

This Could Be Why God Is Resisting You

Don't we all crave freedom? I know I do. Wonderful freedom is found in the forest of humility. I experienced it sometime back as I sat in a circle. There were 20 of us in all. A beautician sat to my right. A lawyer to my left. One fellow wore tattoos, another a gray flannel suit. One arrived on a Harley. A couple showed up late. More than one of us arrived in a grumpy mood. All ages. Both sexes. Several races. We were an assorted lot. With one exception, we had nothing in common.

But that one exception was significant. We were confessed lawbreakers. Wrongdoers, every one of us. Each person in the room had received a piece of paper from a uniformed officer. So there we sat in a Defensive Driving class.

I'd dreaded the day all week. Who wants to share a Saturday with a roomful of strangers reviewing the Texas Driver Handbook? But I was surprised. After a short time, we felt like friends. The bonding began with the introductions. Around the circle we went, giving our names and confessions.

"I'm Max. I went 45 miles per hour in a 30-mile-per-hour zone."

"I'm Sue. I made an illegal U-turn."

"Hello, I'm Bob. Got caught passing in a no-passing zone."

As each one spoke, the rest nodded, moaned and dabbed tears. We felt one another's pain.

No masks. No make-believe. No games or excuses. Costumes checked at the door. Pretense left at home. Charades and shams were unnecessary. Might as well admit our failures and enjoy the day. So we did, and the humility created relief. This was

God's plan all along.

God gives grace to the humble because the humble are hungry for grace.

The inverse must be true—God hates pride.

“Do you see a person wise in his own conceit? There is more hope for a fool than for him” (Prov. 26:12).

“Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight” (Isa. 5:21).

“Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord” (Prov. 16:5a).

“The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate” (Prov. 8:13).

Why the strong language? Why the blanket condemnation? How do we explain God's abhorrence of the haughty heart?

Simple. God resists the proud because the proud resist God. Arrogance stiffens the knee so it will not kneel, hardens the heart so it will not admit to sin. The heart of pride never confesses, never repents, never asks for forgiveness. Indeed, the arrogant never feel the need for forgiveness. Pride is the hidden reef that shipwrecks the soul.

Pride not only prevents reconciliation with God; it prevents reconciliation with people. How many marriages have collapsed beneath the weight of foolish pride? How many apologies have gone unoffered due to the lack of humility? How many wars have sprouted from the rocky soil of arrogance?

Pride comes at a high price. Don't pay it. Choose instead to stand on the offer of grace. “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet. 5:5). To the degree God hates arrogance, He loves humility. Isn't it easy to see why? Humility is happy to do what pride will not. The humble heart

is quick to acknowledge the need for God, eager to confess sin, willing to kneel before heaven's mighty hand.

God has a special place for the humble of heart.

"Though the Lord is exalted, yet He has concern for the lowly, but the proud one He knows from a distance" (Ps. 138:6).

"The high and lofty one who lives in eternity, the Holy One, says this: 'I live in the high and holy place with those whose spirits are contrite and humble. I restore the crushed spirit of the humble and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts' (Isa. 57:15, NLT).

I'm wondering if you'd be willing to join me in a prayer of repentance, repentance from arrogance. What have we done that God didn't first do? What do we have that God didn't first give us? Have any of us ever built anything that God can't destroy? Have we created any monument that the Master of the stars can't reduce to dust?

"To whom then will you liken Me, that I should be equal to him? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of *His* power; not one of them is missing" (Isa. 40:25-26, MEV).

I like the joke about the arrogant man who took God's preeminence to task. He looked up into the heavens and declared, "I can do what you can do! I can create a person out of dust! I understand the systems of life and science!"

God accepted the offer. "All right," he told the buffoon. "Let's see what you can do."

The man reached down and took a handful of dirt. But before the man could go further, God interrupted him. "I thought you said you could do what I did."

“I can.”

“Then,” God instructed, “get your own dirt.”

Humility is healthy, because humility is honest. {eoa}

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