

The Making of a Prophetic Prima Donna

In my editorial role at *Charisma* magazine I come across all kinds. There are many among the nameless, faceless generation who walk in a level of humility and honor that I aspire to. Then there are apostolic abusers and prophetic prima donnas, divas and all-out “exalted prophetesses” who walk in pride and pretense and don’t seem to care who knows it.

A recent encounter with a **prophetic prima donna** got me thinking: How do Christians with international ministries, book deals and large staffs become such drama queens (and kings) who think more highly of themselves than they ought?

The Wrong Ladder

Did they start their journey as part of the nameless, faceless generation only to fall victim to pride’s puffery? Or were they always secretly striving for the spotlight? Were they always willing to climb over (and even trample on) anyone and everyone to get to the top of the ministry ladder?

What causes some Christians to flat-out abuse the people around them once they “arrived” in a position of authority? What does the making of a prophetic prima donna look like? How does it happen? And how can we keep from falling into this trap as God promotes us to more visible roles in the kingdom or in society?

Yes, I have a lot of questions because I don’t want to become an apostolic abuser who maligns the character of others to cover up their own shortcomings. I don’t want to turn into a demanding prophetic prima donna who is too big for her own britches.

Hollywood Christianity Syndrome

In fact, every time I run into one of these prophetic prima

donnas I walk away with the fear of God in me because I know that anyone can be deceived by the pride of life. Especially when success keeps knocking louder and louder. Especially when no one is willing to hold you accountable for the pattern of pride that consistently manifests in your life.

It seems the Hollywood Christianity syndrome causes even the most discerning believers to turn a blind eye to the evidence of deep character flaws that could be a symptom of serious sin. If we can't rightly discern and lovingly deal with the visible pride of apostolic abusers and prophetic prima donnas, how will we avoid the even greater deceptions coming in the end-times?

After much prayer and reflection, I've come to this conclusion: There is not any one formula for the making of a prophetic prima donna. I think we can fall into pride any number of ways. After all, we'll have layers of pride to peel away so long as we live in these fleshly tents.

Honor Vs. Puffery

Think about it for a minute. From the world's standards, these prophetic prima donnas have plenty of which to be proud. "Successful" ministers worked hard to get where they are. They sacrificed a lot. We should honor them in a godly way for laboring over the Word, in prayer and in service to the body.

But I believe the snare of the pride of life becomes a dangerous reality when people begin to idolize "successful" ministers as demigods who are above reproach. We've seen this time and time again when congregants vehemently defend and refuse to believe even the most blatant and public sins of their pastors. But it's just as real in the local church with unapproachable pastors.

Too often, "successful" ministers are surrounded by "yes men" who are either too scared or too ambitious to tell the pastor his behavior is not Christ-like. Instead of speaking the truth

in love, they pray in silence. But too often nothing changes because the deception is so great.

Let me be clear: I'm not giving anyone a license to rebuke your pastor or anyone else. I'm merely suggesting that perhaps some leaders wouldn't fall if those whom the Holy Spirit quickened to speak the truth in love obeyed His prompting.

Get Over Yourself

With all that said, I'm quite sure we all need to get over ourselves. We can't sit idly by and point the finger at the apostolic abusers and prophetic prima donnas at the expense of peeling the onion of pride in our own lives. The truth is, we are probably all too proud to see just how much pride we really walk in and if we don't think we have pride in our souls then we are already deceived.

I've come to the conclusion that in order to avoid falling into the sins of the apostolic abusers and prophetic prima donnas—the ones who mistreat people and begin to think they deserve a measure of the glory for running the ministry the Lord assigned them—we need to frequently check our own hearts. And we need to be open to hear those who labor with us if they suggest we may have an “issue” to deal with.

We need to ask ourselves: How are we treating people? How do we think about people? Do we take God's glory? Walk in false humility? I think if we all focused on walking in humility and love, we'd be more ready to hear and obey the Holy Spirit to help others whose pride may be setting them up for a fall. Amen.

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