

# Has This Sneaky Sin Wormed Its Way Into Your Daily Life?

There seems to be a lot of teaching on the grace of God these days. Some of it is extreme, but much of it is actually good. Most Christians enjoy good Scriptural teaching on the empowering grace of God and want to learn to walk and live in more of it. But how do we increase our capacity to receive more of God's grace in our lives?

The Word is clear on this. Here it is:

"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6).

The measure of grace that you receive from God in your life is in proportion to the measure of humility you walk in. More grace operating in your life means more fruitfulness, more power, more wisdom and so forth. Who wouldn't want that? The key is to humble yourself. Without cultivating true humility in your life, you cannot receive additional grace. However, when you see the potential of what receiving more of God's grace will open up to you in your life, you will make it a high priority to walk in more humility.

In order to cultivate true humility in your life, you must identify pride and learn to resist it. There is always more pride in us than we think, and pride is a hindrance and a barrier to walking with the Lord and receiving from the Lord. You cannot operate in any kind of falsehood and pretension if you want to walk closely with God.

One of the worse and more subtle kinds of pride in the church today is spiritual pride. For example, when Christians try to be spiritual, put on airs and constantly argue doctrinal points, it is usually a sure sign of this most subtle and worse kind of pride working in their lives. God hates pride,

and it blocks Him from releasing more grace into your life. Pride is the nature of the devil, and that is enough reason for you to hate it, too.

We also need to understand the difference between true and false humility. False humility is another very deceptive form of pride. False humility poses itself as beggarly, self-degrading, inferior and unworthy. It will belittle itself while acting pious. It refuses to say anything good about itself.

People with false humility will even refuse to say what the Word says about them. That's not being humble. That's actually being proud. The balance is to not to have a lofty estimation of ourselves while still maintaining truth, reality and soberness in our lives. It is not pride to say what is true and what is scriptural. It is not pride to believe and to say the good things the Bible says about you as a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17). We are to acknowledge every good thing that is in us.

"that the sharing of your faith may be most effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you from Christ Jesus" (Philem. 6).

You really need the revelation of the Holy Spirit to detect pride in your life. Here are some indicators of pride that I heard a minister pose in question form:

*Are you always speaking of yourself? Are you seeking for others to be impressed with you? Why?*

*Why do you feel it is important to tell others your status, your accomplishments, important places you've been and important people you may know?*

*Are you unhappy unless you are the center of attention? Do you enjoy being seen and noticed? How do you handle being ignored? Does it bother you when others don't recognize you*

*and acknowledge you? Why?*

*How do you handle it when someone else gets the credit for what you did? Does your pride scream? When you are accused of wrongdoing, do you have the faith and humility to leave your defense and justification in the hands of God?*

*Do you show genuine interest in people and in what others are saying? Are you a good listener?*

*Ask yourself occasionally, "Why am I doing this? Why am I saying this? Why do I feel this way? Why am I hurt? Why did that bother me? Why did that hurt me or make me angry?"*

I keep a copy of these questions in my Bible and reflect on them often because I am interested in cultivating more humility in my life, and thus the ability to receive more grace.

Pride is a self-promoter, and always wants to have the preeminence. Pride is bossy and forces and coerces people.

Pride is an arguer, always defending itself, making excuses and causing strife.

Pride is unthankful and unappreciative, always having a sense of entitlement.

Pride is not teachable and does not want to be corrected, and always wants to be different than others. It acts as a know-it-all and will hardly ever say, "I don't know" to any question. Pride won't even ask questions because it has all the answers. It rarely shows interest in other people except when it wants to gain something from them.

Pride always projects and seeks to maintain a false image of itself, and is rarely impressed with others and their accomplishments or successes. Pride will actually become jealous and envious with someone else's success.

Well, how are you doing? Is the searchlight of the Holy Spirit beginning to shine on those areas of your life where you could use more humility? Remember, more humility means more grace. Using grace as a license to live more loosely, carnally and in a worldlier way is not humility, and thus does not engender more grace. Read the verses before and after James 4:6 to understand the full context of true humility.

Here are some other Scriptures in Proverbs to help you see pride and its effects: Prov. 6:16-17; 8:13; 11:2; 15:25; 16:5, 18; 21:4; 29:23.

We must all deal with pride now or at the judgment seat of Christ. If you can deal with the signs and symptoms of pride now you will grow spiritually in the grace of God. If not, it will stunt you and could very well be your undoing. {eoa}