

Why God Hates Pride

by Harold Vaughan

Pride is the central sin of humanity and the Roadblock to Revival, and it must be overcome through humility and a willingness to seek God's face.

Duration: 1:07:19

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 40:3, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 10:5, Ephesians 6:12, Colossians 3:13, 1 Timothy 4:13, James 4:7

Topics: "Pride"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Joe encourages listeners to humble themselves before God and confess their sins. He emphasizes the importance of being honest and open with God, acknowledging our pride and shortcomings. He shares a personal story about a friend who taught him the importance of waiting for God's timing and not taking matters into our own hands. The sermon concludes with a reminder that we will be held accountable for our own actions and that we should focus on our own relationship with God rather than criticizing others.

Transcript

I certainly have enjoyed the music here at this church. It's been a great blessing to just be with you. I remember meeting Pastor Joe and some of you dear folks at family camp a couple of years ago, and it sure was a blessing to get to know you.

And I felt like an old brother to Joe my whole life. He's one of those guys where we kind of had a kindred spirit and appreciate his heart and appreciate the opportunity to be here with you in these days. A few things that might be of interest to you, we have a little table back here in the back, and I think Ruth's going to be helping us with that.

And on there you'll find this little handout called When Do We Need Revival? Fifty Evidences of the Need for a Fresh Visitation of the Spirit and Revival. This will be a good little tool. It's just kind of short, kind of brief here.

It'll be a good little tool for you tonight, and when you get home to gather the family around and just read through this and then have a little season of prayer. That might be more encouraging than looking at the results from the sports events of the day. So you might want to gather around together tonight, have a little family time.

I think it'd be a blessing to you. Pastor Joe also wanted me to mention some of the things on the table, so I'll just take a moment to do that. We publish books because, you know, you'll be the same person you are five years from now other than the books you read and the people you meet.

It's the inspiration and information you come in contact with that will have an effect of change upon your life. So we publish books, and here's one by Prayer Secrets by Guy H. King, the old Keswick speaker. Now the cover's not much, but the ingredients are excellent.

Prayer Secrets. Here's one, What Does It Mean to be Crucified with Christ? If you've ever wondered how come your old man doesn't feel crucified most of the time, you ought to check this book out right here. Here's one, Thoughts for Young Men by J.C. Ryle.

Excellent for young men, middle-aged men, older men, especially men and their sons. Thoughts for Young Men. Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God by Jonathan Edwards, the most famous sermon ever preached.

The Price and Power of Revival by Duncan Campbell, a man who saw extraordinary things. The Principles of Spiritual Growth by Miles Stanford. A classic.

It ought to be mandatory reading on what it means to be in Christ. You're either in Adam or in Christ. And if you're in Christ, you're richer than you think.

And brother, this is a classic. It'll stir your heart up. Here's one, Lord Help Me Not to Have These Evil Thoughts.

Something about the battle for the mind, spiritual warfare. Forgiveness, how to get along with everybody all the time. Keep your seats.

Don't run out to purchase this until after service. T.P. Johnson and I wrote this book, and the half that T.P. wrote is really good. So you ought to get it.

It's tremendous. And then The Nature of a God-Sent Revival by Duncan Campbell. And then a Scripture memory program called Overcoming Bad Habits.

And it's all ten. Blue Light Special. Blue Light Special.

All in one little package here. You get all ten. Keep the nine for your library.

Give the bad habits to somebody that needs it. And everybody will be happy. And everybody will benefit.

So there's all kinds of things out there that might be of interest to you. Now I want to speak tonight to you on the subject of what I'm calling The Roadblock to Revival. The Roadblock to Revival.

And we're just going to cut to the chase and get down to the bottom line issue. You say, well, Brother Harold, are you going to be speaking on hatred and bitterness? No. Are you going to speak on rebellion? No.

Are you going to speak on disobedience? No. Stubbornness? No. Are you going to speak on hypocrisy? Gossip? Ungratefulness? No.

Are you going to be speaking on disunity? No. Are you going to speak on prayerlessness? No, I'm not going to speak on prayerlessness. I'm going to speak on the Roadblock to Revival.

Now all of these sins that I just mentioned are the effect of the Roadblock, but the Roadblock itself is pride. All of these sins are the fruit, but pride is that diabolical root. Do you realize that pride is the central sin of humanity? And I want to tell you that nothing breeds antagonism in the heart of God like the sin of pride.

It was pride that changed angels into devils. It was pride that cast Adam and Eve from paradise. And there is no spirit in man more opposed to the Spirit of God than the spirit of pride.

I want to tell you, it is a deadly thing. It's the greatest enemy of the child of God. And it's a great danger for the Christian.

You know, if you're having success, pride would put in your heart that you're the cause of it. And if you're not having success, then pride would put it in your heart that you deserve better. I want to tell you, whether in poverty or in prosperity, whether in feast or in famine, no matter what condition you're in, pride is your greatest adversary.

One of the old Puritans said that there's only two safe places for a Christian. Only two safe places. And that is in heaven and in the dust.

And of the two, the dust is safer because Satan fell from heaven. Two Corinthians in your Bible, or two Chronicles rather, chapter 7, verse 14. Most of you know this text from memory.

And if you know it, don't even look it up. We'll quote it here in just a moment. This is a very common text with a very uncommon application perhaps.

A very familiar text to most of us, but perhaps a very unfamiliar application this evening. Now I understand that in context that 2 Chronicles 7 was written to God's covenant people, Israel. I understand that.

But I believe there's an application for us because all the Word of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. I do not believe that we can work up revival, but I do believe we can prepare the way of the Lord. And I believe we need to be about preparing the way of the Lord.

2 Chronicles 7, verse 14. Let's just stand and quote or read aloud this verse together as a congregation tonight. 2 Chronicles 7, verse 14.

Out loud together please. If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now before we pray, notice what he's saying.

If my people. He was not addressing the Philistines, the pagan, the idolaters. He was talking to his crowd.

If my people, which are called by my name. You know, I think it's time that rather than having the finger pointed out, maybe it's high time we had the finger of God point toward us. If my people.

That's us. Revival does not start with the people farthest from God. It starts with the people nearest to God.

Revival doesn't start with the Sunday morning crowd. It starts with the prayer meeting crowd. Because it doesn't start with those that are farthest from God.

It always starts with those that are nearest to God. And he said, if my people, which are called by my name, will do certain things, God said he would turn around and bless in an incredible way. A moment of prayer together tonight, please.

Our Father, in Christ's name, would you speak a word. Would you speak a word tonight to our hearts. Lord, may there be a word of healing tonight.

May there be a word of health tonight. May there be a word of hope tonight for hearts. God, feed us tonight.

Lord, speak to us tonight. We give you permission to speak to our souls. Thank you for what you're going to say.

In Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated.

You know, tonight I believe not only is every word of this Bible inspired by God, I even believe the order of the words are inspired by God with a design in mind. And he said, if my people, which are called by my name, will do certain things, he said that he would bless in an unbelievable way. Notice the first thing on the lineup.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall, number one, humble themselves. Hey, why do you suppose that humility precedes prayer? Why do you think that perhaps humility precedes turning from wicked ways? Why is pride so detrimental that God said that my people must humble themselves before they can seek my face? Why is pride so detrimental? The word pride is mentioned 49 times in the King James Bible, and the word proud, 48 references, and all of them negative. Search the book from Genesis to Revelation, and you'll never find one positive comment from God concerning human pride.

Now, what is God's attitude toward the proud, and how does God feel about this business of pride? Well, look in your Bible in Proverbs chapter 6 this evening very quickly, and let's find something of God's attitude toward the proud. Proverbs chapter 6, Proverbs chapter 6 and verse 16. How does God feel about pride? Proverbs chapter 6 and verse 16.

These six things doth the Lord hate, yea, seven are an abomination unto him. Six things that God detests. Seven categories of persons and things that Almighty God despises.

You know, Ray Stevens wrote that song, Everything is beautiful in its own way. What I'm going to tell you is that's not true. Not everything is alike to God.

God does not feel the same way about everything. God does not feel the same way about everybody, according to these verses. Now, notice seven things that God hates tonight in verse 17.

The very first one, a proud look. Read on, you'll find that God hates a lying tongue. He hates hands that shed innocent blood.

God hates a false witness that speaks lies. God hates those that sow discord among the brethren. God hates a heart that devises wicked imaginations, and feet that are swift in running to mischief.

Seven things tonight that God hates, but the very first thing he lists is God hates a proud heart. God hates pride. Look over in Proverbs chapter 16.

Proverbs chapter 16 and verse 5. Note God's attitude toward the proud. Proverbs 16 and verse 5. Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. Now, that's about as high a negative as you can get.

Everyone proud in heart, an abomination to the Lord. God hates pride. Look in Proverbs 21 and verse 4. Proverbs 21 and verse 4. An eye look and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is sin.

A high look and a proud heart is sin. Now, these verses, and a host of other verses, lead us to the undeniable conclusion that Almighty God is unalterably opposed to pride. He detests pride.

He abominates pride. He despises pride. He hates pride.

And we've got to ask ourselves the question, why is the high God of heaven so unalterably opposed to human pride? Tonight, I want to give you three Bible reasons why God hates pride. Three Bible reasons why God hates pride. Reason number one, God hates pride because pride is so deceitful.

God hates pride because pride is so deceitful. Obadiah 1.3, the pride of your own heart has deceived you. The pride of your own heart has deceived you.

True humility, what is it? True humility is proper thinking about God, and proper thinking about ourselves. True humility is correct thinking about God, and correct thinking about ourselves. Webster defined pride as inordinate self-esteem, or conceit.

Inordinate self-esteem. Psychologists tell us we need more. God says we have too much.

Inordinate self-esteem, conceit. Bill Gothard said pride is believing we have accomplished what God and others have accomplished in us. Trying to take credit for something we can't take any credit for.

One man said pride is the disposition to exalt myself, to get above others, to hide my defects, and to pass for more than what I really am. I want to tell you that God hates pride because it's so deceitful. It can cause church members to put on a mask of pretense and pretend to be something other than what they really are.

I have one brother, he's two years older than I, and he'd gone off to public school, and he'd gotten hold of one of those mathematic books, and he had brought it home. This particular book had triple digit subtraction and addition problems. And my brother had taken a finely honed number two pencil, and he had carefully worked out those triple digit addition and subtraction problems on the worksheet on the page there in the book.

And for some reason, he had taken the eraser, and he'd carefully erased every mark of pencil off the page. Nevertheless, my keen beady eyes could detect that impression that that number two finely honed lead pencil had made there on the page. So I took my pencil, and I carefully traced over those imprints in the page, and I worked out all the problems that my brother had worked out.

And then I took it to my mother, and I had not been to school a day in my life, and I took it to my mother and handed it to my mother. Now, you know how mothers are prone to believe the best about their children. Mothers are prejudiced, and they think that their children are all exceptional and unusual, and

they're far ahead of their age.

So when I handed my mother this math book with these problems worked out, my mother went ballistic, and she thought she had a child prodigy on her hands. Later, she found out she had a child problem on her hands. But, you know, she thought this is amazing, absolutely amazing.

Now, dear people, here I was pretending to be something other than what I really was. And you know pride can cause us to put on a front and to pretend to be something other than what we really are. Isn't it wonderful tonight that you don't have to pretend with God? If you're converted tonight, you've got nobody to impress.

You only have somebody to please. And the way you please God is by being real, by being honest, and by being simply yourself. Roy Hanschen in his book, *The Calvary Road*, said that openness, number one, is a willingness to know the truth about myself.

A willingness to know the truth about myself from God's point of view. There's nothing anything more devastating than a good God dose of genuine self-knowledge. And he said, number two, that openness, number two, is a willingness to let other people know me like I really am.

And I want to tell you, friend, that revival begins when we pull off the mask of pretense and get rid of the fig leaves of pretense and simply get out in the open, in the light, as He is in the light. But pride is so deceitful. It can cause us to pretend to be something other than what we really are.

It's so deceitful. I'll tell you, number two, pride is so deceitful it can cause human beings to blame others for their problems. Somebody called it the blame game.

Adam blamed Eve for his sin. Eve blamed the devil for her sin. And the whole race has been following suit ever since.

Well, pastor, if it wasn't for my wife, I could live the victorious Christian life. Preacher, if it wasn't for my husband, I'll tell you, I could make a go of it for God. Pastor, if it wasn't for my parents, or preacher, if it wasn't for my children, that's kind of like the student one time that said, well, if it wasn't for my teacher, I could make it to the next grade.

They've got to be over 40 to understand that. Back in the old days, in public schools, they didn't graduate the idiots. They made them take the class over.

But it's always somebody else's fault. Now, modern counseling will tell you it's always somebody else's fault. Always somebody else's fault.

You know, let somebody spill hot coffee on themselves at McDonald's and what do they get other than third degree burns? They lose \$300,000 because McDonald's must be to blame. You know, I just heard the most recent class action suit. Now they're suing the fast food restaurants for having unhealthy food.

May I make a recommendation tonight? If you do not understand that fast food is not good for you, then perhaps you ought to stay home tomorrow because you might not make it back. You might get hurt. Friend, listen, it's not somebody else's fault that the American public weighs 400 pounds on average.

The individual might bear some responsibility. Is there an amen in the house on that point? But it's always somebody else's fault. Can I tell you tonight, we're not responsible for everything that happens to us.

Friend, you are not responsible for everything that happens to you, but you're entirely responsible for how you respond to what happens to you. And it is pride that has turned the American public into a nation of victims. Jeremy Sykes wrote a book along that line.

A nation of victims. So rather than taking responsibility for our own actions, reactions, and inactions, it's how much easier to blame circumstance or somebody. Or I got cold oatmeal when I was six, and that's why I'm a child abuser.

That's a bunch of hogwash. I want to tell you, friend, it's pride that has caused people to blame other things and other people rather than take personal responsibility. I'll tell you, number three, pride is so deceitful, it can cause us to become critical of others.

It can cause us to become critical of others. One fellow said, tell me what ticks you off, and I'll tell you what makes you tick. One fellow said, Cowper said, the hymn writer Cooper said, the proud are always most easily provoked by pride.

Ben Franklin said, the proud hate pride in others. And friend, I want to tell you, a proud man is suspicious of everybody else. He's suspicious of everybody.

You ever meet these spiritual Gestapo crowd? I mean, they're always suspicious, and they're just looking through these x-ray goggles and surveying your heart motives. And friend, I want to tell you, a proud man is suspicious of everybody else, but a humble man is more suspicious of his own heart than he is anybody else. Roy Hession tells the story about that Pharisee and the publican and the gospel that Jesus spoke of him.

And you remember this character. He was the one that stood and prayed thus with himself. He really wasn't talking to God.

He was giving himself a self-talk. He was 20 centuries ahead of himself. If he'd been alive today, he could be a famous, best-selling Christian author.

But this fellow, he stood and prayed thus with himself. Remember how he prayed? He said, Lord, I want to thank You I am not like other men. Lord, I thank You I'm not like other men, extortioners and adulterers.

And Lord, I thank You I'm not even like this publican down here beating his breast and making a spectacle out of himself. And then he went on to give his good points. Lord, You know I fast twice in the week.

I give tithes of all that I possess. Here he is just bragging it up. But the main point was, he was glad he wasn't as bad as everybody else.

Well, Hessian tells the story of a Sunday school teacher who decided to light in on the Pharisee for a Sunday school lesson and let him have it for 45 minutes. Here was a guy who was glad he was not as bad as everybody else. So she gave him down the road for about 45 minutes and the time came for the class to end.

And the Sunday school teacher said, Now students, let's bow our heads now and let's all thank the Lord that we're not like that Pharisee. How many of you think maybe she missed the whole point of that message right there? A little Pharisee in some of us? You bet. A rather large Pharisee in many of us? You better believe it, friend.

And I'll tell you something about pride. The more we have of it in our own hearts, the more we despise it in other people. You know what it says in Romans 2? Why do you judge another man for the things you judge him of? You're guilty of yourself.

Have you ever noticed that the things that bother you about other people are typically things that are true about you? Have you ever noticed that? But it's a whole lot easier to nail the other man than to admit, I'm the man. Oh, friend, I want to tell you, sometimes I preach in churches and I go out the back door and people come by and they shake my hand and they have all sorts of interesting comments. And many times they come by and they make a statement like this, Brother Harold, that was a great message.

And then they roll the R's like they're from South Africa. Harold, that was a great message. Great message.

And Brother Harold, that was a great message. They really needed that. Keep it up, man.

That was a great message. Oh, that was a great message, Brother Harold. I wish my wife would have been here.

She really needed to hear that message. I'm going to go get the tape and give it to her. I've had people say this all the time.

Oh, Brother Harold, that was a great message, man. I know some people that really needed that. I'm going to get a bunch of tapes and pass them out.

You know, when you hear preaching, if all you can do is think about who it applies to, but never realize how it applies to you, you're infected with a disease called pride. You know what revival is? It's God pointing His finger right at you. I mean, God pointing His finger right at me? When's the last time you were in a service, when you were the only person in the whole building, as far as you're concerned? I mean, every word was directed toward your heart.

Every word struck your heart. I want to tell you it's a good thing when God's talking, no matter what He's saying. But I'll tell you, when we're full of pride, we assume that, well, we're already past that point.

We've already exceeded that level of maturity, and it must be for that other crowd, that weak crowd. We are the weak crowd, friend. The only way to look down on somebody else is to think we're better than they.

And then when we're full of pride, we can spot a splinter a mile away in the other man's eye, but we can't detect a beam in our own eye when we look in the mirror of the Word of God. I'll give you a little test for pride. A little test for pride.

Can you think of anybody within a thousand miles of here that in your heart of hearts, you believe you're better than they are? Well, get real. Madison's only a couple of hundred miles up the road. Really? Oh, come on, Harold.

A lot better than those liberal politicians. Yeah? A lot better than those homosexuals. Yeah? A lot better than those streetwalkers.

Is that right? A lot better than Ole Rush. He's even a dope addict. A lot better than him.

Is that right? You know, if you ever really get a good, clear vision of the holiness of God, you'll see clearly you have the potential for every depravity known to man resident within your own heart, and by the grace of God, you'd be leading the pack when it comes to depravity. You see, this pride that causes us to become critical of other people. And I want to tell you something, friend.

God has no use for a critic. And where the devil doesn't go personally, he sends a critic. And we can't help anybody or be of use to God when we're full of criticism because we're so full of pride.

It causes us to be critical. I'll tell you number four. Pride is so deceitful, it can cause you to water down sin.

And this has become an art form, and we've got this down to a science in the United States. You know, pride will cause you to deal with what's respectable rather than what's real. Do you realize that there are respectable sins in various regions of the country? Just depends on where you're at.

I mean, what's a sin in Winston-Salem and Old Milwaukee might be two different things. It's amazing how as you go from area to area, they're acceptably regional sins. Oh, but we'll never do that.

Don't mention this. This is our sin. This is our back-door man.

Don't talk about that. I was in Las Vegas one time, and the pastor said, don't preach on gambling because we got a bunch of people that work in the casinos. So pride will cause you to deal with what's respectable rather than what's real.

Pride will cause you to deal in generalities rather than specifics, and there'll never be any revival as long as we're blame-shifting and rationalizing. One time a young man came forward in church service. He took the pastor's hand, and he said, Preacher, I came to rededicate my life to the Lord.

Pastor said, Wonderful. Why don't you get on your knees over there in front of that chair and confess your sins to God? The young man looked stunned and shocked, and he said, Well, Preacher, I can't think of anything to confess. And the pastor said, Son, just guess at it.

Just guess at it. And you know what? He hit the nail on the head on the very first try. We were in Nashville, Tennessee.

We had Roy Hesschen from England who wrote the Calvary Road. He came to be the featured speaker, the Apostle of Grace. And I want to tell you, I needed the message of grace.

I still do, but I needed it bad back in those days. And God got to working in that conference and in that church. There was a lady in the church, an older lady, that had a blind spot.

I'm not talking about an optical problem here. We're talking about a spiritual problem, a blind spot. A blind spot is something that's obvious to everybody except the person that has the problem.

Like the guy with bad breath. Everybody knows it except him. You ever run into these people that go out and eat spicy foods and they want to get up and talk about one foot away from your face? Have you ever been around these people? It seems like they all the time follow you around, man.

I mean, what is wrong with you? But they're oblivious to the fact that they're about to gag you, you know. They don't know that. Well, a blind spot is something that's obvious to everybody except the person that has it.

Now, this older woman in this church, her blind spot happened to be an abrupt, abrasive, offensive tongue. She would spout off things, offend people. They never would come back to church.

She was unaware of her affect upon others. She was oblivious to the fact of her offensive tongue. So some younger ladies in the church decided it was time to lovingly confront the older sister about the blind spot.

Now, how many of you think there's ever a time when it's appropriate for the brethren to confront us about the things we're unaware of? Is there ever a time for that? There's an appropriate way, and there's a time for that. Well, they went to the older lady. They didn't read her to the riot act.

They went in lowliness, humility, and carefully tried to lay it out before the lady and tell her about the blind spot, the offensive tongue. And when they confronted her, do you know how she responded? She said, well, that's just my personality. No doubt she had read one of the temperament books.

And, oh, well, I'm just a cleric. I'm going to mow people down. I'm just overbearing and rude, and I can't help it, and that's just the way my parents were.

That's just the way we were brought up. That's just the way we are in this part of the country. By the way, I was in Madison, Wisconsin, back earlier last fall, and we went out to a certain restaurant, and I had my four-door dually truck.

I took up four parking spaces, and when I came out, I got a nasty note on the windshield, and I said to my family, I can tell we're back in Wisconsin already because I hear they're letting us have it with all these choice words. But anyhow, anyhow, I don't know what that's got to do with the point, but they confronted the older woman. She said, well, that's just my personality.

Can't help it. It's an inherited trait. It's the way I was brought up.

God made me this way. Well, you ever read in the Bible, 1 John 1, 9, if we confess our lousy personality, God is faithful and just to forgive us for our personality and to cleanse us from all our character defects and imperfections. Listen, friend, they're probably going to come up with a Bible that says something along that line to accommodate the line of thinking that we've adopted.

Let me tell you something tonight, friend. God can't forgive personality. I met some people that ought to be forgiven for their personality, but God can't forgive personality.

God cannot forgive temperament. God cannot forgive weaknesses, mistakes, or inherited traits. The only thing God can forgive is sin.

And it's just about come down to the point now where there's a three-letter designation to excuse every wrong behavior. There's 440 psychological dysfunctions that they're now categorized, and I'm sure they're adding to them daily. Let somebody get involved in an adulterous affair, and what's the first thing that comes out of somebody's mouth? Well, they're having a midlife crisis.

I like what one guy said. He said, how can you have a midlife crisis when you have eternal life? I mean, how are you going to find halfway of that, friend? It's just impossible. I was in Maine, and the public schools were having problems.

They brought in the psychologist to diagnose the students, and they came to church that night. The principal and the teacher were in this particular church, and by the way, God really did something in that place. And they said that the psychologist diagnosed the students with a syndrome called ODD, oppositional disorder dysfunction.

They all had a case of ODD. And they came to church and told me about it, and I said, yeah, I think I was born with oppositional disorder dysfunction. I believe the Bible calls it the sin nature.

Houston, Texas, two thugs kill somebody, and the defense is urban survival syndrome. Got a case of USS. I had a fellow come down.

He was talking to me. He was counseling, and anyhow, his wife wrote me back in a couple weeks. He'd been in to a Christian, Christian for Christian counseling, and I'm not opposed to some counseling, but friend, I want to tell you something.

We need to quit listening to these Freudian flops who can quote a Bible verse at the end of some of this junk that they've read from some humanist or some pervert like Freud and then try to convince us that this is Christianity. And you know, she wrote back and said her husband had been diagnosed with intermittent explosive disorder, a case of IED, which means that he throws temper tantrums and acts like a two-year-old, and it's all because he can't help it. He's a victim of IED.

He is not. But you see, it's pride that causes us to water down the concept of sin to where nobody's responsible for a blooming thing and everything is explained away in terms of let-offs and excuses and rationalizations. I want to tell you, friend, we're never going to have revival until we get off the page of the humanist and get out of psychology and get back into theology.

I was in a meeting in Signal Mountain, Tennessee. That thing went on for three Sundays. It's good to be in town when God is.

I'm telling you, it's good to be in town when God is. Man, God moved in that meeting. There was a fellow in that church.

He sat on the back row. He's the kind of guy, an older guy. He'd come in late, leave early, sit on the back row, never did anything, never said anything.

He was a timid, shy, backwards sort, and he often would come to his preacher and say, Preacher, please don't call on me to pray because I'm afraid I might make a mistake and the people might laugh at me. And the preacher was one of those slobbering mercy-showers. I mean, just, oh, brother, you know, it's just the way you are.

And he was all the time patting the guy on the back. Well, I want to tell you that God pointed his finger right at Brother Johnson one night and showed him his problem was not his timidity. His problem was his pride.

No, no, he was not a loudmouth extrovert, but he was just as concerned as the loudmouth extrovert about what people thought about him. And God convicted him that his backwardness was really a manifestation of pride in reverse, not in high gear, but in reverse gear. Brother Johnson hit the prayer room.

He wept it out. He got in front of the church. The place was packed, and the people couldn't believe it.

Brother Johnson giving a testimony. What's up? They all perked up. And Brother Johnson was weeping and crying, and he said, I've hid behind my timidity and used it as a self-protection device, but he said, tonight, God has shown me what a proud heart, and God gave him his composure, and that man began to testify, and the people were absolutely stunned.

You know what I think they thought? Man, if God could do that for Brother Johnson, maybe God could do something for me. I'm telling you, it put hope in their hearts. And the preacher told me that from that night to the day of his death, that Brother Johnson became the boldest witness in that church for Christ.

You know, isn't it good? Isn't it good that we're not locked in to what we are by nature? We're not limited to what we are by upbringing or temperament or personality or training or any other thing, but we can do all things through Christ that strengthens us. But you see, it's pride that causes us to water down the concept of sin and come up with some sort of an explanation rather than just being honest in the presence of God. So deceitful.

I'll tell you number two pride. God hates pride because pride is the greatest of all sins. It's the greatest of all sins because it's the essence of all sin.

Humility is the foundation for all virtue, but pride is the essence of all sin. Because behind all of the sin is the sin of pride. It's the essence.

It's the essence of all sin. The Bible says, all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. God said, boil the cosmos down.

You come up with two root sins. Lust and pride. And friend, I want to tell you, it's the essence of all sin because pride can eliminate God from a person's thinking.

Pride can eliminate God from a person's thinking. Psalm 10, for the wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek God and God is not in all his thoughts. You know, after 9-11, I was in New York 30 days later.

Do you realize the New York people were mild, meek, and kind for about six months after that thing happened? I don't know if you were there. But the whole nation toned down and had an open ear. I remember my father was in the hospital and he was dying at that point and I had to go do some banking and I went in to talk to two bankers and they dropped everything when I asked them the question.

I said, do you think that maybe we have a God problem? Well, what do you mean? Do you think maybe we're in trouble with God because we've neglected Him? Well, yeah, and they dropped everything and they were open to talk about spiritual things. So the next terrorist attack, be forewarned and be forearmed and come up with excuses because people will drop everything. It isn't going to last long because they get hardened again and they forget about it because pride will drive God clear out of a person's mind.

The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not see God. God is not in all his thoughts. Romans 1, they didn't even like to retain God in their knowledge.

I talked to a 65-year-old relative one day and I said, have you ever thought about where you're going to spend eternity? He said, no, I've never given much thought to it. I thought, man, how can you live this long and never give due consideration to the Creator? Well, the wicked through the pride of his countenance will not see God and God is not in all his thoughts. It will eliminate God from a person's thinking.

I want to tell you pride is the first thing to enter a man and the last thing to go. You know, there's only really one difference between a proud man and a humble man. There's really only one essential difference.

The only difference between a proud man and a humble man is that the humble man is willing to admit he's proud. That's really the only difference. I'll tell you pride, number two, will stop Jesus from being the Lord of my life.

Even as a Christian. Pride and God are like oil and water. They don't mix.

And God never will compromise with our human pride. The Bible says, diatrophies love to have the preeminence. Love to have the preeminence.

And there's a diatrophies in every one of our hearts called the flesh that loves to have the preeminence that belongs to Christ alone. The chorus says, save me from myself, dear Father, from each subtle form of pride. Lead me now with Christ to Calvary.

Show me I with Him have died. Friend, have you ever seen that likeness of your old sinful self crucified? Christ, the cross, is the only antidote to pride. It's the greatest of all sin, number two, because pride is the very nature of Satan himself.

It's the very nature of Satan himself. Pride was the very first sin to destroy the calm of eternity. Remember that original sinner, Lucifer, the sun of the morning, that anointed, majestic, intelligent, beautiful cherub.

How that God said to the original sinner, Lucifer, thou was perfect in all thy ways in the day in which thou was created. Friend, God didn't make the devil. The devil made himself.

God said, you were perfect in all your ways in the day in which you were created till iniquity was found in you. And then it says, thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty. What happened to him? Satan became so infatuated with himself, so enthralled with himself, so enamored with himself, he was no longer satisfied to be subservient to the Creator, and he wanted to knock God off the ruling throne.

Self-exaltation is always the move of Satan. He said in Isaiah 14, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.

I will sit upon the mount of the congregation. I will ascend the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.

Five times he said, I will. And I want to tell you, man is never more like the devil than when he's full of self-will. The Bible says that a person that's full of self-will is disqualified from pastoring a local church.

Not self-will. The Bible says never put a new convert in the place of leadership lest he be lifted up with pride, fall into condemnation of the devil. And what was the condemnation of the devil? Was it not his staggering pride? I'll tell you, it's the nature of Satan.

It's the essence of sin. But number three, it's the greatest of all sins because pride is in reality nothing less than the worship of ourselves. You know, some churches you don't need a Bible to go to worship.

All you need is a mirror. That's why some churches had a lot of glass in their cathedrals. That's not the gospel.

The greatest need of the human race is not self-esteem. The greatest need of the human race is redemption by the blood of the Son of God. That's not the gospel.

There's no nice way to put it. This is a false gospel, man. I'll tell you, the man who exalts himself wages war with God.

You want to please the devil, begin to admire yourself. One time, there's this father and he began to brag to his family. By the way, my boys gave me a .45 caliber rifle for Christmas.

Don't have any point in saying that. I just want to throw it out for what it's worth right there. I've never gotten a gift like that from my family.

I thought that was worth an amen. But anyhow, this fellow began to brag to his family about what a great marksman he was. And the family thought, now, this is something.

Dad, he ought to be on television, you know, shooting those balloons, blindfolded, riding down the road. You know, one of these kind of guys. And he decided to take his little boy out hunting.

And all the way out to the duck blind, he filled his ear all the way. He said, son, when we get out there, the ducks will be falling out of some display of marksmanship. Well, they got out to the duck blind, and sure enough, the ducks come flying over.

Quack, quack. And here they come, and the father stands up, unloads the magazine, and not a single duck falls out of the sky. And the little boy thought, now, Dad's going to be embarrassed after all that bragging and boasting, and not even a single duck.

Well, he looked over to his father, and he didn't seem to be embarrassed. In fact, he seemed to have this look upon his face like he'd had a brush with an angelic being. He took his hat off.

A moment of reverence in all. And he stood there, silent. And after a moment, he spoke up, and he finally said, son, we've just witnessed a miracle.

He said, son, we have just witnessed a miracle. He said, there flies a dead duck over the tree line. Right, Jonathan? There it goes.

Not only have you ever met anybody like this, that these people will not back down. You know, C.S. Lewis said pride is an anti-God state of mind. An anti-God state of mind.

You say, well, they just have a big ego. Exactly. E.G.O. Edging God out.

You know, vitamin I is the only vitamin we have too much of in our spiritual diets. The middle letter in the word pride. The middle letter in the word sin.

I. I. I. Brother, that's the source of our problem. I'll tell you, the man in the grip of pride worships at the shrine of self. But Paul said, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice.

The trouble with a living sacrifice, it keeps on wanting to hop off the altar. That's why you gotta have the flesh hooks to hold the sacrifice down in the place, in the place on the altar. Crucified with Christ.

Lord, bend this proud and stiff-necked eye. Help me to bow the head and die, that it may no longer be I, but Christ that lives in me. Joseph said three characteristics of a man on a cross.

Number one, he's facing in one direction. Number two, he has no further plans of his own. And number three, he knows there's no going back.

I have been crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, the old I, but Christ now lives in me.

God's not in the self-improvement business. He's in the Christ-replacement business. And friend, I want to tell you, the exchanged life is what we need.

When God calls a man, He bids him to take up the cross, to die to self and follow Him. It's the greatest of all sin. It's so deceitful.

But number three, God hates pride because it's soul-destructive. Soul-destructive. Proverbs 16, 18, Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

You recall Herod, how he got up and gave that oration and the people began to lap praise on him and said, it's the voice of a God. And rather than transfer the glory to the Lord, he lapped up that praise and he was smitten of worms. An angel smote him and he was eaten of worms.

Pride goes before destruction. A haughty spirit before a fall. Andrew Murray said, Welcome everything that helps you on toward humility.

Financial setbacks, misunderstandings, broken relationships, sickness, hard times. Welcome everything that helps you on toward humility. I'll tell you, pride can destroy your relationship with God.

The Bible said, God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. You know, the Bible says God resists, He literally stiff arms the proud but He gives grace to the humble. I'll tell you, pride can keep a man from being saved.

I was in a meeting in a church. One night a man stood in the back. He was a family man, business man, honest man, a church man.

He was a good man by human standards but he was a lost man. And he said, you know I've known for many years that I've never had a new birth experience but he said, I've been afraid to admit it because I've been afraid of what you people would think if I did. And he broke down and he said, tonight I finally realized for the first time at the judgment seat of Christ, not only will you know that I am lost, the whole universe is going to know I'm lost.

And he said, if you're going to know it then, he said, you might as well know it now. He said, I am a lost soul and I need to be saved. And that fellow broke down and weeping and wept his way into the kingdom.

What kept that fellow from getting saved? It was his arrogance, his independence, his pride, his fear of what others thought about him. I'll tell you, pride will not only keep you from being saved, pride can trip you up after you get saved if you don't watch it. And my people which are called by my name will humble themselves and can I recommend tonight there's a difference between saying your prayers and praying your prayers? You know what I tell a lot of people? Throw away your prayer list for a couple of weeks.

Don't go over the same old ruts you've been over that God hasn't answered for the last 20 years. Just throw that away for a while. Stop saying your prayers.

Start praying your prayers. I'll tell you, there's only one class of person that ever prays and that's the person that needs God. The person that knows they need God.

And the person that is convinced they cannot make it without God. They're the only people that ever really pray. I mean, it's not praying like you mean it.

It's praying because you mean it. Look at Luke 16. A man prayed from hell.

He wasn't praying like he meant it. He was praying because he meant it. They weren't these cool, calm, casuals.

People say, well, you know, God's not deaf. No. But we might be.

And it's not a matter of volume or emotion but I'm telling you there ought to be seasons of intensity in prayer with God. If my people call my name they'll humble themselves. God said, I'll give them grace.

I'll give them grace to pray. You know, we're trying to do all these shenanigans. See you at the poll.

And trying to get national attention from the media. I even heard one of the sponsors for the National Day of Prayer lamenting the fact that Peter Jennings and Dan Rather didn't give them national air time. Can I say something to you tonight? The purpose of prayer is not to get the attention of men.

The purpose of prayer is to get the attention of God. So here we are praying in the streets and trying to get the attention of men. We have our reward.

Get off the Capitol steps and get back in the prayer closet, man. You pray to your Father in secret and He'll reward you openly. Grace to pray when we humble ourselves.

If my people call my name we'll turn from their wicked ways. You know, most of us, we don't think we've got any wicked ways because we're comparing ourselves with our culture which is absolutely, absolutely reprobate. Well, we look pretty good compared to the rest of the crowd but you get lined up beside the snowy white righteousness of Jesus Christ and you'll not be strutting around in God's presence.

You know, I grew up in the country down home and I'd go hunting a lot more like walking a lot and I shot at a lot of turkeys but all I ever got was feathers. I decided to call a buddy of mine from Carolina. He's an expert turkey hunter and I got in on Friday night from Ireland and he was there with his son at 5 o'clock the next morning we were up.

Let me repeat that. I got in from Ireland at 8 o'clock and was up at 5 the next morning. Quite an accomplishment.

I was up. My son was up. He was up.

His son was up. So here we got four guys going turkey hunting. Well, if you know anything about turkey hunting you're not supposed to take the whole battalion with you but so here we make off and we got all kinds of turkeys behind the house and men there gobbling their heads off and lo and behold, here comes some old timer, some old codger tooling in on this broken down Ford pickup and made off for the spot

where we wanted to go.

I said, we're not going there. I'm afraid somebody will get shot. So we're 45 minutes delayed.

We finally heard a turkey off in the distance where I had permission to hunt and we struck off and we should have been set up an hour earlier. Well, we got over there and he set up these fake turkeys. We had a fake jake.

That's a small gobbler and a fake hen and we set those things up and then he got out these turkey calls. He had mouth calls, slate calls, box calls, all kinds of calls. I mean, he had calls all over the place.

It sounded like a turkey choir rehearsal going on and he was making all these noises. We got a half gobble warning. It sounded like the turkey had laryngitis.

Maybe he had sinus problems also and kind of a half gobble and we said, that's him. So here we are set up and I'm frozen, plastered against a tree. You know, you're not supposed to move so I'm sitting there and it sounds like this rustling coming across the hill and it sounds like I heard a buffalo and lo and behold, here comes a whole gang of hen turkeys.

Well, you're not supposed to call in hens, man. You're supposed to call in the gobbler but here come all these hens just going around and eating and carrying on and about 40 feet behind the gang of hens was the gobbler in full strut and he was showing off. Man, he had his chest poked out, his head tucked down, his tail feathers up in the air, those other feathers dragging the ground and he is in full strut and just carrying on, proud as a peacock man and the hens are 40 feet in front of him, not paying any attention to him whatsoever and I said this is just like high school.

And I hear this guy, you know, just showing off and carrying on. It was really comical to see him because the hens weren't paying a bit of attention to him. Well, the hens came down and got right 15 feet from us and they got spooked, they knew something was up but the gobbler, strutting, oblivious and he finally came down and my buddy's over against the tree, he's only 20 feet away, he said shoot, shoot, but he's on the wrong side of the fence.

I'm tired of having to clear my conscience and brother I'm not going to shoot that bird until he comes over on the side where I've got permission. So that old gobbler, he saw that fake Jake and he broke strut and he went ballistic. Man, his head turned redder than it was to start with, he began to poke his head through the barbed wire fence, he was going to hop all over him.

You know they talk about how peaceful and loving nature is, what a joke, what a lie, I'm telling you that gobbler would kill that other gobbler if he hadn't had the chance. Well, he came through and got in the broken barbed wire fence and he came across the line and brother I lowered the boom and went home with the bird for Thanksgiving for the first time in my life. You know what did that old turkey in? Strutting around, carrying on, oblivious, not paying any attention, unawares.

Can I say something to you tonight? Nobody struts in the presence of God. You know something friend, in our circles, it's so easy to get a mindset that thank God we're not as other men, and somehow we're holier than thou, when the fact of the matter is, if Paul was the chief of sinners, I want to recommend we come in right behind him. You know how I know when I'm broken? I know I'm broken when my sin looks big and everybody else's sin looks small.

And I know I'm full of pride when my sins look small and everybody else's sins look big. That's how you can tell. If my people call by my name will humble themselves and seek my face.

Jonathan Edwards said pride is the saint's hardest conflict. I want to tell you pride can cause you to become satisfied with your past or current level of spiritual attainment and lose all heart to go on with God. Friend, I want to tell you it's the greatest of all sin.

It's so destructive. It can not only destroy your relationship with God, it can destroy your relationship with other people. Proverbs 13, 10, only by pride cometh contention.

Only by pride cometh contention. Why are there so many church splits, so many broken relationships, so many broken homes? Only by pride cometh contention. Someone said most of the shadows in this life are caused by standing in one's own sunshine.

You know pride defiles everything it touches. Pride can keep me from apologizing. Pride can cause me to defend myself.

Pride can cause me to look down with disdain upon others. I say it again, I know I'm broken when my sins look big and everybody else's sins look small. Oh friend, I'm not going to give an account for the other man and you're not either.

We're given an account for number one. Lord help us to quit condemning and being critical of the other's response or lack of it and just take responsibility for where we're at. I'll tell you a little story about a friend of mine, he's the best friend I've ever had at that point in my Christian life.

You know I'd always look for somebody that had their act together and long to find somebody that was walking with God and I found this fellow and I'll tell you I think he was walking with God and we became so close we became good friends. I mean we'd seek God, we'd go out in the woods and pray half the day, half the night. I'm telling you we had a wonderful relationship and you know he was such a good friend that I could tell him what I was really like and he liked me anyway.

I never had a friend like that. I never would be totally transparent because I figured if the guy found out what I was really like he wouldn't want to be around me because I didn't want to be around myself half the time. But this guy accepted me and loved me and I want to tell you we became the best of friends.

Well, I began to notice some inconsistencies in his life and you know what happened? I got critical of him. He was amazing to me. Now, how could I ever be critical of somebody because of their inconsistencies? I had enough inconsistencies of where they could do a psychological study that would last 3,000 years.

But here I was not verbally criticizing but mentally and he sensed it. Well, he came to my apartment one night and he sat down right there and he put his cards on the table and said, Brother Harold, he said, since there's a distance and friction in our relationship have I done anything to offend you? He put his cards on the table. And you know what I did? I pasted on one of those Gomer pile evangelical ear to ear grins and I said, Oh no brother, there isn't anything wrong.

I mean I was smiling so broadly I'd make Robert Shuler look depressed. I mean, oh no, no, there's nothing wrong. Looked like one of those smiley faces you get at Walmart.

And no, no, nothing wrong. Well, he didn't buy it. He probed around with all kinds of questions and he could see I wasn't ready to give up the ghost so he got up to leave and he went over by the door and he looked back at me and we're really good friends and he said, Harold, I think you're lying.

And when you get ready to get honest, I'm ready to listen. Closed the door, left, left me sitting on the couch. I felt that big.

If I'd had been sitting on a dime, I'd had three feet to swing my legs. I felt about like, I'd been found out, but still so proud I wouldn't even own up then. Can you believe it? Two months later I had to go to this pastor's conference.

I'm there to speak to the crowd about how to be revived and my friend showed up and ruined the whole service and I'm thankful I had enough conscience conscience to where I couldn't just overlook it and keep on going. I said, I've got to talk to you. I got him back behind the pulpit.

He said, you came to my apartment. I said, you're the best friend I've ever had. I said, I've never had a friend like you.

I said, you know, as we began to be such good friends, I saw these inconsistencies. But I was afraid to confront you because I thought if I did, you would reject me and God showed me the fear of rejection only by pride cometh contention. I used to think you couldn't maintain relationships with total honesty.

I leaned toward the idea you can't maintain relationships of any substance without honesty. Number two, I said, I saw these inconsistencies and I became critical. I didn't get concerned.

I didn't get burdened. I didn't come and pray. I didn't try to help you.

I just got critical and God showed me a critical spirit. Only by pride cometh contention. I said, number three, I saw these inconsistencies but I was afraid to confront because if I did, it would expose my own needs and God showed me the fear of exposure only by pride cometh contention.

I said, I didn't want you to know that it takes such a trivial thing to get me all bent out of shape. I said, brother, the distance you sense between you and I is because of my pride and I am so sorry. Will you forgive me? You know, pride just about cost me one of the best friendships I've ever had on earth.

It's so destructive. Pride can cost you a relationship with your spouse, with your children, with your parents, with your preacher, with your friends, your family. God hates pride.

It's so destructive. It's so deceitful. It's the greatest of all sin but God said, if my people call mine out, my name will humble themselves.

You know what that means? Humility is our responsibility. It's a choice. It's a choice.

Some people say, well, you know, I'm willing for God to humble me. Respectfully, only a fool would make a statement like that. The truth is, if it wasn't for the grace of God, we could not take our next breath.

We could not stand on our feet. We would not have another rational thought if it was not for the goodness and the grace of God. It's our responsibility to humble ourselves.

Pride is the roadblock and it's so vast. You'll never jump high enough to get over it. You'll never swing far enough to the right or the left to get around it.

If you're ever going to get through this barrier, you've got to go through on your knees, brother. There's some sins you can deal with in your seat, but there's some sins you can only deal with on your knees. Isaiah 57, 15, Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.

He's so vast. He fills eternity. So immense.

He said, I dwell in the high and holy place with Him also that is of a humble and a contrite spirit to revive the spirit of the humble and revive the heart of the contrite ones. The high and holy God of heaven in the high and holy place. Well, we would anticipate that, but where else? I want to tell you He's with the man that's willing to get in the dust and to humble himself under the mighty hand of God.

William Law said, Pride must die or nothing of heaven can live in you. And I want to tell you, there's nothing more deadly than spiritual pride. On our website we have an article by Jonathan Edwards, The Deadly Dangers of Spiritual Pride.

Pride must die or nothing of heaven can live in you. We sing it sometimes when I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died my richest gain I count but loss and poor contempt on all my pride. You know, if we're not pouring contempt on our pride, we're probably pouring contempt on somebody else.

And when we're pouring contempt on others that's a dead ringer sign we need to turn around and pour contempt on all our pride. If my people which are called by my name will humble themselves God said, I'll pour out grace on them to the point where they can pray. Not say prayers, but pray prayers.

They can turn from their wicked ways. They can get victory over besetting sins. And they can seek my face.

There's nothing the goodness of God won't do for a man or woman who's willing to take the witness stand against their own hearts and say God, you're right. I'm wrong. I've got six questions for you tonight.

A little different kind of invitation. How many here tonight with Sibila Harold God has convicted me of pride because to be honest, it's easier for me to see other people's faults many times than it is for me to see my own. And the very fact that I'm so reticent to pour out other people's sins before I pour out my own is an indicator of staggering pride.

How many would say it's often easier to see other people's sins than it is to see your own. Am I right on this point or wrong? How many here tonight with Sibila Harold God has convicted me of pride in the area of blame shifting and instead of taking responsibility for my own actions, reactions and lack of action I've been prone to blame other people and other things and God has shown me this blame shifting disposition is really at heart nothing more than a manifestation of pride. Anybody here convicted of pride in the area of blame shifting? That's amazing.

How many here with Sibila Harold I've been excusing my sins and I've been putting another name on in fact I have a technical name but God has shown me that this excusing sin by renaming them is really at heart nothing more than pride. Anybody here convicted of pride in the area of excusing sin by putting a fancy name on them? How many here tonight with Sibila Harold I see where pride has crept in and only by pride contention has come and I have some interpersonal relationship problems and God has shown me

tonight that at the heart of these, the friction in my interpersonal relationships is because of my own pride only by pride cometh contention. Anybody here tonight having some relational problems and God has shown you it's pride.

My hands up here tonight. Anybody else? Amazing. How many here tonight with Sibila Harold I see I believe pride has lulled me into a state of satisfaction and complacency I'm not in the world and I'm not doing all the old things and all the externals.

Somehow I've cooled off in my heart and I've become satisfied with my spiritual plateau and I've lost the hunger and the drive and the enthusiasm and the thirst and the drive to go on with God. Anybody here tonight kind of just cooled off and become satisfied and complacent and tonight God has shown you pride is at the root of it. Anybody like that here tonight? Just kind of drifting, just kind of drifting, you know, going on through.

Every day with Jesus sweeter than the day before. Every day with Jesus I love Him more and more. Brother, that ought to be the experience and if it's not, something's wrong.

Anybody here in the meeting tonight would say, Harold, I'm a lost, hell bound sinner and tonight God has convicted me that the reason that I am still in my lost estate is because I've been so proud. I've been afraid to admit it, but tonight I've got nothing to lose because one day everybody's going to know it and I'd like to be saved. Anybody in that condition tonight that would like to be saved.

Now God has spoken to the vast majority of our hearts tonight and I think that there's only one response. If my people call by my name, will humble themselves. It's our responsibility, it's a choice.

God said I'll pour out grace on you, you can pray, you can get victory over those besetting sins and you can have grace to seek the face of God with fervency and freshness. Let's stand for prayer. Heads are bowed, eyes are closed.

Father, at your invitation, may people be helped. Before we sing, before they play the piano, before we go any farther, how many of God's people tonight would make a choice to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and you'd leave your seat and you'd get on bending knee and you'd bow before the Lord and humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Before we go any farther, how many would like to make your way to an altar of prayer here? Just find a place somewhere in the auditorium and just humble yourself and tell God the real things.

Be honest. Be open. Make a cognizant choice.

An intelligent choice. I'm going to humble myself. I see pride in my heart and tell God all about it.

Friend, there's a fountain filled with blood where you can come and you can put all of those sins and all of that pride and it's adequate for God. It's enough for you. He can cleanse and forgive.

Heavenly Father, thank You that many are coming even now. God, may there be help and grace in time of need. God, would You give us a spirit of brokenness? God, would You help us to see the magnitude of our own sin? And God, let us see that it was our sin that crucified the Savior.

God, help us tonight, Your people, to pour contempt on all our pride. Oh, I pray that relationships would be restored. Joy would be revived.

That homes would be ignited with a fresh touch of grace. God, help us tonight as we bow before You and tell You the real things. God's talking to your heart.

Maybe you just need to turn around there at your seat. Make that chair an altar. Let's just spend some time tonight bowed in God's presence telling God the real things.

Dear sister, if you could just play kind of softly when I survey the wondrous cross as people respond to God.

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