

Don't Be a Victim of Pride

Scripture

“Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, “How do you advise *me* to answer these people?” And they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.” But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. And he said to them, “What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us’?” Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, “Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make *it* lighter on us’ —thus you shall say to them: ‘My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father’s waist! ‘And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!’” So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had directed, saying, “Come back to me the third day.” Then the king answered the people roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him; and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!”” (1Ki 12:6-14 NKJV)

“By pride comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised *is* wisdom.” (Pr 13:10 NKJV)

Commentary

Do you remember Rehoboam? Instead of listening to good advice, he acted in pride and followed the will of his worthless advisors, those with whom he grew up. Not long after this terrible decision the kingdom was torn apart. Foolish pride had filled the heart of Rehoboam and reason had given way to madness. Have you ever noticed how people sometimes seem to act like complete idiots? No disrespect is intended, I use the word in a technical sense. Normal, reasonable people sometimes act in a ridiculous fashion.

Think about it a moment. It probably won't take very long for you to remember a time when you catered to someone because they offered a complement. Sometimes we might look back and see where pride has even led us to act against our conscience. During those sinful events, observers would likely say, “he is not acting himself.” Like the criminal who offers a ridiculous alibi when caught in a crime, the prideful man often lies to himself about his actions.

The truth is pride is a root sin, a sin generator if you will. For example because of pride, a sin observed by others will cause the sinner to generate a lie to cover it up. This is a vicious cycle, and left unchecked will lead a person to reject the soundest advice. Instead of listening to reason, pride will lead its victim into all manner of evil, usually dominated by strife.

So let us be like the second part of Proverbs 13, let us be well advised and wise. Pride refuses to listen to reason, but humility hears the words of life and peace. Jesus said, “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt 5:3 NKJV)

Listen carefully to your counselors, and weigh what is said by the Word of God. Do not resist the truth because it comes from an unlikely source, or because it conflicts with your lusts. Remember, “Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor *is* humility.” (Pr 18:12 NKJV)

“*Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.” (Php 2:3-8 NKJV)