

# The Battle With Sin Pride

by Tim Conway

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility in battling pride and seeking spiritual growth, highlighting the example of Christ and the need to depend on God for our strength and guidance.*

**Duration:** 44:03

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

**Topics:** "Pride And Humility", "Christian Sanctification"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the topic of pride, highlighting how pride is at the root of many sins and how humility is essential in the Christian walk. The speaker emphasizes the need to identify and battle pride by acknowledging our utter dependence on God. Various biblical examples are used to illustrate the consequences of pride and the importance of humility in the lives of believers.

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## Transcript

Brethren, I want to hit on, I don't know, maybe this even may take more than one time, but brethren, pride, that's where I want to go tonight. Brethren, how do we, how do we, I ask myself this, how do we even battle pride? You know, in some ways, in some ways, I've heard it said before, well pride is basically behind every sin, and that would be right. And I've heard people say, well unbelief is basically behind every sin, and that would be right too.

And we could go through and we could prove all those. And it's possible that you could say, idolatry is behind them all. I mean, you know, we could say that, we could prove a lot of things like this.

But I thought, you know one of the texts that's been jumping out at me? Well, let me just say this, if we're going to fight it, we need to see it. We need to identify it. Pride, brethren, you know what basically pride is? Or maybe we could take it to the other extreme.

You know what humility is? Humility is basically saying, I am nothing, and God is everything. And pride is when we say we're something. That's basically it.

And when Jesus starts his characteristics in the Sermon on the Mount, of what a true Christian is like, the first one, blessed are the poor in spirit. Brethren, that's the heart of the matter. Now think with me here.

Jesus said this, he looks at the Jews one day, some of these folks, and he says, how can you believe? This comes out of John's Gospel. How can you believe you who desire glory from one another? You

remember him saying that? Think with me. How can you believe you who desire basically to have a good reputation among each other? Let me read the text to you exactly.

Where is it here? John 5.44. How can you believe when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? This one has really jumped out at me because I thought, wait, you know what Jesus is saying? Even though we may be able to tie unbelief to every sin, he's saying pride is really at the root. Pride is the greatest root cause even of unbelief. He says, you will not believe.

You are full of unbelief because you seek applause from one another. And I got to thinking about that. What should that tell us as Christians? Does that teach us anything about the battle? And I got to thinking, well, why can't they believe? But I got to thinking, what is it? Brethren, what is it? I mean, what is it about pride? We don't want to look weak because basically humility is saying I'm nothing and I need a crutch and I need help and I need God, I need Christ, I need what he did for me.

I am nothing. I'm poor in spirit, not just because I think I'm poor in spirit, I'm poor in spirit because I see myself the way I really am. I am absolutely incapable of any spiritual good whatsoever.

I come to God as an utter sinner. My righteousnesses are filthy rags. The best things I've ever done in my life outside of Christ are absolutely an abhorrence to God.

He cannot accept them. I have nothing to offer Him. I am totally undone based on my own merits.

None of it was good, ever, at all, none of it. And I got to thinking about this. Brethren, this is such a hindrance.

We want to be thought well of. It is so innately Adamic, natural, ingrained in our flesh. We want people to like us.

And so we want to portray ourselves as likable. We like when people want to be around us. We like when people want to compliment us.

We like when we're able to do something well and be recognized for it. There is something in us that just pulses with that. And He says, you can't believe.

In other words, when people are having a difficulty believing, I've heard John Piper say this. He said, you know the real issue behind why some people just can't understand doctrines like election? It's not because they're incomprehensible. It's because of their pride.

And that's so true. Brethren, what He's telling us here is pride is the very root of all of our unbelief. Basically, if we're in a place where we don't want other people to think less of us.

You see, there's a fear of man. We're not willing to become nothing because it's going to destroy our reputation. Brethren, we're people that thrive on reputation.

And you ask yourself, how much do you do what you do for reputation's sake? How much do you do? Brethren, it's amazing in the church how many people want to preach. Amazing in the church how few people want to scrub the bathrooms. Why is that? We don't want to take the lowest seat.

And what if I take the lowest seat and nobody recognizes it? But you know, Andrew Murray, he did a book on humility. And he said that the grace of God... You know how God says this over and over? He resists

the proud and He gives grace to the humble. He says, with this man will I dwell.

Those that are humble and of a contrite spirit. And Andrew Murray says the grace of God is like water. What happens when you pour water out on the ground? Where does it go? To the lowest points.

And he says the grace of God is like that. It flows to those points. Brethren, when all hell comes against you.

One of the ways it's going to come. Is it's... And brethren you know. The battle is up here.

The battle is in the mind. The battle is in the thoughts. And it's those thoughts that come.

And it's in the mind. You want the glory. You want the attention.

You want the reputation. You want to be recognized. You want to be thought well of.

And brethren, if you start really thinking. And you really start asking yourself. You start examining your motives for things.

You will find this behind so many. So much. So often.

I remember Jim Elliot. Upon reading David Brainerd's diary. Both very godly young men.

But Elliot said. Reading Brainerd I'm moved. To confess pride hourly.

Brethren let me tell you something. I just came through 2 Chronicles. You know what was amazing to me? Listen to this.

God's people wrestle with this. The temptation for this is huge. Asa.

Anybody know Asa? Who was he? Listen. 2 Chronicles 14.2 Don't look there just listen. Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God.

2 Chronicles 15.17 The heart of Asa was holy true all his days. Here's a man of God. But you know what struck me? I'm reading about all these good kings.

In 2 Chronicles 16.7 At that time. Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him. Because you relied on the king of Syria.

And did not rely on the Lord your God. The army of the king of Syria has escaped you. Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army? Many chariots and horsemen.

Yet because you relied on the Lord he gave them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout all the earth. To give strong support to those whose heart is blameless.

You see. There was a point in his life where he said. Lord we can't beat this enemy.

It's just too great. We're powerless. Brethren this is the heart of humility.

The heart of humility is a proper estimation of self. That we are nothing. Brethren do you get a feel? God created his creation.

To be entirely dependent upon him. You see scripture just shows us these verses. From whom the father of lights.

From whom every good and perfect gift. Brethren what God wants us to see. Is from his hand comes everything.

He wants us to be absolutely dependent on him. Here's Asa. Hanani says to him.

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth. To give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this.

For from now on you will have wars. And Asa was angry with the seer. And put him in stocks and prison.

For he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at that same time. Here's a king.

Here's a good man. And he was overcome with pride. Jehoshaphat.

2nd Chronicles 17.3 The Lord was with Jehoshaphat. 2nd Chronicles 17.6 His heart was courageous in the ways of the Lord. 2nd Chronicles 20.32 He walked in the ways of Asa his father.

And did not turn aside from it. Doing what was right. In the sight of the Lord.

But then you have this. Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned in safety. To his house in Jerusalem.

But Jehu the son of Hanani the seer. Went out to meet him and said to the king Jehoshaphat. Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord.

Because of this wrath has gone out against you from the Lord. Again Jehoshaphat king of Judah joined with Ahaziah. King of Israel who acted wickedly.

He joined him in building ships to go to Tarshish. Brethren sometimes this. When you're being asked to help by another king.

You want to save face. You want to go out to war with me. You don't want to seem to be a coward.

Right. And so he joined with them. Desiring the approval of man.

And he's faulted. This was a good man. Hezekiah.

Hezekiah was a man that says. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. According to David his father.

But then you have this. But Hezekiah 2nd Chronicles 32.25 Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him. For his heart was proud.

Therefore wrath came upon him and Judah and Jerusalem. God poured out some good thing upon him. And he began to think it was.

He didn't give the due return to the Lord. He didn't give the due thanks. Uzziah.

Here's another one. A good king. Reigned 52 years in Jerusalem.

He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. But when he was strong he grew proud to his destruction. He was unfaithful to the Lord his God.

Entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. But Azariah the priest went in after him with 80 priests of the Lord. Who were men of valor and they withstood king Uzziah.

And said to him it is not for you Uzziah to burn incense to the Lord. But for the priest the sons of Aaron. Go out of the sanctuary.

Uzziah was angry. God gave him leprosy. You have Josiah.

We know about Josiah. He didn't turn aside from the ways of the Lord to the right hand or the left. But you remember what happened when Necho king of Egypt came out.

Basically Josiah rose up in pride. And Necho told him look I'm on a mission of the Lord. I'm not even coming out against you.

Leave me alone. The Lord has called me to do this. And the word says there it was the Lord.

And Josiah rose up. And it cost him his life. He was killed.

Well brethren. How do we fight pride? One thing is we begin to acknowledge it. Basically the heart and soul of humility is entire dependence on the Lord.

And brethren I can tell you this. The heart and soul of humility is not running around confessing your sin all the time. Now listen to me very carefully.

That doesn't mean there isn't a place for confessing our sin one to another. But what I mean is this. If I take Paul as my example.

Do you know what? He never confessed sin from his own pen once. You ever notice that? But you know what he did? He constantly was recalling what he used to be before he was saved. And brethren.

He was constantly remembering grace. But he was also remembering that that grace presently made him what he was. And he was actually able to outrun even the other apostles.

And he wasn't going to refuse it and start off on this. It's amazing to me that we never see him confess his own sin once. As a believer.

But here was a man of great humility. And he would say that he was a persecutor. Formerly.

A blasphemer. Formerly. He thought to do many things contrary to the name of Christ.

Formerly. And isn't it amazing that when you find his testimony all the way through Acts and through his epistles. He's saying that.

But he never once confesses present sin. That's amazing to me. A man who is no doubt as humble as anybody.

That has lived the Christian life aside from Christ. I mean undoubtedly. Paul was in his day was probably the most humble man on the face of the earth.

And he didn't go around confessing his sin. But I'll tell you what he was ready to say all the time. I am a product of grace alone.

And there's no other explanation for my life. And see brethren. We can have a false humility.

False humility is when you say. Oh I have such a wicked heart. Oh I'm such a bad person.

Oh I'm this and I'm that. Brethren people like that. That's a false humility.

Because I'll tell you what. True Christians do know the power of God in their life. They do know the power of walking in the Spirit.

They do know a life where sin's dominion is broken. And brethren as much as we see it. We need to be giving thanks for it.

Just saying oh wretched man that I am. And walking around in that mindset all the time. That doesn't do God honor.

And you don't see Paul doing that. You see Paul walking around at times saying. I have a clear conscience.

I don't even know any sin against myself. He says that brethren. But he was very quick to say.

But I'll tell you this hell hole God pulled me out of. And that's not to say that Paul thought he was perfect. It's just very interesting to me.

That in wanting to express a Christ like humility. He doesn't belabor his own sin all the time. And I just think that's noteworthy.

But brethren we should be consumed with grace all the time. Brethren remember what you were. Remember what you are.

Remember what you are even now without Christ. Let it all come back there. Brethren we need to remember constantly what Christ is.

Remember Christ. I mean that's one of the things. Christ said learn of me for I am meek and lowly in spirit.

He's meek and lowly. He was humble. And he said learn of him.

Brethren one of the things that you and I are going to need to do. As we do battle with this. Is you need to picture Christ.

The scripture says he didn't please himself. I mean he basically lived his life totally submitting to his father's will. Brethren are we self-willed? Are we doing what we do.

Because we want to do it without regard to what God says in his word. Brethren when Jesus said this. Jesus said if anyone would come after me.

Let him deny himself. Take up his cross and follow me. Brethren what is taking up the cross? Brethren taking the cross is an instrument of death.

How does a person die to self? It is repeatedly over and over and over and over again. Resigning yourself to God. Resigning yourself to his will.

Seeing Christ. Even when you know. But Lord if I follow you in this it's going to be hard.

But that's okay. Because brethren that path of humility. Those are the ones God dwells with.

The humble and contrite. The lowly. That's where he dwells.

That's where his grace flows. That's where happiness is found. That's where peace is enjoyed.

Brethren which ones of you have ever got happier. Closer to Christ. More deeply profoundly joyful.

By seeking your own will. It doesn't lead to that. Brethren think with me here.

Ladies. How much do you dress? How much do you do with your hair? How much do you do with your makeup? Because you are all out wanting to please the Lord. Are you doing it all out because you're resigning to him.

All out because you're seeking to die to self. And to follow in a path of humility. Brethren lack of humility is the explanation for everything that's wrong with us.

Everything. I mean if you look at yourself and you've got a problem. You've got a struggle.

You've got a defect. You've got an issue. You've got a sin.

Lack of humility will explain every one of them. Every one. We are to carry that cross and we are to die to self.

And Christ is the perfect image of this. He did not please himself. And he obeyed his father all the way.

When his father put the cup to his lips to drink the wrath. He drank it. Brethren he comes to us in the beginning and he says.

Come to me. Learn of me. Learn of me.

Brethren learn of the humble manner of Christ. Let it just sink into your mind. Think of him walking through life.

Think of him humble. Think of him 40 days hungry. I have the power to turn that stone into bread.

But I'm not going to do it. Because I am going to trust my father to provide. You see it's absolute submission.

I am really hungry father. I am really hungry. And the devil is just sticking it to him.

Come on. You're the son of God. You can do this.

But he's saying. And brethren you know what happened? He withstood the temptation. And his father sent an angel.

You see brethren pride is so much about. I want what I want when I want it. But if we would just submit to Christ.

He will give us better things in his time. That's the way it is with the Lord. Brethren.

I can tell you this. I mentioned this already. Isaiah.

He walks into that temple one day. And he sees the Lord on the throne. And he fell on his face.

And you remember what he said. Woe is me. He said I'm undone.

I'm a man of unclean lips. Brethren I'll tell you what. I've thought often about that image.

But today it struck me. It struck me. I always had this mindset.

That when he said. I'm a man of unclean lips. I always had a sense that.

He suddenly became profoundly aware. Of the lack of total integrity. And total honesty on his tongue.

And that among the people. But today it struck me. When he said I'm a man of unclean lips.

I suddenly saw a man. Who had spoken too highly of himself. On too many occasions.

And lived amidst a people. That took too much credit. For too many things too often.

And when he saw the Lord in his glory up there. And he fell on his face. He suddenly realized.

I have nothing. It's just like Job. Job was vindicating himself.

He was justifying himself. And when he saw the Lord in the whirlwind. He repented in dust and ashes.

He said my mouth is shut. What am I? You see this is what God was doing to him. Job let me tell you about me.

Let me tell you what I have done. I did this. And I did this.

And I did this. And where were you? You did none of it. And by the end he was saying.

Oh Lord you're right. I was a fool for opening my mouth. Brethren this is where the battle is.

This is where the battle is. We need to see high and lofty views of God. And we need to see and be reminded of ourselves all the time.

What we are. And we need to keep in mind. Brethren there is a sinister hellish relationship.

Between our pride and an incapacity to believe God more deeply. How can you believe? You who receive the glory from one another. And you know right there in the same portion of scripture.

Jesus says. I do not receive glory from men. Man that hit me too today.

Wow. I never saw that text so profoundly tied to the humility of Christ. And to the pride of man.

The way I did today. Brethren the truth is. We far too much desire the glory of men.

I do. I do. And this is the heart of the matter.

And we've got. You're not going to battle this thing unless you identify it. Brethren it's a problem with God's people.

And you can have great gifts. Again as Andrew Murray said. He said the biggest dead giveaway.

To counterfeit holiness. Is a lack of humility. Strikes deep.

Can you see Jesus? He washes their feet at the last supper. He's washing their feet. If there's ever a humble thing.

Something a slave did. He's washing their feet. The Lord of glory.

And when he gets done. He says I've given you an example. And the guys are arguing.

Over who's going to be the greatest. Have you ever read that? That was taking place at the last supper. They were arguing about.

Here he is saying. My body which is broken for you. It's like Matt has told us before.

The washing of the feet. It's a little picture of the cross. Christ not coming to serve himself.

But to serve. In absolute humility. Not coming to take glory from any man.

He washes their feet. And he says. Now I've given you an example.

Of humbleness. Of love. And they're arguing about.

Who would be the greatest. Now obviously I don't know exactly. This sequence.

But it happened at the same occasion. Brethren I'll tell you this. When the spirit of God came on Pentecost.

A humility came into those people. Those disciples. That they didn't have before that.

The power of God came upon them. Peter so feared. The disapproval of men.

That he denied the Lord. In front of little girls. Little maidens.

Brethren that's pride. He didn't want to be thought. Badly of or disapproved of.

Among these people. And when the spirit of God came. There he was before the Sanhedrin.

Listen brethren. We may credit boldness there. But also humility.

Because now he's ready to say. Now let's have a discussion about. Who's going to be the greatest.

Let me tell you about the Christ. Who is the greatest. And he's doing it with boldness now.

Brethren humility can be done in boldness. Humility isn't all timidity. But what it is.

Is it's constantly. Acknowledging who you really are. And brethren what are you? Really.

Everything you have. Came from God. And he can take any of it away.

Except that of course. Which he promises never to take away. But brethren we've got to do battle.

This is where it is. Pride. This is one of those ugly things.

And it will come against you. And there will be such fierce battle. In your thoughts.

In your mind. Brethren. Beat the flesh.

Into submission. Beat it. Buffet it.

That's what Paul said. Listen. God says this.

Humble yourself. Through Peter again. Humble yourself.

Therefore. Under the mighty hand of God. And he will exalt you in due time.

Casting all your care upon him. Humble yourself. Brethren one of the ways you're going to do battle.

Purposely. Do that. Which is the most humbling thing to your flesh.

Purposely. Brethren I'm serious here. It says humble yourself.

Now I realize you can't reach in. And grab hold on your heart. And change it.

Look. Here's something that needs to be done. And it would be humbling to do it.

And I don't want to do it. Lord give me the grace. See again.

If it's real humility. You're coming back to trust the Lord. All the time.

Lord give me the grace. Lord. The truth is I don't want to do this.

The truth is. My flesh doesn't want to take the low road. The truth is.

My flesh doesn't want to take this path. I need your help. And if you can then you don't gloat that you did.

If you can you can thank the Lord. Brethren. I just want to end with this.

Do you remember? Paul said. Something happened to him. That he might not boast.

Or become lifted up. Remember what happened to him? A thorn in the flesh. He prayed.

How many times? Three times. Lord please take it away. And the Lord says my grace is sufficient.

And you know what Paul said? So be it. If in my weakness. And in my nothingness.

Christ shines. Then this is great. Let me tell you.

Brethren. We are typically praying against. The most helpful circumstances.

And thorns. That God can put in our life. The very things.

Brethren. You want to know a sign of real maturity? Is when you can. You can answer like Paul.

And say. You know what? This thing. Oh brethren.

It is so hard. The valley of humiliation. Is a hard valley.

But it speaks of such spiritual maturity. When you can get to the place to say. I don't like that thorn.

But I know this it humbles me. And for that I am thankful. Brethren.

To thank God for the thorns. And to thank God. When He knocks you down ten notches.

When He shows you your nothing. When He allows you to fall right on your face. Brethren.

We ought to thank the Lord. Not run from it. Not pray.

You know most of the time. We are praying. We are praying to the Lord.

To take away the very thing. That would do us so much good. To have.

Pray for it. Brethren. Let me tell you this.

God. Has predestinated to conform. His children to the image of Christ.

And that image is one of humility. And you know what? Sometimes we have not. Because we don't ask.

Brethren. Ask. Lord.

Burn the humility of Christ. Into me. And do it no matter what the cost.

Can you guys pray that way? He is going to take. Look. If you want what is most valuable.

And you want to win this battle. And you want to overcome. Then I highly recommend you pray that way.

You want to become more like Christ? Then pray for that humility. Humility doesn't get burned into us down the easy road. It gets burned into us through the thorns.

Typically. But if you have. If you have.

A real. Hunger and thirst. After righteousness.

Then you should not be afraid to pray this way. Brethren. If God gives you the thorns.

And in the end. All it does is shows your weakness all the more. And it just shows everybody else that you are nothing.

Because that is what you are. And that is what I am. And if it just reveals that.

And that weakness just surfaces. And Christ can pour His grace in. So that.

He is more recognized. And He is more thanked. And He is seen to be greater.

Brethren. This is why the Lord calls. The stupid.

And the poor. And those that just aren't. Very much in the eyes of the world.

Why? So that when people boast. They boast in the Lord. Brethren.

This is a battle to the end. And believe me. The battle is with pride.

Brethren. Some of us may not have greater levels of humility. Because you haven't asked for them.

And because when God begins to bring that path. You pray against it. Is it possible that you might pray that He removes something from you? I don't know.

I don't know if that is possible. That you would pray. That God would take something away from you.

That would actually move the Lord to take it away. Before it actually done it's perfect good in your life. I don't know.

I doubt that. And the reason I would say that is because He didn't take it away from Paul. But I'm certain of this.

That we often times don't have. Because we haven't asked. Brethren.

When I spoke several weeks back about order and argument in prayer. You want to order your argument in prayer? Lord you promised to conform me to the image of Christ. That image is one of a man who did not seek glory from men.

Lord I want that. Make me like that. And you know what? Pray for it.

Every day. Pray for it. Make it.

It seems like I remember Paul Washer saying. That he kind of kicks himself now. Because when he was first saved.

He prayed that God would help him preach. God would help him preach. And he said God did help him preach.

And he realizes now he should have been praying. God make me humble. God make me humble.

You ever hear him say that? Something akin to that. Brethren I'm serious. God will give us what we ask for.

I mean. As long as it's good for us. But he gives us repeated promises.

That he'll give us if we ask. And he gives us the promise too. That we don't have because we don't ask.

And brethren one of the reasons we may not have a deeper degree of humility. Is because we haven't asked enough for it. And it may be because we haven't put a high enough premium on it.

Brethren battle to the end. It's a battle to the end. God help us to fight.

Anybody want to say anything? Or any last comments here before we? Okay. Well we'll adjourn.

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