

Self and Its Pride

by B.H. Clendennen

The sermon warns against the dangers of pride and emphasizes the need for humility and self-denial in the Christian life.

Duration: 38:35

Scripture: Proverbs 16:18, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 2:3, James 4:6

Topics: "Pride And Humility", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the dangers of pride and self-exaltation, highlighting the need for humility and surrender to God. It discusses the root of all evil as the proud atheism of self, leading to spiritual deadness and separation from God. The message stresses the importance of recognizing and crucifying the self-will, desires, and pride within us to truly experience God's transformative power and live a life centered on humility and obedience to Christ.

Transcript

I believe the world stands on the threshold of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible makes it very plain that it's not everyone that says unto Him, Lord, Lord, that's going to enter in that day. It is a very special people prepared, made ready by the Word of God.

People that have allowed the Spirit of the Lord to deal with that heart in every aspect of it. And as He dealt with that heart, were willing themselves to do whatever He said. Verse number 3, chapter 2, Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there come a fallen away first.

That man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye of not that when I was with you, I told you these things. What a message, what a thought.

All the evil of fallen men and angels has its roots in the proud atheism of self. You need no look no further than your own heart to find the kind of an antichrist that John said had gone out from among the church in that day. All of the evil.

Men are dead to God because of one thing. They are living to themselves. That is the sole reason that men are dead to God.

The loss of spiritual desire is simply a result of the desire being focused in our own hearts, in our own self-will. Self-love, self-seeking, self-esteem are the essence of pride. Now without a death to self, there's no escape from Satan's power over any of us.

No matter what kind of an experience you have without a death to that which the Bible calls self, there cannot be an escape from Satan's power. Wherever self-abilities are allowed, listen closely, wherever self-abilities are allowed to share in Christian service and worship, there is the satanic spirit of pride. Wherever that's allowed.

That's not saying that God doesn't use, but we're recognizing that God is taking something from ourselves. And we're not just merely being exalted by something that happened to be ours in time. Now all the virtues of a heavenly life are the virtues of humility.

That has to be drilled home in this proud day when the church talks so much about a better self-esteem. When all along the line we're experiencing helps that has more to do with the human. I've noticed that in even what they call Christ-centered counseling today, and I do believe there is such a thing of Christ through his word dealing with our hearts in many ways.

But most of what we find Christ-centered counseling has all of its dealing with self. We're always talking to people about their need for love, but God's message to you is that you need to love. Amen.

It isn't just a matter that you need to receive, you need to give. There has to be that loving. But all the virtues of a heavenly life are the virtues of humility.

All the genuine praise, joy, glory have their birth in that humility that comes when a person is really born of God. The true joy, you can teach people to go through the forms and you can get all the music just right and get the flesh moving with it. But the true joy is a product of that humility.

It is humility alone that makes the impossible gulf between heaven and hell. No angels are in heaven but because of the humility that marked their characters. All others in their pride followed the devil.

All of them that remain there today are there because of this mark of humility that marked them. No devil is in hell but because of the fire of pride that has corrupted the whole of his life. No matter where.

Humility opens man to God, but pride shuts a man to himself. Whether he be man, woman, whatever he is, pride always shuts a man to himself. Whether he be preacher or whether he be devil, it's always the same.

Now herein lies the great struggle for eternal life. Pride and humility are the two kingdoms in strife over a man's soul. It is here the pull of the one side of human nature against the pull of the other side.

This is the warfare that's taking place. This is what Paul spoke of when he talked about flesh lusting against spirit and spirit against flesh. It is this warfare of the two kingdoms of pride and humility.

Every unregenerate man is in the service of self. Regardless of education, position in life, without a humility that comes from the birth of Christ in that soul, he is in the service of self. It doesn't matter what he may call it.

Now this humility cannot be cultivated through a sound head knowledge of scripture or doctrine. It cannot be cultivated into the human being. It's not a product of just a religious education.

You can't talk a man into humility. Humility is like perfume. When you've got enough of it, you notice it yourself.

You're killing somebody sitting next to you. Amen. And when humility is something that you become proud of, then it's not the humility I'm talking about here this morning.

This humility can come only as Christ has a birth in our being. There cannot be otherwise. There can be no humility that pleases God without Christ being born within us and living that life out through us.

Now only as the old man is brought to death through the power of the cross can the humility of Christ manifest himself through those that are birthed of God. It isn't enough just to have an experience at one time with God and talk about going to heaven and can't being lost anymore. That isn't the way it works.

It is only as that cross effectively works in our life, bringing a death to that part of ourselves that's motivated by pride alone. Now the supreme enemy of man coming out of the fall of Adam is self-exaltation. That is the enemy.

That was the supreme enemy. That was a product of the fall of man. It brought about the fall of man wanting to be as God.

Brought about the fall. After that fall this became the mark of the human race. That Adam, that first Adam.

You note in the Bible that we have what the Bible calls the first Adam. He's referred to as the second Adam. But the second Adam is also referred to as the last Adam.

You see in that first Adam all died. But in that second Adam was the possibilities of all being alive. And it was out of that fall came this race of self-exalted people.

Christ said, I can do nothing of myself. I'm meek and lowly. I seek not my own glory.

Now if this be Christ, then self-exaltation must be under Christ. And that's what we just read. Sitting in the temple of God.

What know you not? That your body is a temple of God whose temple you are. And Paul talks about somebody being in there on the throne in that temple. Exalting himself above everything that's called God.

That is self. That is that under Christ spirit. It will manifest itself in a real person.

A flesh and blood person. As this eon comes about as a tribulation time. But now that under Christ spirit.

The mark of the beast in the final analysis is selfishness. It is that selfish spirit that would use God for its own means. That prosperity message that makes God only a stepping stone to self-actualization.

Is a spirit of under Christ. And it doesn't matter where it comes from. How big the preacher that preaches it.

It is this self-life. And if this I can do nothing of myself. Be the spirit of Christ.

Then self-exaltation is the spirit of under Christ. Paul wrote about him. Who exalts himself above all that is called God.

It is a sad thing. When such a spirit rules in the church of Jesus Christ. Man need to look no further than his own self.

His own heart. To find that same under Christ spirit. Which John said was already in the world.

You only have to look at that self that the Bible says. Is deceitful and desperately wicked. To find the under Christ that John said was already in the world 2,000 years ago.

It is that spirit of self that would use God for its own ends. That for its own selfish purpose would attempt to use the Almighty. Now here in man.

Here in man's innermost being. Self has its awful birth. And establish its own reigning over a kingdom of pride.

Of which all outward pomp and vanities are but its childish playthings. Did you hear what I said? Here in the heart of man is the birth of that kingdom of pride. Which all that you see in this world Solomon came to know.

That all of it was vanity and vexation of spirit. All of those things we grasp for are but the childish playthings of this kingdom of pride. The world is unreached today because such a spirit has gripped the church.

We've spent the money and the resources that God has given the church for reaching the heathen. To satisfy the vanity of a heart that cannot be satisfied. Solomon with all of his wealth.

Man never lived on this earth richer than Solomon. The Bible said he tried it all. Had 900 wives and concubines.

Gold without count. Stables you couldn't count the horses. Everything but he said it's all vanity and vexation of spirit.

He said with all of the seeing the eyes are never full. And with all of the hearing the ear is never full. And with all of your getting the heart is never satisfied.

Have a thousand suits in that closet and you'll want another. Have a thousand pair of shoes and you'll always be drawn to another. That is the vanity of a selfish life.

That's antichrist. I said that's antichrist. And it rules supreme in a great part of the church this morning.

That's the reason 3,000 million people perish without God. It's because of the selfishness of that church. Always.

Never anything big enough or fine enough. He said Solomon said all the rivers run into the ocean. But the ocean is never full.

All of your getting will never produce what you're looking for. It's vanity and vexation of a spirit. And this is what Paul is saying to us.

Birth in man. Self. In that innermost being.

Self. Had its awful birth. And established its throne ruling over a kingdom of pride.

That has driven men relentlessness. It is not those things from without which defile a man. Listen to me.

The Bible said it's not that which comes in that defiles. It's not the thing from the outside. The inward strong man of pride.

The diabolical self has its high works within the human. It is place in there. Desires that God never intended.

It is there. Man's imagination has everything before it. Yet it goes after nothing but as self sends it.

You know, I told you here just a few weeks ago about again. I preached a message. Who is your God? A lot of years that he spoke to me about.

Coming home on that Saturday to get ready for Sunday morning. He dealt with me. How that self was a God for the most part of the American church member.

He said to me on that airplane. When I, when he said, who is your God? And I answered not knowing who was talking. I said, the Lord is my God.

And that voice said to me. How do you know? Your mouth says a lot of things your heart don't agree with. There's folks sit in church and sing how I love Jesus.

And their heart is cold as a frog. Amen. They'd rather be anywhere than the church.

They're not there. Their lips are saying. I said, how can a man know who his God is? And the word of the Lord came to me.

And said he'll sacrifice to and for whoever his God is. And he pointed up how we'll always sacrifice for ourself. We may not pledge the missions.

But we'll put those shoes on lay away. We'll buy that car on time. We'll promise J.C. Penney.

We'll pay him if he'll let us take the clothes home. But in that coming home, I heard in my spirit. He said, I want you to get there early.

And I want you to stand at that door right there where you park. And watch the people that come on that parking lot. I came that morning.

I felt a little conspicuous standing out there. I said, I wonder what they're going to think I'm here for. But the first car that came on.

I didn't have to wait any longer. The first car that turned on was a great big Lincoln Continental. And that's fine.

I'd had nothing to do with it except what he's going to tell. As it come by and wait, I saw the flash of that diamond. And somehow the spirit said to me that cost over \$3,000.

It's not paid for. Amen. That suit wrapping up that \$2.98 body cost \$500.

He didn't pay for it either. 25 cents of every dollar he makes is given to drive that Lincoln. When he comes by, tell him, I want 20% permissions.

I said, Lord. I said, Lord. He'll tell me that's too much.

He said, I know. Because I'm not his God. The one sitting in that Lincoln is his God.

He'll give 25% to drive that car. But he's not going to give 20 cents out of that dollar to reach that lost and damned. You see, there is somebody sits on that temple.

And if you don't knock him off. I said, if you don't knock him off. If you don't deal with self, self will deal with Christ.

If you don't crucify that old man, that old man will crucify Jesus. And that pride of self will be the predominant factor. Listen, I'm talking to you this morning.

I believe we're on the threshold of the greatest harvest the world has ever known. And the people that are going to reap it are the people who have been delivered from themselves. This is a self that must be denied, crucified, or there can be no disciple of Christ.

I said, there can be no disciple. Unless that old man is dealt with. So grave is the blindness of pride.

That helpless creatures feel exhausted because of natural abilities given them by God. They act as though those abilities were their own. Amen.

Helpless creatures. That the Bible says you have nothing that wasn't given you of God. There's nothing about your life that didn't come from the Almighty.

But you look at the pride that swells up in a human sometimes. As they begin to use an ability that God has given them. No man has the power to do anything except by life loaned to him every moment by God.

This book says you move and breathe and have your being in God every moment you live. God loans you that, ladies and gentlemen. You don't have any guarantee to ever walk out of those doors again.

There were folks went to bed last night and woke up in a different world this morning. You have no guarantee if you live till tomorrow. It's because God loans you that time.

If you can sing, it's because the Creator fashioned those vocal chords. And every note that squeezes through them ought to be a boundless thanks to God to let it happen again. We have nothing that wasn't given us.

There's nothing you have, I have, that's worthwhile at all. That wasn't given us by the God of all grace. Amen.

In God we move, we breathe, we have our being. To ascribe glory to ourself for what we possess is to be guilty of lying and stealing. And I can tell you there's a heap of it going on.

I said there's a heap of it going on. All about us, these things. But as God conditions us for the harvest, as God deals with our hearts, our lives, for the harvest of the earth, more and more He's going to deal with this and the attributes of such a life.

We make things, we can harbor things, we can talk about this is the cause, that's the cause. Let me tell you something ladies and gentlemen. It doesn't matter what this world ever gets to be.

It doesn't matter, I don't think it can get much worse with its pornography, with its filth. I can tell you it isn't looked at by the man or the woman that God deals with that selfish spirit. This world, we're not going to make it any better.

You're not. The Bible said it's going to get worse and worse. If you think it's bad now, I can tell you this is like a Sunday school picnic.

Besides what it's going to be when the church is gone. You hear me? I said this is like a Sunday school picnic. This is a Boy Scouts convention.

Besides what it'll be once the church is gone. It isn't going to get any better. But you and I must be strong in the Lord and the power of His might to walk holy in spite of all of this hell about us.

God never protects us from anything. He never intended to protect you. I must demonstrate to this world that this life is a holy life.

And it doesn't succumb to that. And as I walk in this new life, it doesn't succumb to that. It doesn't watch that.

It doesn't let that affect its life. It doesn't operate in that realm of things. As I walk, I must demonstrate to this world that this is a life that cannot die.

It's an eternal life. This is the whole thing that God has to read and He doesn't protect us from anything. He allows the adversary to come.

Press against you. And in that time, your choices and your walking demonstrate to a world that there's something took place in that life that cannot be explained by man. Thank God temptations, everything that comes down the pike are just as much a part of the plan of God for your life as anything else in this Bible.

It is here that I come to know what's happened to my life. Are you listening? I said it is here that I come to know. Oh, listen.

When you ascribe glory to yourself, you have become guilty of cheating and stealing. You have nothing that God didn't give you. What is the result of this pride which blinds us to our true condition? Just listen to me.

The results of it. We reason ourselves into all kinds of misery. This self.

We reason ourselves. We make our lives the tools of unnecessary desires. Never intended to be a part of us.

Never some things that's troubling you should never have been a problem to your life. But because many of us were so long confined in Christ that there were things aroused and awakened in us that give us hell and haunt us that the cross has to ever be at work in our lives. You hear me? But it's all a product of a life that allowed that kind of a thing.

It has to die. There's no tame in the flesh. There's no save in the flesh.

There's no cleanse in the flesh. Self has to die. There's things there.

Desires that ought never have been. That little child. You raise him up.

Keep him away from that filth as much as possible. But teach him in the ways of God. Amen.

Don't allow. Always talking about so many young people being sexually active. You don't ever get that way and turn back away from that.

But as long as you're pure. Amen. As long as you're pure and haven't indulged your life in that.

There is not an alcoholic on this earth that is born that way. He never would have craved alcohol had he not drank alcohol. You see, that's a product of this kingdom we're talking about that has to be put to death.

Amen. Has to be put to death. We make ourselves the tools of unnecessary desires.

Seeking after imaginary happiness. We create ourselves a thousand unnecessary needs. We believe that just a little more is going to make us happy.

If I could just have one more suit of clothes. If I could just have one more pair of shoes. If I could just have a Cadillac.

Or if I could have a Rolls Royce. Wouldn't I love to have a Porsche? If my house could be a little bit bigger. If we just had another bathroom here.

Oh, let me tell you, another bathroom won't be happy. I grew up in a house that never had a bathroom. And we were happy anyhow.

We had a bath, not a bath. But it was happiness in it. Listen, it is in things that make you happy.

That's a lie of your own imagination. You see, in a quest for happiness. We're always creating a desire for things that's not going to do anything for us.

Just a little more money. Just a little more of this. And all you want is just a little more.

It's a bottomless situation. There is no end to it. Amen.

No end to it. None whatsoever. Seeking, amusing ourselves with false hopes and insatiable passions.

We bring distress of every sort upon ourselves. Oh, God, if he could hear me. I said, if you could hear me.

Amusing ourselves with what God never intended to be amusing, ladies and gentlemen. We bring on ourselves things that create monsters. That if you're not careful, they get bigger than you are.

There's parts of this thing. You feed it, mister. You feed it, lady.

And it'll eat you up. There is a place of no return. Listen, there's a place of no return.

I must know that weakness. I must know that. I must not venture there.

My feet must not be allowed to walk that path. I must not allow myself to be associated with what I know may be the pull down of me. Because we in all of this, listen.

When any man honestly looks at the above question, that is, what is the result of pride? He'll realize that nothing is so unbecoming as self-exaltation and pride. He'll recognize that immediately if you look. What is it in the human soul that most of all hinders the death of the old man? It is the imagined genius of self-will.

The glory of learning, the conceit of natural reason. I don't make any appeal for ignorance. Amen.

God doesn't either. And I'm going to tell you, just because you learn something doesn't make you any more holy. Amen.

It is this conceit of things. We begin to believe because we've accomplished certain things in life on our own. Then there comes this awful thing of pride, of self-will.

It is the imagined genius. These are the master builder of pride's temple in the heart. And like faithful priests, they keep up the daily worship of the false god of self.

So much of that. Well, I laid hands on this blind man and he was healed. Now just as well that I haven't been there.

Preach yourself! I couldn't heal a flea. He didn't have to say that. We knew that all the time.

Knew that all the time. But the very fact that he said it pointed somehow to himself. Pointed somehow to himself.

We're always wanting. Amen. We seek after gifts.

Preachers seek after gifts. Lord, let me have the gift of healing. No, that'll draw a crowd.

You get the healing of the sick. That'll draw a crowd. Wasn't for God's glory.

Amen. Listen, wasn't God's glory involved at all. Much of the seeking after spiritual things has a selfish tent to it.

It isn't to glorify God. It's to let me be seen. Those gifts ought to flow through vessels.

Amen. Through vessels, through us, all of us here. Those gifts should flow unhindered.

Because we're so dead to our own selves. That when it's over, nobody's looking at a vessel. Amen.

Whereas man ought to be the temple of the living God. Self sits there in the natural man. Obsessed with his own imaginability.

Fiercely jealous of his own independent interests. Amen. We can carry that over.

We let people in the church. We preach the message that promised everything, cost nothing. I filled the church with pears.

They never saw the gold. They're satisfied with the brass. And they're there because we promised everything and cost nothing.

And when Pentecost preaches, it has to produce. Because we're talking about something alive. So we have the curse of the imitation today.

Simply because of that selfish spirit. Amen. Trying to produce results out of something that's never going to produce results for God.

Amen. It's a curse of the imitation. Pride is the only.

Listen. Only. It is only the disorder of a fallen world has no place among other beings.

You listen. Has no place. It is only a disorder of a fallen world.

It has no place, none whatsoever, among other beings. No place in the kingdom of God. No place for that time to be in.

It was man's awful fall from the life of God that has given birth to self and the deceit of pride. Had he never fell, this would never have happened. It was this pride that put the devil and the angels that followed him out of heaven.

They wanted to be like God. They wanted to exalt themselves above the most high. Wanted to usurp the place of God.

And now Paul, writing thousands of years later, says if that's happened, in that unregenerate heart, in that heart that sits in the church religious without God, that's took place. He sits in the temple of God, exalting himself above everything that's called God. I can tell you, folks, most of the church is not saved.

And the reason it never got saved is it never got lost. We just invited them to accept Jesus. And he became a part, at least they thought he did, of everything else they were.

We never got them lost. We never dealt with that human heart like it is. We never told and preached the total depravity of that human nature, that there's no place in the economy of God for any of that.

We never preached the law of God to deal. He said the law is for the whoremonger, for the murderer, for the lawbreakers. Amen.

Men will take anything. They'll tell you they need eternal life. But like the rich young ruler, they don't want to talk about being a lawbreaker.

They don't want you to deal with them on the line of where that heart is. And unless you get them lost, you never get them saved. There's no way that you can get a human being saved unless you make him know he's lost.

You can bring him in this altar, add Jesus to whatever he is, let him join the church. He comes in unsaved, bringing the devil with him. Then the influence of the darkness takes its hold on the pew of the church.

Then we wonder why God isn't working. Amen. There's a lot of things used as tools of evangelism.

But they must be used right. Bussing, bussing would be wonderful to buss them in, to get them saved. But buss just for growth.

You can buss more flesh in than you got spirit. And I can promise you, you've lost it. I said you've lost it.

It'd go down the drain. Because God isn't looking for quantity. He wants everybody to be saved, but everybody isn't going to be saved.

But the quality of life, that new creation brought in by God, this new creation. It was man's fall. It was man's fall that brought about this awful thing of pride.

His fall from God that centered his life in himself. Amen. Everything.

I'm amazed to listen at the courses that are saying today. The message that are preached. Amen.

Hearing people call our Father, God, Daddy-O. Amen. I mean, you hear it.

All of the slur, the slang that's being brought out. I'm a king's kid. I belong in this place.

These are what I'm supposed to have. King's kids have the best. All of the kind that turns to self, the thought, everything.

Born in hell, ladies and gentlemen. Not a product of a new creation. You can believe that whether you want to or not.

I can tell you 85% of the people that sit on the church pews this Sunday morning have never experienced the birth from God. And what I'm saying to you this morning is foreign language to them. Amen.

Foreign language. They have no idea. Amen.

What's going on? I preached down this year just last week, Thursday morning, on the memorial service. That's when they honor those pastors and preachers that have gone on the year before and those that have gone on and not being any kind of a specialty preacher. I don't deal much with Mother's Days and Father's Days.

I preach Easter every day. Amen. The resurrection is taking place in lives all along the line.

You don't have to wait for Easter to get saved. This is a realization. And so I was a little hesitant before I called and told them I'd preach it.

But as God began to deal with me and the thought that He told me to preach and I never really realized it all until I got wise. We're here in memory. What kind of a memory did they leave us? What are we doing with the memory? And what will tomorrow's generation remember about us? The old man in 1958 laid his hands on my head and ordained me to this ministry.

Brother Gorey, an old law of spooking preacher, never had too much of formal education. But oh, God, he had a Bible message. He had a message of God.

As he put his hands on my head down in McAllen, Texas in 1958, that old man said if he ever ceases to preach the truth, take him out. Take him out. That was his prayer.

There was no joke. There was nothing. He was just saying, don't let him stand in the pulpit and make mock of what God is.

Don't allow that to happen. I said to those preachers, they left me a legacy of a faith that said to me, he that knows Jesus has the answer to everything in life. We're not recommending some hospital somewhere.

We're not recommending some center somewhere to take care of the drug abuse. They said Christ is the answer. And the church is a custodian of redemption.

Whatever your problem is, you can find it in this altar. I told them about where Shirley and I both have been, halfway to the Arctic, in a little village, Indian village, they call remote air. The only way to get there is by airplane, little airplane.

1,100 people, 1,100 alcoholics, now 700 born-again, spirit-filled believers that hate alcohol. Amen. There is no Christ-centered drug situation up there.

There's only one thing up there, Jesus Christ. I said, Jesus Christ. They left me that faith, an undiluted gospel.

They would have said to you, if you would have said to Brother Gorey, that you can mix Romanism and Pentecostalism, he would have said, you do not know God. You see, they left a faith. A faith that was born, not of self, but of God.

What kind of memory are the children coming along, going to have with you, this is what Paul meant, that you mothers be an example to those coming home. You fathers, you youngers, be an example to those children, that they may be able to look to you and say, Jesus is there. They know Christ.

Their life is different. It's not a selfish thing. They didn't come to church every Sunday to see what they could get out of God, but they came to be a vessel through which God could give something to somebody.

Bow your head with me.

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