this section with these words: the more I travel and meet people, the more I come into contact with different groups and individuals, the more I converse on a one-to-one basis with those I meet today; the more aware I am of the need of the convicting and convincing power of God's Holy Spirit that men and women, young people, boys and girls, would come to see themselves before God as guilty sinners. Yes, the need of the hour, more than any other, is the need of the power of God's Holy Spirit in showing sinners that they stand before a sin-hating God as guilty, lost, undone and helpless, and that the cleansing of the blood of Christ is their only hope. Yes, we need the power of God's Spirit to work in us the knowledge of sin by God's Holy law—for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20), to work in us the repentance God requires, that is, to get on God's side against ourselves and sin, and to work in us that saving faith (the faith of God's elect) so we may lay hold upon the Lord Jesus Christ, believing Him to the saving of our souls.

If you miss Holy Spirit conviction, you miss repentance; if you miss repentance, you miss saving faith; if you miss saving faith, you miss Christ; if you miss Christ, you miss heaven; and if you miss heaven, you are on the road to hell to pay for your own sins throughout eternity.

Oh, that we would think and meditate on these things, for without the knowledge of sin, then I have no need of a Saviour, and without the awakening and convicting power of God's Holy Spirit no man will seek Christ savingly!

In this second study on the sin of pride, I would desire to go into its characteristics, how it manifests itself, and then to give you examples from the Word of God as to how it operates in men's hearts.

One of the characteristics of this sin of pride is that it *deceives the heart*, as we see in Obadiah 3: "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?" But the answer comes back from the Lord Himself to this question in verse 4: "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD." Yes, pride has deceived your heart, my friend. Though you fly high now—having plenty, no need of anything or anyone—yet God will bring you down into judgment; for no one can put off forever his reckoning day with God.

One day every one of you will bow your knee to God and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. You will either do this in mercy or in judgment. The pride of your heart will be broken and you will seek after Christ as a poor, guilty, needy soul, laying down your arms of rebellion and hoisting the white flag of surrender, yielding up all to Christ as Lord, and this in time while there is yet mercy; or you will do it at the Great White Throne Judgment at the Last Day when there will be no more mercy. Oh I warn you: Don't let the pride of your heart deceive you by thinking that you will not have to face God all alone, either in mercy or in judgment; for God's Word says you will and God cannot lie. Why not meet Him in mercy now at the cross?

Another characteristic of this sin of pride is that it *keeps men from seeking God* as we read in Psalm 10:4: "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." Yes, this sin of pride keeps you from seeking after God's appointed Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ, because you are self-sufficient. You see no need of another's righteousness because you are satisfied with the fig-leaf covering of your own. You go about seeking to establish your own righteousness and have never submitted yourself to the righteousness of God. Therefore being self-sufficient, self-satisfied, and self-righteous, you see no need of seeking Christ, not knowing what Revelation 3:17 says, that you are spiritually wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.

Therefore pride keeps you from seeking God and His righteousness in Christ, and makes you say in your heart and by your deeds that you had rather be damned in hell than to admit your need of help from above. Oh what a damning sin pride is, that a man would rather perish than to admit that he is a sinner, all wrong, who needs help from God! Oh my sinner friend, why not meet God in repentance now at the cross of Christ while there is still mercy to be found?

Another characteristic of this sin of pride is that it “*exalteth itself against the knowledge of God*” (2Co 10:5). The natural heart of man, being a proud heart, lives upon its own stock, and drinks at its own cistern, thereby exalting itself against the knowledge of God as revealed in His Holy Word. It says like Pharaoh in Exodus 5:2: “Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice?” It says like Cain in Genesis 4: ‘Why should I bring a blood-sacrifice for sin? I am as good as anybody else!’ Oh how many fly back in the face of God with proud hearts saying: ‘Why should I deny self and take up the cross and follow a despised Christ? I have my prayers, I have my forms, I have my baptism, I do my penance, I don’t need the blood of Christ to cleanse me, I am getting along quite well, thank you, and need no help from God.’

But God says you need the righteousness of Christ to get to heaven; yet in your pride you exalt yourself against this knowledge and say you will get to heaven by your own works. Oh what a sin pride is, to thus blind your depraved mind to the knowledge of God’s requirements! God says you must repent of your sins or you cannot enter heaven, therefore you will die in your sins. Yet in your pride you exalt yourself against this knowledge and say, ‘God does not require me to repent, for I have done the best I can. I have not hurt my neighbors, nor have I been morally unclean or a drunkard, or a wife-beater; I have nothing to repent of, I have been good all my life.’ I say, Oh what a sin pride is to thus blind your depraved heart and mind to the need of repenting of your self-righteousness!

God says that unless you are born again by His Word and by His Spirit, you cannot see, much less enter into, His kingdom (Joh 3:3-5). But in your pride you exalt yourself against the knowledge of God, by declaring that you are going to get into God’s kingdom by your infant baptism, or by your decision, or by your church membership, or by your adult baptism, or by your lodge, or by keeping the golden rule. But I say again: Oh the deceitfulness of your proud heart that makes you believe you are right and God is wrong, and that your knowledge is to be trusted rather than the knowledge of God as revealed in His precious Word.

No person or church or denomination or nation that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God will ever succeed. No, you shall be brought down! This nation of ours which exalts itself in its wealth, its resources, its learning, its accomplishments, its power, its democracy, shall come down in judgment unless there is a turning back to the knowledge of God in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pride has blinded our leaders to God’s holy requirements, that we are to love the LORD our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind; and we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. Pride has blinded the hearts and eyes of our leaders, our lawmakers, our judges, our governors, and our statesmen to the fact that God requires righteousness, justice, and retribution—that is, punishment for sin. In their pride and exaltation against the knowledge of God, they object to the idea of justice, righteousness, and retribution; and then they are surprised that there is lawlessness in our homes and in our schools, colleges and universities, on the streets and in the different strata of society. Oh that our leaders would hear God’s Word: “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Pro 14:34).

Not only are our leaders blinded by pride to all of this, but every man in every walk of life hates discipline, hates justice, hates righteousness, and hates God’s retribution. This to me is the tragedy of modern man: you have in your pride exalted yourself above the knowledge of God and departed from the basic principles of equity and truth, and therefore are in a state of confusion. And what makes it worse is that in your pride you object to the one thing that will make it all right again, which is bowing to the authority of God’s Word and listening to God’s voice, where He tells you to humble yourselves before Him and seek His face in righteousness.

Does He not tell us in His Word that He giveth grace to the humble, but resisteth the proud? Does He not say He will hear the cry of the humble and will have nothing to do with the proud but punish them? Then is it not the height of foolishness to stand out against Him in your pride of learning, your pride of wisdom, your pride of self-righteousness, when your end is nothing but the lake of fire? Would it not be better—ten thousand times better—to admit you are a fool, you have been acting like a fool; and take your place before God as a poor sinner and nothing at all, instead of trying to brave it out before the God of the universe against Whom you cannot win?

Oh let me expostulate with you for a moment: Would it not be the height of wisdom, godly wisdom, to lay down the arms of your rebellion, admit you and your ways are wrong? To admit that your methods of permissiveness toward your children, your family, your children in the classroom, in school, and prisoners before the bar in your courtroom are all wrong, and that God’s way is right—that is, that justice, righteousness, and retribution should be exercised?

I say from God's Word that this is the height of godly wisdom; and if it is not followed, and you yet in your pride continue to exalt yourself against the knowledge of God, then you will pay the price of it all which is the loss of children, home, family, society, and nation in God's judgment upon sin that is sure to come: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom 1:18). My prayer is that God, by His Spirit, will convict and convince of this sin of pride which blinds men's hearts until you cry unto God for deliverance in the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Biblical Examples of Pride

We come now to view some examples of pride as given in the Bible, and thereby see how pride works and why God hates it (Pro 8:13; 16:5). The first one we will consider is *spiritual pride*. We see this exemplified in the life of Cain in Genesis 4. God had revealed unto Cain and Abel that the only approach to a Holy God was to be upon the basis of the shedding of blood, upon the basis of substitution, and that in God's appointed way, by the offering of a lamb. Scripture says that Abel came this way, admitting he was a sinner, offering his blood-sacrifice, but Cain in the pride of his heart brought of the fruit of the ground. By bringing an offering of his own hands, he thus said to God that he was not a sinner and that God had judged him wrongly. And did you know, man is still saying the same thing today? "No need for me to come by the way of blood redemption, for I am not the sinner God says I am." Yes, spiritual pride lifts a man up to defy God, saying he is not a sinner.

In Mark 10, we read the story of the rich young ruler who came running to the Lord asking, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Then our Lord answered him by telling him: "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother." The rich young ruler said unto him, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth."

Here again we see spiritual pride in another form. This man's heart had deceived him into believing that he had not committed adultery because he had not committed the outward act, not knowing that heart adultery is in the eyes of God the same sin. Pride had deceived him into believing that because he had not killed anyone he was free of this law, not knowing that hatred of one's brother and unlawful anger is murder in the sight of God. Pride had deceived his heart into believing that he had never stolen anything, not knowing that covetousness is stealing, and this was the sin of his heart.

This same thing about spiritual pride is given us in Luke 18:11-12, concerning the prayer of the Pharisee in the temple. "God I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." You see, pride had blinded this man's heart to his true need of God which only made him proud of who he was, what he had done, and what he had not done. His religion consisted in five *I*'s; *I* was on the throne. Are there not many reading these words who are proud of your Biblical learning, proud of your abilities, proud of your teaching, proud of your preaching, proud of your church, your pastor, your denomination, your gifts, proud of the fact that you are not as other men are.

My friend, have you ever admitted this before God? Have you ever cried out against the spiritual pride of your heart? Have you ever laid bare your heart before God, confessed it, knowing that it can only be cleansed before God by the precious blood of Christ? Oh, cry out against pride, the pride of your heart. Confess it, and cry after Christ for deliverance from it by His precious blood. If not, then surely this heart-sin, though not seen by man, will doom you into hell. But, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jo 1:9).

The Bible also speaks of the *pride of ambition*. We see this in the life of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:5-6 when they sought to be like gods, to know the difference between good and evil. Pride blinded their hearts and eyes as they listened to the voice of Satan and ate of the forbidden fruit; and by this sin of pride and rebellion, they threw the whole human race into chaos.

Again, we see this pride of ambition in the lives of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in Numbers 16. When blinded by the sin of pride, they aspired to the office of high priest; God consumed them in His wrath by opening the earth, so they went alive down into hell. Oh, what a sin pride is that it makes a man aspire for that which God in His sovereignty has withheld from him. Do you aspire to a great place in life, motivated by the pride of your depraved heart? Then listen: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD" (Jer 45:5). Cry unto God to break this pride of ambition and seek the face of God in repentance.

The Bible also speaks of the *pride of position* which is sin against God. In Exodus 5:2, we read of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, saying to Moses, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice?" Man in his pride is saying the same thing today: Who is God that I should obey His voice? Why should I bow to His authority? Why should I deny self anything? Why should I ask for help? I don't need God! Oh what a sin pride is, that it makes you stand out against God and say you will not bow to the authority of God.

In 2 Kings 5, we read of the pride of position in Naaman, who almost went to hell because, at first, he would not consent to dipping seven times in the river Jordan at the command of the Lord. He was a leper and had gone to God's servant Elisha for healing, but when he heard the terms he went away in a rage because of his position; and would have gone to hell had a soldier of his not talked him into going and dipping seven times in the river Jordan as commanded by the servant of God.

Oh how true this is today, pride of position keeps men from Christ. Unsaved preachers in their pulpits, blinded by the pride of position will not admit before God they are sinners. Men and women everywhere today in the church and out of the church will not take their place before God as lost sinners because of their positions. Pride of position causes men to perish. Remember: God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Turn to God, asking for a broken heart over this sin of pride.

In Daniel 4, we find another example of this pride of position in King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. When his heart was lifted up and his mind hardened in pride, he was removed from his kingly throne and they took his glory from him. Seven long years he roamed the fields and ate grass as an ox. When God got through with him he could only say: "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?...and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Dan 4:35, 37). What an awful extreme God used to bring this mighty man down, break his proud heart, and make him cry unto God for mercy!

Oh, you that are eaten up with the sin of pride remember God will bring you down; it will be in mercy here or in judgment at the last great Day. Which shall it be? Let me reason with you for a moment; this sin of pride is so unreasonable because all that we have has come from God. It is He alone who gives us health, wealth, strength, wisdom, abilities to work, plan, and labor at our job. He and He alone gives us what we have. Without Him we can do nothing, absolutely nothing; we are the creatures of His hands, and did not make ourselves.

God in His sovereignty has put us into the family into which we were born, the nation into which we were born, the color of our skin He gave us, the environment and all that goes to make up our lives. We receive nothing, spiritually or physically, except it comes to us from above; therefore, of what have we to be proud? If we have received anything in this life, it has come from God! 1 Samuel 2:6ff says, "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive...he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them." Again we read in Psalm 75:6-7, "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another." Yes, all things are in the hands of our sovereign God, and all things come from Him, so, of what do we have to be proud?

If we are saved, it is only by God's sovereign grace! If we have any good thing, it has been given to us from above! If we have any gift, it was given to us by the Holy Spirit who gives to every man as He pleases. He does it in a sovereign way. If we are able to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, it is because the Holy Spirit works in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. If our eyes have been enlightened to see and receive any spiritual truth, it is because the Holy Spirit taught us and opened the Word to us. If we are able to do a good work for God, it is because of His sufficiency. We read in 2 Corinthians 3:5, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."

It is of God's mercies that we are not consumed. It is of God's love that we have been drawn to Him. It is because of His everlasting arms being under us that we are kept. It is by His faith that we are saved; it is by His blood that we are cleansed; it is by His righteousness that we are clothed; it is by His power that we are kept; it is by His grace that we are sustained; it is by His intercession that we are delivered; it is by His goodness that we are led to repentance; it is by His indwelling Spirit that we are filled. All that God has for His people is from the Father, all is through the Son, and all is by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, of what do we have to be proud? I answer: Nothing, for all has been given to us from above. So let us bow at the footstool of Christ; let us pour out our hearts in confession of this sin of pride. Let us seek His face in forgiveness and forever hide in Christ, for He is our safe hiding place and we are complete in Him.

4. Christ Overcomes Pride.

God's eternal Word is forever settled in heaven, because it was written in heaven and "is given [unto us] by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2Ti 3:16-17). The Word of God is a sword to cut and to heal us. It is bread to feed us. It is water to quench our thirst. It is a fire to burn its way into the deepest recesses of our hearts. It is a lamp to lighten our pathways. It is a rod to chasten us. It is a staff to lead us. It is life to quicken us and make us alive. It is the power of God in the hands of the Holy Spirit to save us, cleanse us, deliver us, and make us suitable for the inheritance of the saints. All of this by the saving faith in Christ that is worked in us by the faith that comes by hearing the Word of God. For we are told that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17).

Yes, the Word of God warns us, counsels us, guides us, leads us, and points us to the Lamb of God, Who takes away our sins by the shedding of His own precious blood. The Word of God also reveals unto us the gracious invitation of our Savior God to come to Him and find rest, peace, forgiveness, and deliverance from sin, especially this sin of pride we are studying.

We have shown you from the Word of God that the God of the Bible hates sin, especially this sin of pride, because it robs Him of His glory. But, if we are willing to confess the sin of pride and forsake it, He will have mercy upon us—Proverbs 28:13: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Alright, there it is! To the Law and to the Testimony we must go, paying special attention now to the many gracious invitations that God gives to poor, needy sinners. It is written, as it were, in bold letters on the pages of Holy Writ: "*Come and welcome to Jesus Christ!*"

Oh, how my poor soul rejoices in such an invitation: "Come and welcome to Jesus Christ." Come and welcome to the only One who can deliver us from sin, this sin of pride and its deserved damnation; come and welcome to the only One who can save us from the wrath of God; come and welcome to the only One who was lifted up for our transgressions and raised for our justification; come and welcome to the only One who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; come and welcome to the only One who can bring us back to God; come and welcome to the only One who can bring us to heaven; come and welcome to the only One who is rich in mercy, grace, and love; come and welcome to the only One who has gone to prepare a place of rest and peace for us in His Father's throne; come and welcome, I say, to the One who opened the fountain of cleansing by the shedding of His precious blood for sin and for uncleanness. I say again: Come and welcome to Jesus Christ.

What a mercy is this then that is bestowed upon poor sinners: to be invited to come to the feast made ready by the Master Himself. You might ask the question: To whom then is this invitation of mercy given? Matthew 11:28 has our Lord saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Yes, it is given to those who have labored long and hard to save themselves by the works of their own hands, and are no closer to God than when they started, but are in fact laden down with a heavy burden of sin. Our Lord says: Come and welcome to Me, come lay down your burden of sin upon Me, and I will give you rest.

I tell you from a heart of personal experience today that there is no rest like the rest of the sin-weary soul upon the bosom of Christ by faith. I don't know of another soul living that tried to work his way into the good graces of God as I did. But to quit my work and rest in Christ as my all in all was indeed a great mercy. How can anyone possibly live in confusion and strife, in the arguing of their heart and in the awful accusing conscience without Christ to bear their sin-burden? I can't live without Him.

Again, Luke 14:17 has our Lord saying: "Come; for all things are now ready." What is ready for those who are invited to come?

(1) Salvation from sin is ready; for Christ Himself finished the work of redemption on the cross and proved its accomplishment by rising from the dead and leaving our sins in the grave.

(2) The Father who planned our salvation is ready to receive us in Christ, because He has let the Lord Jesus back into His presence as our Representative. No sin was upon Him when He returned to glory as our High

Priest; all our sins had been left in the tomb, therefore the Father received Him and set Him above all principalities and powers.

(3) The riches of His grace and mercy are ready; His white robe of righteousness is ready; His eye salve to put upon our blinded eyes is ready: “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see” (Rev 3:18).

(4) All power is ready to save, deliver, and keep each poor soul that comes to Christ, for our Lord tells us in Matthew 28:18: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” Also in John 17:2 He says He has power over all flesh. Therefore, John 6:37: “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” Yes, He has power to save and to keep, and will not cast us out, for He Himself said in John 10:27-28: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” Yes, all things are ready; so come and welcome to Jesus Christ.

Again, Isaiah 55:1: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” What a gracious invitation is this! We are welcome to Jesus Christ as poor bankrupt paupers. Oh, praise the Lord! That fits my case, for that is all that I am: a poor, worthless, penniless pauper. But did you know, my friend, that this is the one to whom the invitation is given? No money—yet come and buy, for God freely gives us all things in Christ. The question is asked: What are all these things? I will answer, He freely pardons us for Christ’s sake. He freely forgives us of all our sins for Christ’s sake; He blots them out as a thick cloud never to be remembered against us anymore. This then is a most blessed invitation, for it invites both the thirsty and the hungry, both the cursed of God and the devil’s castaways, to come and welcome to Jesus Christ, the friend of sinners.

Again, Isaiah 1:18 has our blessed Savior God saying: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Think of this, ponder this, meditate on this: the Lord of glory inviting poor sinners to come and reason with Him about their eternal soul. He invites you who are sin-sick, sin-laden, sin-convicted and convinced, to come and reason with Him and to know that every sin you confess to be scarlet, every sin you confess to be red like crimson, He will forgive and cleanse by His own precious blood as you look to Him by faith. What a word! What an invitation! What a blessing! What a salvation! What a Savior is given to us in the Gospel!

You might say, “But I am a great sinner.” But Jesus Christ says, “Come and welcome, I died for great sinners.” You might say, “But I am an old sinner having lived all my life in sin.” But Jesus Christ says, “Come and welcome, I died for old sinners, black and dirty as they are.” You might say, “But I am a hard-hearted sinner, I have a heart of stone on which nothing makes an impression.” But Jesus Christ says, “Come and welcome, I died for hard-hearted sinners, I give them new hearts.” You might say, “But I have served sin and Satan all my days.” But Jesus Christ says, “Come and welcome, for I died to deliver you from the clutches of sin and Satan.” Yes, it is written of our Lord, “Thou shalt call his name JESUS for he shall save [or deliver] his people from their sins.”

You might say, “But I have sinned against light and knowledge.” But Jesus Christ says, “Come and welcome, I died for sinners like you.” You might say, “But I have sinned against mercy and the prayers of father, mother, brothers, sisters, and wife; and even the prayers of all of God’s people.” But Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God says, “Come and welcome, for I died for the ungodly sinner like you.” You might say, “But I have no good thing to bring with me, I have nothing but sin, a wasted life, a proud and rebellious heart.” But, dear friend, our Lord says, “Come and welcome to Jesus Christ.” For He alone can put away your sins by the sacrifice of Himself.

If you indeed hate sin, mourn over sin—for it has been against God—if you are willing to confess your sins and forsake them, then indeed God says He will put them out of His sight. Come and welcome to Jesus Christ, for in Him alone is found deliverance from the power, penalty, and presence of sin.

At times my soul seems not to be able to contain itself as I understand that my Blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ still invites me to come to Him. As 1 Peter 2:4 puts it: “To whom coming”—always coming—for He is still my Lord and Savior. He is still my Refuge from each storm, my Hiding Place in every fear and in every battle. He allows me, by His grace, to keep coming to Him day by day and hour by hour to find in Him my all in all. I need a Savior just as much today as I did the day I first came to Him as a poor, hell-deserving sinner.

*Come ye sinners, poor and needy, Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you, Full of pity, love and power.
He is able, He is able, He is willing, Doubt no more.*

*Come ye needy, come, and welcome God's free bounty glorify;
True belief and true repentance, Every grace that brings us nigh,
Without money, without money, Come to Jesus Christ and buy.*

*Come, ye weary, heavy laden, Bruised and broken by the fall:
If you tarry till you're better, You will never come at all.
Not the righteous, not the righteous, Sinners Jesus came to call.*

*Lo! th' incarnate God, ascended, Pleads the merit of His blood;
Venture on Him, venture wholly: Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus, none but Jesus, Can do helpless sinners good.*

—Joseph Hart

