

Spiritual Pride

by Don Courville

The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and the dangers of spiritual pride, and calls listeners to continue in the spirit and in humility, and to fear God.

Duration: 1:24:11

Scripture: Luke 18:9

Topics: "Humility", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

This sermon delves into the importance of humility before God, emphasizing the need to be lowly in spirit, to avoid pride in various forms such as performance, possessions, appearance, position, heritage, pedigree, ability, power, and admiration. It highlights the transformation that occurs when one embraces humility, allowing God to work deeply in their heart and revealing the highest holiness as the deepest humility.

Transcript

Psalms 113, there we go, nine verses and there's one verse I want you to especially notice as we read it and that's verse six. Psalms 113, verse one. Praise ye the Lord.

Praise, O ye servants of the Lord. Praise the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.

From the rising of the sun into the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised. The Lord is high above all nations and his glory above the heavens. Who is likened to the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth.

He raises up the poor out of the dust and lifted the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people. He maketh the barren woman to keep house and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord.

Verse six. Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth. Let's pray.

Mighty Father, we're not even worthy in ourself to come before thee, only through the blood of Christ. We thank you and praise you for the wonderful gift that you've given us in salvation in Christ. Oh Lord, thank you for all your goodness to us.

And now Father, we come this morning, hopefully not just to do our duty, to perform, to go through our ritual, so we can get to the mill and get to our fellowship time and get on with what we want to do, but hopefully, Father, we've come to meet with God. And Lord, we're prone to wander, as one songwriter wrote, so draw us back in. And we're prone to let our minds wander.

Our bodies might be here, so we ask that you would put a hedge around us here and that you would box us in. Father, we're prone to many ills and evils and prone to think our own thoughts and not check with you and not be submissive to you and get ourselves into boxes and get ourselves into corners. And so, Father, if we're there, we pray that you'd set us free.

Lord Jesus, you came to die on the cross for our sins to set the captives free. And now, Father, I especially ask for the anointing of your Spirit and your grace and your mercy as I attempt to share what thou has showed me in the word. For I'm totally unworthy, totally inadequate, and thou knowest my struggling to thee not to do this.

But I submit myself to you. Holy Spirit come in Jesus' name. Amen.

You may be seated. Somebody mentioned this week about a two-hour sermon. So I hope you've already taken your break.

I don't know how long this will go. I had the thought of maybe breaking it up into two weeks and we'll just see how it goes. I have had great struggle with this message with God.

We were up in Canada a little over a month ago and one of the speakers there had two messages that he had had great struggle with God. He didn't want to give them, but he did give them. And as I get into this message, you might understand.

But finally yesterday about noon, I thought I had freedom from God and to change the subject. And I've been studying on the fear of God and to go over into another area, not to go into this area. And I thought I had freedom from God to do that, but I just fooled myself.

And I thought, okay, God will go over into the judgment of God, an area we haven't covered with the fear of God. But no, he brought me back and made it very clear I'm supposed to share this with you. It's the fear of God in the next fruit.

We've been going through these things on the fear of God and I'm sorry I haven't got an outline made up for you on this. I'm just not that disciplined, I guess. I think it'd be nice if I could do that somewhere along the line.

I don't know. But hopefully, the first thing I started off on this study, of course, was just for myself, not for you. But the object and reason of fear, why should we fear God? And I've covered this.

It helps us to understand God himself and just the highlights on it. His presence is dreadful, his name is dreadful, his worship is to be fearful in the church and things of this. And I started this study from a study I did with a group of people.

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Now this one, the next one, the ninth fruit is humility of mind, humility of mind and I have, and I actually stopped and didn't give this last week thinking maybe I wouldn't have to cover this subject, but God has made it clear I'm to share these things with you and because of the power of this subject and the self-conviction and the deep, deep root of this area, we have a lot of problems in our lives and in our churches because of not having a humility of mind. John Bunyan said this, just to kick us off so that we understand where we're going, and I have a text, Romans chapter 11, that we'll look at, what I did quite a bit of studying on Romans chapter 11, and because of the subject of high-mindedness there addressed, it's a pretty powerful subject, but Bunyan said this, the man that is proud and of a high and lofty mind fears not God. This is plain from the exhortation, be not high-minded but fear, and that's in Romans 11, 20 where we'll be in a little bit.

Have you, here you see that a high mind and the fear of God are set in direct opposition the one to the other, and there is in them closely concluded by the apostle that where indeed the one is, there cannot be the other. Where there is a mind, a high mind, there is not the fear of God, and where there is the fear of God, the mind is not high but lowly. Can a man at the same time be a proud man and fear God too? Why then is it said, God beholdeth everyone that is proud and abases him, Job, and again he beholds the proud afar off, in the Psalms, Psalms 138, 6, the other was Job 40 verse 11.

He therefore that is proud of his person, of his riches, of his office, of his parts and the like, feareth not God, it is also manifest further, for God resisted the proud, Job James 4, 6, which he would not do if he feared him, but in that he sets him at such a distance from him, in that he testifies that he will abase him and resist him, it is evident that he is not the man that hath this grace of fear, for that man, as I have showed you, is the man of God's delight, the object of his pleasure, the man that fears God. The covetous man feareth not God, and he goes on into these things. In Romans chapter 11, if I might give you the background of our subject, I'm going to flip back over here, because it's actually about seven pages into what I have, but I want to give you a little bit of the background of this, and you'll be familiar with it.

In verse 13, Paul is writing to the Romans, and the Gentiles of course are at Rome, and possibly some unsaved Gentiles mixed in there, as happens many times when there's a lot of people around and things are happening, and so the subject had come up that God was done with Israel, and so Paul's attempting to set them straight in Romans 9, 10, and 11. And 13, he says, For I speak to you Gentiles, and as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office, if by any means I may provoke to immolation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, and this doctrine is pretty strong around today, what shall be the receiving of them be but life from the dead? For if the first roots be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree was grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches, but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou will say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Detect anything there? Well because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith, be not high minded but fear.

For God, if God spare not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee, behold therefore the goodness and severity of God, that's quite a subject, the goodness and severity of God. On them which fail severity, but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness, otherwise thou also shall be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them

in again.

For if thou was cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and was grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise, there's that subject again, in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, which hasn't happened yet. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the Father's sakes, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God had concluded them in all an unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. And he goes into praising God here.

What's going on in this passage is he says you're in by grace. And don't get proud. Don't boast.

And there's all kinds of pride that goes around sometimes in the believer's lives. And he says you better fear. And if you don't think that this isn't possible, it is because it's happening in our country.

The grace of God has almost moved off of our country. It happened that in Revelation 2, 5, he said, I'll remove thy candlestick. And as I walked among those seven churches and I lived there, you could see the evidences of the blessing of God and the blasting.

Even Laodicea there, nothing grew in that area. It was like somebody sterilized it. He had so spewed them out of his mouth.

And so he's saying, lest I spare not thee. He's saying you can lose the glory of God. I don't think he's talking about their losing their salvation at all.

But he's saying you can fall from God's favor by your pride. And so he's addressing a pretty serious subject. And he said the Jews had got to the point to where they thought and they were God's chosen people.

But they thought because they were God's chosen people, they were some kind of elite. And they could get along without God. They could get along without God's word.

And of course, the fact of it was their independence of God led them into a lot of trouble. The church today is right where Israel was. We have become, as a professing body of believers, independent of God.

We're making excuses for our unproductivity. We have programs designed to try to shore us up, prop up programs to make us look like we are progressive, to make it look like we are successful, that we are spiritual. And I was thinking back 25 years ago when I was doing some traveling around the country and God had really tuned me up.

He had really tuned me up. He had shaken me and dealt with me with my bitterness. And so I started going around the country and that's when I asked God to teach me about churches.

And so for those few years, just really a couple, that I was really in on that, maybe up to three years on doing some of it. But God really opened up my eyes to see a lot in this area. And just by keeping my mouth shut and listening.

Now, it's very difficult to see this area of spiritual pride, which is what we're going to cover. In this passage that I just read, he said in verse 22 about continuing, he's speaking of a position and a relationship that they were to continue in the spirit and in humility and they would not continue in pride, any kind of it. And so he's speaking about the fact that Israel had grown independent of God and they got into the problems.

He said, as a matter of fact, he covered back down in there in that verse, he said three things about God. There was his goodness, there was his severity, and there was his ability. He said God is able to bring them back in.

In verse 23, for God is able to graft them in again. And he said he is going to do that. And he says, don't be wise in your own conceits, thinking oneself to be prudent.

Years ago, there was a preacher in my neck of the woods down in the south down there in Louisiana, who really had a large following. But he got into a moral sin and he fell. He had a big fall, as happens, while he's preaching.

He was doing that. And here's a statement he said, he said, he said, I never lost the feeling of the love of God, but I lost the consciousness of the fear of God. Be sure your sins will follow you out or they'll catch you.

Be sure your sin will find you. Now, when I go back over and come back along this way, and I want to cover some things. I don't know how long I go.

Maybe somebody might get their blessing in two hours. I don't know. This subject started looking at Jesus in Isaiah 11, where he said that the fear of the Lord would make him of quick understanding.

He had those seven characteristics of the spirit on him and the spirit of the Lord. We had, we'd looked at that starting this off a few weeks ago and shall make him a quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. And that's when I began to ask God, what does that, what does that mean? And that meant basically that he would live in such a holy reverence of the father all his days.

He would have such a holy reverence of the father that he would do nothing that would displease his father. Basically what that meant that his life would be a well pleasing aroma. That's basically where the Hebrew went.

It would be an aroma of pleasure to God. I don't have time to go back into that. And even the wisest man in the world concluded everything that he said with these words, that is here the conclusion of the whole matter.

Fear God, keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of God. It is the duty of a believer to fear God. For God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

I'm not looking forward to judgment day. Maybe you are. Maybe you feel like you're going to pop in there and be squeaky clean.

But if you've ever had God show up all of a sudden and open up your heart and show you what's there and it doesn't scare you to death, you probably really haven't had an encounter with God. This proud, arrogant spirit. Now let's go into this a little bit.

Spurgeon said this. For you young people, he's told us as parents that we should all the time be trying to win you and make Christ attractive, bidding you to come to Jesus, basically, and putting this into my own words. And they were not to try to push you away and basically many times that we can do that with legalism or with harshness because we want you to come along.

We will put hedges around you and you will feel like those hedges are barriers to keep you from being free, but actually fences are for safety. And so you'll try to climb over the fence and go find out and then you get snake bit and many get destroyed. It is a dangerous world spiritually out here.

It's just by the grace of God that us parents that we are here in the position and in the fact that we're in because of the evil that is out there. But he said we must get them away apart from toys and sports and try to occupy their minds with better pursuits. So I preach and Spurgeon preached it too, see.

We must drive at the main points always and what is the main point, Mr. Spurgeon? Here it is. And keep the fear of the Lord ever uppermost in our teachings for we cannot well teach them while their minds are full of other things. And so if you hear us parents grumbling and mumbling and groaning and complaining and stuff about you wasting your time, it's because when you're wasting your time, you're on the devil's turf.

You're there. When you're putting your mind into areas that will not promote godliness and spiritual strength then that's the problem. Now I've got some principles and I'm going to give you a copy of these when I'm done from Jonathan Edwards.

As we go through, I'm going to stop and I'm going to give you a principle. I'm going to give you the first one right now about this thing of humility of mind, not to be high-minded. He said the first and worst cause of errors that abound in our day and age is spiritual pride.

This is the main door by which the devil comes into the hearts of those who are zealous for the advancement of Christ. It is the chief inlet of smoke from the bottomless pit to darken the mind and mislead the judgment. And I'll tell you what, this is true.

I have gone off down the by-path and gone through this path. It is a horrible place to be, to where you think you are spiritual, you think you are and you're actually in pride. I was working with an evangelist a number of years ago, there were several of us working with him and he got off into this, traveling from coast to coast and I was a part of the team working with him and he drew one of the elder's other men with him and it took another evangelist to come in and work with us and try to corral him back in.

And the first one to get caught was our friend traveling with him and when he saw what was going on he was so ashamed and so humbled and so broke and crushed that he got carried along with this, it literally almost just broke him to pieces. He was so embarrassed that he got carried along with this and it took God Himself to get the evangelist straightened out because he told us we needed to be moving on. It was a horrible, horrible experience to get into these things.

"...Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded." 2 Timothy 3, 4, "...Traitors, heady, high-minded. Spiritual pride is a sin of a very high damned of all natures." Bunyan had said, Edwards said

the second principle, he said, "...Pride is the main handle by which he has hold of Christian persons." This is the main handle that the devil can get a hold of us, Christian persons, and the chief source of all the mischief that he introduces to clog and hinder a work of God. "...Spiritual pride is the main spring or at least the main support of all other errors until this disease is cured, medicines are applied in vain to heal all other diseases." I've got a list back here that I made of a few areas of this pride.

I've got ten of them and I might come back and go through some of these. One of these is the last one I did is the pride of doctrine. Makes you proud.

If it makes you proud, then there's something wrong. The doctrine might be good, but the fact that you're proud of it. I remember one time, this just really hit me, and I'm still thinking about it, and maybe you can think about it.

I'm not sure I know completely what to think about it, but somebody had come up and they were so proud that they were one of the elect. I don't know, something just sort of hit me funny about that. I said, I don't know about this.

I think it should work the other way. It should break us and humble us that God would choose us and save us. It's just really strange how this thing works.

Spiritual pride, then, he says, is a sin of a very high, damnable nature. It was a sin of Satan. It was a sin of the fallen angels.

It was a sin of great damage. It's a sin of great damage in a leader, and this is why the qualifications not to be a novice has to be lifted up into pride and have the condemnation of the devil. It's really bad, he said.

It's the thing that destroys spiritual life. Another principle, a third principle, Edwards said, it is by spiritual pride that the mind defends and justifies itself in other errors. It can be with spiritual pride, we can get off in errors, doctrinal errors and whatever.

We're so proud that God has shown us something. We cannot be convinced by the word of God itself. It is a dangerous area.

This is why we need each other. I need you. We need each other.

Now, I don't know if you want me to go on. Maybe we need revival. I've been thinking about this.

We probably, we should be the lowest, humblest, neediest, meekest church around. I don't know about you, but I grew up as we are the first church. We're the best church.

You're the worst church. You're the last church if you're boasting about yourself. Our boasting is always to be of the Lord.

Always of the Lord. I said, Lord, you still want me to go on? All right, let's go a little bit more. That third principle, that third principle is spiritual pride that the mind defends itself and justifies itself in other areas and defends itself against light by which it might be corrected and reclaimed.

The spiritually proud man thinks he is full of light already and feels that he does not need instruction, so he is ready to ignore the offer of it. And usually, we will hedge ourself off from everybody else. I just talked to a young man.

He just left the church within the last couple of weeks. And they felt like they were the only church in their little group. I said, brother, you do need to get out of there.

You do need to get out of there. We are not superior to other churches. We're all in the body of Christ.

We may have different things than they and whatever, but we are needed. And so that third principle is a powerful one. Now, let's get into this.

That's just introductory stuff. What is this thing called humility of mind? I'm going to cover five things, five things about this. It is, first of all, our spiritual clothing.

It is our spiritual clothing. Let's go to 1 Peter chapter 5. It would not be fair, I don't think, to God for us to cover this subject without seeing some of the strongest stuff that God has said about it. Your old man, your old nature doesn't have anything of itself that's any good.

It's just full of pride. It's full of corruption. And the worst of the worst is pride.

And so God comes along in 1 Peter 5 and verse 4, He says, And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, be clothed with self.

You know, that's what's being pushed a lot today, self-pushing programs. He says, No, that's a heretical type teaching, be clothed with humility. For God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.

Has it not seemed incredible to you? How so many people can profess to be Christians and live ungodly. This is a topic that we talk about when I go after these revival conferences with the speakers and the advantages. It's such a proportional problem in the churches.

There's so much ungodliness, even among leaders claiming to be Christians, yet they've got things in their life. They will go live in their home and be shocked at how they live. But yet they will be a leader, professing to be a leader in our conclusion.

That's why we're writing this track on this subject, as many of them are not saved. Those in the church will come up to be professors of Christ. But yet when close interrogation is made of their life, which they don't like, they've got something else.

They've got a testimony. Your testimony is what has happened to you by Christ, what is happening to you right now by Christ, and what will happen to you in the future by Christ. But it's Christ, it's not about yourself.

So he says, Be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble. Humble yourselves therefore unto the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. And you know what we do? If we cannot get exalted, if we cannot get pushed up to the position that we think that we deserve, if we cannot get what we want, we'll do it ourself.

And if we have to trample over somebody, if we have to neglect our family, put aside things that are really important to get what we feel like we deserve, we'll do it. I've got a lot of little stories in this area, and I've shared a lot of them with you. And I've got a lot of these things I'm not proud of myself.

And God is using this week to, that's why I didn't want to preach it, because I've had so much failure in this area. I even confessed to my family, I've been struggling with a fear the last few weeks. I've been struggling with a fear, which is sin.

And God has taken me to show me the root of this in the last day, that this root is pride also. It's a fear of finances, not having the finances. I've been buying Keith Daniels airline tickets, and I've been getting worried, because I've been charging lots of money, and I don't happen to have that type of lifestyle.

But it's just God has shown me fear, because I've done it every year. But this year, there's just not that there to back it up. It would be backed up.

But it was fear, and its root is pride. Now, let's look at this humility of mine. It's our spiritual clothing in Christ.

He says, six, humble yourselves, therefore, into the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him, for he cares for you. There's my sin. I've confessed it to you too.

Now let me share another principle with you, before we go into this. It's 1 Peter 5, 5. This is the fourth principle. On the other hand, the humble person is like a little child who easily receives instruction.

He is cautious in his estimate of himself, sensitive as to how liable he is to go astray. If it is suggested to him that he is going astray, he is most ready to check into the matter. But on the other hand, if we have spiritual pride, we will be very resistant to one of the evidences of it.

I've been there and can be there, very resistant. But on the other hand, he's saying humility is very open to suggestion. Oswald Chambers said, the great characteristic of a saint is humility.

How is this so, that it is the great characteristic of a saint? Bunyan has six suggestions. Would you like them? You're always open to get my notes afterwards, by the way. He says, number one, be afraid of self.

Be afraid of self. The most terrifying person that you should be afraid of is yourself. Two, be afraid of your own naughty heart.

His words. Three, be afraid lest the devil get advantage of you. Paul said he wasn't ignorant of his devices.

Number four, be afraid of forgetting what we are by nature. Number five, be afraid of forgetting our need of continual, our need of continual need of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit for support, for supply, for pardon, for bringing conviction in our life so we can get pardon for that sin. And six, he said, be afraid of forgetting that our abilities are from God.

That's a good one, isn't it? If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. If any man minister, let him do it as the ability that God gives. 1 Peter 4, 11.

It's God that gives you that ability. There's a sixth principle from Edwards. If spiritual pride is healed, other things are easily corrected.

Could it be that we're just putting band-aids all over the place? And God is saying, let's just go ahead and have major surgery and get down to the root of all these little areas in your life you're struggling with and look and see if there's spiritual pride there. And so, our first care should be to correct the heart and pull the beam of pride out of our eye, and then we shall see clearly. Spiritual pride affects our eyesight.

B, first A, it's our spiritual clothing, and then B, it's our spiritual guidance. And I don't think we need to say a lot on this. The psalmist said, the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way.

And I say, then, of course, obviously, if we have spiritual pride, we are really not open to God's guidance. And if He does guide us, we're probably very likely to argue about the wisdom of what He is doing, where He is leading us, and that's why we will mumble and grumble and get angry and get upset and all these other things, because we're proud. Who am I to have this happen to me? Don't you know who I am? God says, yes, I know who you are.

That's why I'm letting this happen to you. You think you're a somebody, and I just need you to understand you're a nobody. And I can use nobodies, but all these somebodies are out there pushing themselves.

He says, I can't really use them. Go back, if you go through Proverbs on this subject on the fear of God, it's an amazing study just to go through there, and how much wisdom is promised along with the fear of God. Here is a seventh principle, which he titles, Growing Christians Beware, and I have copies of all this for you after I'm done.

But if I don't get done today, I don't know if I want to give you all these copies, but I might. Seven, those who are most zealous, and listen to this one, those who are most zealous in the cause of God are the most likely to be targeted as being filled with pride. In other words, he's saying if you are very zealous for God, very humble in your heart, and very sincerely seeking God, and searching for Him, and being used by Him, you're going to become a target, and you're going to be accused of pride.

But know if that does happen, the one that is accusing you is the one that has the problem, because this is an age-old problem. We like to lift ourself up by looking at the faults of others, but a humble person is not going to do that. When any person, he goes on, appears in any respect to be noticeably excelling others in his Christian walk, odds are ten to one that it will immediately awaken the jealousy of those about him.

Spiritually pride people become envious, because you've got something they'd really like to have. There's a little ananiasis fire they seem to pop up. Let's go another one.

C. A. Will be clothed in humility. B. It's our spiritual guidance. Not going to spend a lot of time on that one.

C. It's our spiritual knowledge. The fear of God in our life produces this humility of mind, and it becomes our strength in the Word. Because the Bible says, the fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.

Before honor is humility. Number eight on the principles, Edwards said, they will suspect whether they have good reason or not, that he is very proud of his goodness, and that he probably thinks no one as good as he is, so that everything he says and does is observed with this prejudice. Continuing on from that seventh one, they're going to just suspect that this person that is very humble and very godly is proud, and they're proud of their goodness, and that they, it's just really bad, and does, is observed with his prejudice.

The Bible says, who can stand before envy? Who can stand before envy? If you ever come under the attack of someone that is full of envy, it will be a brutal attack. Or if you've done it, it was a brutal attack. It's a horrible thing, that area.

Number nine principle, those who are themselves cold and dead, and especially those who have never had any experience of the power of godliness on their own hearts, will easily entertain such thoughts of

the best Christians. This arises from nothing less than a secret hostility against essential and fervent holiness. We have entered into a new age of attack on other Christians.

It hadn't been around like this in years past, unless there was, back in the Puritan days, there was some stuff that went on, there was some of this letter writing and stuff, but today it's vicious, it's vicious. I even know of some that have done this, and one in particular, I really am scared of him. Because a man that doesn't have the fear of God, if you approach him about his sin, he has no fear of God to turn around and write letters about you.

And I've never had any real contact with this person, but there's been problems in letter writing, and letter writing is going on a lot. But it comes from, we had no fear of God to do this. Let me go into another area.

Another area. I'm going to put these two together. Nine, Edwards said this.

Those who are themselves cold and dead, and especially those who have never had any experience of the power of Godliness from their own hearts will easily entertain such thoughts of the best Christian. This is nine. This arises from nothing less than a secret hostility against essential and fervent holiness.

Then he goes into ten, and he says, but the zealous Christian should take heed that this does not prove a snare to him. And the devil take advantage of it to blind his eyes from beholding the true nature of his heart, and to think that because he is charged with pride wrongfully, and with an unkind spirit, that such charges are not sometimes valid. And so if it does come, he is to look and see if it is true.

But there is another danger there that can come into us, a very subtle danger, which becomes a very damning danger on us, is that all of a sudden we will jump up and defend ourself. And what's that? It's pride. Because at that point, if I've done that, and I have done that, I have taken upon myself the responsibility of God to protect me.

And God says, okay, I'm going to move over. You want to protect yourself? Go ahead. And the enemy comes roaring in.

And God finally says, you had enough? He says, vengeance is mine, vengeance is mine. I did a little study on this in the Greeks, since I'm not a real great Greek scholar, not at all. It's tough, memorizing all that.

But I did a little study. I went to one of my Greek books, my Greek, several volumes. And so I began to study on the word.

And I was a little bit surprised that this word was not used by the Greeks very much. It was a word they didn't like. We could understand that, couldn't we? Because they were very proud people.

They didn't like to use this word because the connotation was groveling, slavish. And so they are sort of, you know, proud. And so it was a word that was hardly recognized.

And he even said no Greek writer employed it before the Christian era. He said it's a fruit of the gospel, humility is a fruit of the gospel. It was there.

The Greeks had that word because it had to come from somewhere. But the gospels actually, the New Testament actually changed the word and it became something totally different. And it means depressed, low, and those type of things.

It's all in the scripture because it's let this mind be in you, which was in the mind of Christ. It's all there. He said being found in fashion of the man, he humbled himself.

So it's there and became obedient unto death. But here's what the gospel did. It took this low word that they didn't like and it changed it.

Instead of being the lowest thing there was, it became the highest spiritual quality in the spiritual life was humility. But to the Greek, it was the worst quality that could ever be inscribed to a human being. So despise they hardly would ever use it.

Isn't that interesting? Who made the change? Jesus did. Jesus did. What did he say about himself? The only things you'll find him saying about himself are these, I am meek and lowly in heart.

In other words, he's saying the highest quality of a human being is humility. You can see why maybe somebody wouldn't like to cover this subject because inside of the human heart there's a continual thinking about ourself more highly than we ought to think. And in a church, it can become a cancer.

In a heart, it can become a cancer that eventually will destroy it because the root and the source, when you're sucking on that root, comes from Satan. It's the most poisonous of poisons. Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord.

D, the next one, D. I'm not going to go into a lot of the Greek and verses and stuff, but let's go to D, the next thing. It is the one true oneness with Christ. Humility is our true oneness with Christ.

It is, humility is our oneness of Christ. Once we've lost it, we've slipped over the slippery slide of self and we have slid down the slope of self-indulgence and we have slid into the sloth of pride. We're not fellowshiping with God.

We may think that we are. So by taking this term, humility, Jesus brought about a recognition of God in his own life by being totally humble. He demonstrated his absolute dependence upon his Father.

He demonstrated something that was a characteristic that men had to learn through extreme suffering, extreme circumstances, extreme humbling to get to that point to where they would be totally dependent. Look at it. Look at it.

Why is it God is sometimes taking us through the grinder? Because he's got to grind us down to recognize that without him we can do nothing. I remember when I was memorizing that verse on a bus over in Turkey going to town and my discipler was going over that verse and I would always forget the last part. John 15, 5, I am the vine, you're the branches.

He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. What's the last part? Oh yeah, without me or without me you can do nothing. Fruit comes from Jesus and Jesus produces this humility.

Okay, this D, it's our true oneness with Christ, 11 on those principles was the last how much pride the best have in their hearts. It is the worst part of the body of sin and death, the first sin that ever entered into the universe and the last that is rooted out. It is God's most stubborn enemy.

This oneness with Christ doesn't happen if we're proud. Twelfth principle from Jonathan Edwards is this, pride is much more difficult to be discerned than any other corruption because of its very nature. That is pride is a person having too high an opinion of himself.

Is it any surprise then that a person who has too high of an opinion of himself is unaware of it. His thinking is that he thinks that the opinion he has of himself has just grounds and therefore is not too high. If the grounds of the opinion of himself crumbled, he would cease to have such an opinion.

These Puritans could put things forth in ways that really could bother you. Jesus was born and laid in a manger and we might complain because we got some kind of little inconvenience. Where does that come from? Every inconvenience, every discrepancy that comes our way, every problem, everything, we deserve it.

Who are we? Who are we to think that if our own master could be laid in a manger, could go through life being mocked and despised, Isaiah 53, rejected among men, rejected. Who are we to stand up if somebody says something about us? Who are we? I've told you this many times when Pray and Hide, that great man of prayer came from India to the Keswick conference and they didn't know him there at this convention like those in India knew him. And he was only great because he was low, humble, lived in God's presence in prayer.

And God used him mightily and when he got up to speak, he was just sort of stuttering along and getting started, slowing. Some woman in the congregation stood up and started singing a song and they sung him down. What would that have happened to you? If that had happened to you, would you have felt bad, embarrassed? Yeah, we probably would have.

You know what? He was just so happy. He just went down. He didn't speak.

He went back in the back. You know what he's doing back there? He's back there just worshiping God and loving God and praising God and thanking God. He let him experience this and the speaker come back, the moderator said, oh, Brother Hide, I'm so sorry this happened to you.

He said, it's the Lord. Let him do what he wants. Wow.

Are you humble? Would you like to preach this message? You're welcome to come up and take over. Oh, God have mercy upon us. Totally low are Jesus, totally despised and rejected among men.

Edwards said, number 13 on the principles, but because of the nature of spiritual pride, it is the most secret of all sins. And if the Spirit of God is digging today into your heart, good, because I had to go through this all week. You only got an hour or two.

That is pride is a person of having too high an opinion of himself. 13, spiritual pride is the most secret of sins. There's no other matter in which the heart is more deceitful and unsearchable, and there is no other sin in the world that men are so confident in.

The very nature of it is to work self-confidence and drive away any suspicion of any evil of that kind. There is no sin so much like the devil as this for secrecy and subtlety and appearing in great many shapes that are undetected and unsuspected. Jesus lived on the fullness of his Father's love.

He lived for the presence of God. He's up early in the morning praying with his Father. The most probably humiliating form of humiliation and humbleness is to live in prayer.

You'll never seem more weak, and it'll seem like the devil will say, you're wasting your time. Don't do that too much. But you'll never be more like Jesus than when you're totally in his presence in prayer.

That's why we don't pray. That's why we'll do things without praying about them, because we have self-sufficiency. If God hasn't hit you yet, just hang in there.

He'll probably get you. Number 14 on the principles. Spiritual pride takes many forms, and by the way, this secret, it's the most secret of all sins.

It's the hardest one to root out, and especially among leaders. The hardest guys in the country are the preachers. Hardest, hardest guys, because of all of the stuff they've gone through and the schooling and all the things, fatheads.

That's really what happened when I come out of all those years. I really thought I had a fathead, and so God knows what to do with those. And it's happened again, too, and it can happen any second.

It's a terrible thing. It is our true oneness of the Spirit of Christ. Under that, I had number one, he identified himself as a man.

Jesus identified himself as a man. How did he start off? In a manger. Think about this.

God Almighty, so holy that even he has to humble himself to look at the stars, humbled himself and came down as a man. Number two, Jesus, by living in the fear of God, changed the whole meaning of humility to the Greek and to the believer, and so what he said to us to be totally lowly and needy was to be filled with God. That's what he was teaching us.

Edward said in principle number 14, spiritual pride takes many forms and shapes, one under another and encompasses the heart like the layers of an onion. When you pull off one, there's another underneath. Therefore we have need to have the greatest watch immeasurable over our hearts and with respect to this matter and to cry most earnestly to the great searcher of our hearts for his help.

He that trusts his own heart is a fool. When we had a revival 25 years ago, this was the exact expression that was given by one of my friends, my preacher friends. He said it's like peeling off an onion.

A layer is peeled off and you shed some tears and God peels off another layer and you shed some more tears and God peels off another layer until you finally get down to the very root. If God hasn't broke your heart over your heart, what's wrong? I mean the most godly man in the world, when God took him through the crusher and he comes out and he says I am vowed, God got to his heart finally. His job really never did understand and he's there defending himself from his supposedly would be friends and everything.

You know I was thinking that someday I would like to go through Job. I think that would be a most interesting study to go through. It might be a little bit like going through this, I don't know.

But two, Jesus by living in the fear of God, he changed the whole meaning of humility to the Greek mind. They didn't know what to do with him and this is what will happen to you. Don't think it's strange considering the fiery trial, but if you become more like Jesus, there's going to be some stuff come your way.

A number of years ago, I picked up a man, we went to a conference and the man was totally shook. He was totally shaken. He was really shocked and shocked and he poured out his heart how him and his family had been thrown out of the church.

They came to him and said, would you get out of our church? Would you leave? I said, what was the problem? He says, the problem was we were just too godly. Has that ever happened to you? Pray God it would. First hour.

Have you ever read, have you ever read and really studied it out, this passage of scripture? Have you ever really looked at this? Two men went up into the temple in Luke 18 to pray. The one a Pharisee and the other a Republican. When you go to pray, which are you? Which am I? The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Republican.

I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I possess and he never gave anything because the tithe is God's. Anything beyond that is giving.

If you keep the tithe, you're a thief, it's God's. And the Republican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other for everyone that exalted himself shall be abased and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

The way up is the way down. We need to be like the Nile River, we need to run low. To get to the Mount Everest of Christianity, we must go to the lowest valley of humiliation.

We must do it. Joseph had to do it 17 years, Moses had to do it 40 years, David had to do it a number of years, Job had to do it, Peter had to do it, Paul had to do it. Be careful how you pray because back in 1988, I asked God to teach me about the humility of Christ.

And I've told several people at different times in the conversation to be fitting, don't ever pray that prayer unless you really want to have it answered. Be careful, be careful. Well, 15, since spiritual pride in its own nature is so secret, it cannot be so well discerned by immediate intuition on the thing itself.

It is best identified by its fruits and effects, some of which I will make mention of below together with the contrary fruits of Christian humility. And he's going to go into the category now, and maybe, I don't know, we ought to maybe take a break, but it's the category of being the great fault finder. Have you ever been a fault finder? One time a man came to me, he had four pages of all my faults.

Hey, brother, you don't have enough pages there, you need to go get a book. He then lined himself up to be a follower of me and all my faults, and no doubt, they were probably all legitimate. I had these little things going, the third one there, that first one was he identified himself as a man off of D, our oneness with Christ, two, Jesus by living in the fear of God changed the whole meaning of humility, but three, the fear of God produces true humility because the fear of God produces no confidence in self.

Only Holy Spirit can produce this fruit, by the way. It's one of the fruits, Galatians 2, 22, 23, of meekness. Number 16, spiritual pride causes one to speak of other people's sins, their enmity against God and his people, or with laughter and levity and an air of contempt, while pure Christian humility disposes either to be silent about them or to speak of them with grief or pity.

And it should be a grief in our heart to have to mention the faults of another. We should do that with fear, but sometimes we have to because of the nature of our, as a body. A body has to come around at some point and say, there's a cancer in the arm, and it grieves me to have to say this, but we've got to minister to our arm.

Galatians 6, 1, ye which are spiritual, what's it say? Galatians 6, 1. I remember, I've never forgotten, I've probably shared this story a lot of times, about a group of men in a church. They were sitting around, and the pastor was going around about a brother that had got into sin. Can you remember that story? They were going around about this brother, and he asked him, what would you do? What do you think about this? And each one of them, they had some kind of negative thing, but they wouldn't have done that.

I think we need to do this to him. And he finally comes around to one man sitting there with his head bowed, and he said, pastor, if it wasn't for the grace of God, I would have done that. I would be there too.

And he said, you come with me. We're going to go to our brother. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, who is that? What is spirituality? The fear of God produces true humility.

Restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Would we not fear to live without it? Edwards said, number 17, the spiritually proud person shows it in his fault, his finding fault with other saints. They are low in grace and low cold, and how cold and dead they are, the spiritually proud, and are quick to discern and take notice of their deficiencies, the deficiencies of the humble.

The enmity, the eminently humble Christian has so much to do at home and see so much evil in his own that he is not apt to be very busy with other hearts. Oh, God have mercy on us. 18, he says, this humble person, he complains most of himself, complains most of his own coldness and lowness in grace.

He is apt to esteem others better than himself and ready to hope that most everybody has more love and thankfulness to God than he, and cannot bear to think that others should bring forth no more fruit to God's honor than he. Thayer, a Greek scholar, said, humility, quote, is not rising far from the ground, lowly in spirit. Have you ever noticed what Ephesians said in 4, 2, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering and forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, in the bond of love, forbearing one another in love, in lowliness and meekness? We as a nation, our nation is just reflecting the professing church, so if we condemn it, we just have to condemn ourselves.

Let me ask you a question. Why did God, out of all the young virgins in Israel, choose Mary? For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. Very simple.

You know what? You ought to praise God and I should praise God for any opportunity that's brought into my life to humble me because it says in the scriptures in Acts 8, 32-33, in his humiliation his judgment was taken away. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away. Micah 6, 7 and 8, he has showed thee, O man, what is good and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.

God does want to fellowship with you. He does want to walk with you. He does desire your fellowship.

He craves your presence. He wants to enjoy you and you to enjoy him. This is what it's all about.

If you're not doing it now, this is why so many people say they're Christians and they have no enjoyment of God, they live in sin and they think they're going to die one moment and pop into God's presence and start loving him. They're going to go to hell and we as Christians have an obligation not to encourage them in their sin but to tell them, no, you're not saved if you live like that. It's wickedness and it's being taught and encouraged and the denomination I was brought in, it's encouraged and it's wickedness in our land and it's destroying the church to where the believers, the true believers have to come out.

Listen, we had the privilege of being in the presence of a man that God has greatly humbled and taken through many, many trials and tribulations. Last year, a little over a year ago, Gregory Frizzell, and he has a book, and in this book Iceberg, talking about Iceberg dead ahead, he said reverential fear of God, respect for Christ's church, belief in the Bible in regard for Christians has plummeted to shockingly low levels, vast percentages no longer have any real sense of sin's accountability to the holy God who judges all wickedness. They fear neither sin's consequences nor God's righteous judgment.

He said today, the reverential fear of God in Scripture has dramatically declined in many of the nation's churches. In society at large, irreverence has become even far worse. There's no fear of God before your eyes.

Current patterns reflect an unmitigated collapse of reverence for God and belief in the literal truth of Scripture. In just one generation, Christians have gone from having fairly strong public esteem to being virtually the only group, and it is fashionable to slander in the mock. And then he says this, people who seriously believe in biblical authority and Christian values are now viewed as the fringe and radical right.

Now listen to this statement. When the church no longer fears God, society no longer respects or listens to the church. So get ready.

Unless we see an awakening, a major awakening revival, we are lined up for some stuff. Believers, what time is it? He said it is time to return to reverential fear of the holy God of Scripture. This will not be preached in most of our churches.

Humility of mind. The last one I have, E. It is our spiritual reality. The fear of God has the fruit of humility.

Humility is spiritual reality. That's real spirituality. I have a lot of fear for a lot of my relatives that profess Christ.

It bothers me. Just my relatives. I won't talk about yours.

You can talk about yours. But it just causes me to tremble when I get in the Word. Humility, holiness, joy in the Lord.

Are you humble? Are you pursuing the Lord? Are you rejoicing in Christ? Do you live to honor Him? Let me close up with these things. And it's a long runway. So maybe a while before we get there.

But I want to cover. I want to go ahead and finish. Humility of mind.

First, what it is not. We've been going through all these things. It is not to be high-minded.

Lifted up with pride in all these things. But let me slip back over here. I don't know if I go over here or not.

But I am. And let's just go into this. Humility of mind.

Let's just dig in there if we can go a little deeper. I don't even know where I left off on these principles. What was the last number? Eighteen.

Nineteen. Nineteenth principle. Some who have spiritual pride mixed with great learning and joy, earnestly speaking to others about them, are likely to be calling upon other Christians to emulate them and sharply reproved them for their being so cold and lifeless in responding to them.

Don't you know? I am something. Listen to me. Follow me.

A preacher one time said to somebody in their church, don't worry about what Scripture says. You just do what I say. At that point, it was time to move out.

It was time to move out. Okay, what it's not. It's not being self-focused.

It's not being conceited. It's not being ungrateful. These are the things that Paul was dealing with in Romans 11.

Let me give you an illustration of humility. Remember when David was being chased out of his own castle by his own son? And on top of that, there's this rascal over there on the side of the road throwing dust and rocks on the king by the name of Shimeon. And David just happened to have his mighty men with him.

I mean, they could flick off a fly with a stone at 100 yards. They were so good. I don't know if that's really true, 100 yards is a long way, but you wouldn't want to mess with them.

They were good. They could probably cut your head off so fast you'd be sitting there wondering what happened. But one of them said, Oh, king, can I just go over there and relieve this guy of his head? Can I go over there and fix him up? David just said, Yeah, go ahead.

I don't like this dust, and I don't think there's any showers in the hotel where we're going to be tonight. But no, what'd he say? He said, You leave him alone, because God has allowed him to do that. You go to the Scriptures.

You can go to 2 Tamils 16, 5 through 8. God has bidden him to do that. And I'll never forget what a preacher said one time. He said, No Shimei can hurt you, but your attitude towards him can kill you.

Right there was a test. His own son running him out of the temple, and then Shimei to do that, and David to say, Oh no, leave him alone. God has allowed him to do it.

No, Shimei can hurt you, but your attitude towards him can help you. And your attitude will reveal your spiritual position. You see, God was taking him through all of this to prepare him for things down the road.

And also some of the things he experienced, he was reaping the consequences. Let me go through another principle here. Number 20, there are others who are overwhelmed with their own vileness, and when they have extraordinary discoveries of God's glory, they are taken up by their own sinfulness, though they are disposed to speak much and very earnestly, yet it is very much in blaming themselves and exhorting fellow Christians, but in a loving and humble manner.

What do you see in here? There are those that are going to go through these excruciating painful experiences, and they're going to come to see their own vileness as Job. They're going to have an extraordinary view, though at the same time, of God, like Job. Have an extraordinary discovery of God's glory.

Have you ever wanted to get closer to God? Wanted to get to know him more? This is what he's doing. He's helping us get closer. Because he can only let us come so close because of our own vileness, so he has to help us to get closer.

What is humility of mind? It's the product of the fear of God. It's living low. I think I'll just slip on through some things here.

I'm going to give you the rest of these. I was up to 20, and there's a lot more. I'm going to give you the copy.

I'm going to just go through some things here and close down. But I made a list here. I'm closing down.

I have some prides, and you can list your own. Pride of performance. Pharisees and publicans, Luke 17, 9. Pride of performance.

Ever seen a Christian proud of their performance? Sort of nauseating. How about pride of possessions? The rich farmer. Are you proud of your possessions? We can struggle.

I have to struggle with that. I find my hammer out in the woods all rusty. I'm so proud of that hammer.

You know, proud of appearance. I went through a lot of that being raised up. Do you know what I would do? Dad had a nice Oldsmobile, and when he took me to school, I'm in high school, he would drop me off right at the front door.

My friends are standing over there, and I'll hop out of the nice Oldsmobile. But if he wanted to take me to school in the old beat-up 54 Chevy, I'd have him stop a block before school. I didn't think I did that.

Yeah, I needed the exercise. I knew you'd get it right. You don't do anything like that, do you? This is just a tune-up.

Pride of position. This is Satan, proud of his position. Same thing like Mordecai.

You can tell if somebody's proud of their position, you just try to take it away from them. Pride of heritage. There's Paul, Pharisee of Pharisees, Benjaminite, all that side.

Pride of pedigree. Pride of ability. You know, I wonder if Moses, after 40 years, didn't have it all put together.

He had been put there by God, the basket and the river and everything, and now he had all the ability, he had the position and everything, and he was going to lead Israel to freedom. There's only one problem. God wasn't going to do it that way.

He wasn't going to do it with Moses having ability. And so Moses had to be tuned up before he was ready. Pride of power.

About the power. Of course, so Nebuchadnezzar, but when his heart was lifted up in pride, he was disposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. Pride of admiration.

Jude 16 has some interesting things. I don't know if I marked this, so it may take me a little bit to get back there. But Jude 16 says, These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouths speak in great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

Men's persons because of advantage. Well, Andrew Murray said, The highest lesson a believer has to learn is humility. Oh, that every Christian who seeks to advance in holiness may remember this well.

There may be intense consecration and fervent zeal and heavenly experience, and yet, if it is not preceded by dealings of the Lord in your life, not preceded by dealings of the Lord, there may be an unconscious self-exaltation with it all. Let us learn the lesson. The highest holiness is the deepest humility.

The highest holiness is the deepest humility. And let us remember that it comes not of itself, but only as it is made a matter of special dealing on the part of our faithful Lord and His faithful servant. Let Him have His way with you.

The reason God could use George Washington Carver was because he was born low, and he lived low, and he stayed low. And God could use him. Yesterday morning, I was sitting, looking out, watching the sparrows try to get into the barn.

The barn was all shut up, and they're circling around, and they're trying to get in. Down at the bottom of the door had a space big enough where they could get in. And they fly, and I counted 15 of them one time.

I don't like them in there. They're messy and everything. But finally, one of them figured out if he flew down low enough, he could get in.

Is God trying to get you to fly low? And me? So we can get in? I'm going to close up with a prayer by Murray. And it's this. O Father, that of Your great goodness You would make known to us and take from our heart every kind and form and degree of pride.

Father, that You would do this, whether it be from evil spirits or our own corrupt nature, and that You would awaken in us the deepest debt and truth of that humility which can make us capable of Your light and Your Holy Spirit in Jesus' name. Amen. God bless you.

And I have a copy of all these principles. There are 35 all together that I've got it for all of you to have if you'd like to have one. And if God has spoke to you and you need to spend some time with Him, go ahead and do that.

Jeff, I'll put these copies up here in the front. You can get one afterwards. There's at least one to a family.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/W0Q0IIBwdhY.mp4>
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